

The Liberals also have a problem with the issue of conscience. There are Liberal Members of Parliament who are former Cabinet Ministers who supported capital punishment at the time of abolition. In a debate with myself on *Canada-AM*, a frontbencher in the Liberal Official Opposition stated that he supports capital punishment. He said on *Canada-AM* that he voted against capital punishment in 1976. When asked what he would do with respect to the Conservative motion in support in principle of capital punishment, he said that he would vote against it. I question the ability of some members of the Liberal Party to vote according to their conscience.

Let me deal with four or five points that have been made by other members. I do not believe any religion in Canada has an exclusivity on who is Christian and who is not Christian. I can list for the record ministers, clergy, of church denominations of all types who have written me as the heads of their churches in complete support of a return to capital punishment. They include the Oxford Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ontario; the Fundamental Baptist Mission; a letter from a former padre in the United Church; a letter from Pastor Jake Giesbrecht of the Ferndale Bible Church in Peterborough, Ontario; a letter from Reverend Hutson, T. Hilsden of the Social Concerns and Public Relations, Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada; a letter from the Reverend Earl N.O. Kulbeck of Scarborough, Ontario, Minister of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada; and a letter from Reverend G. W. Porter, retired United Church of Canada padre of the Lakefield Legion of which I am an honorary member. I have a letter from Reverend Evangelist Theodore Ruud of Calgary, Alberta. I have pages of letters from clergy who support a return to capital punishment—

● (1630)

**Mr. Cassidy:** How many bishops have you got, and name them? Name the bishops who support your view.

**Mr. Domm:** —on religious grounds. I sit in the House of Commons and I stand here today and I will debate with any member opposite who says to me that someone says that someone else is not a Christian because they support capital punishment. Who are they judging—whoever “they” might be? I do not propose to judge any member of the Opposition as being Christian or anti-Christian. I think members opposite are on pretty thin ice when religious leaders of the country judge other religious groups, organizations, churches and theologians as anti-Christian because they support capital punishment because of the teachings in the Old Testament and because of the teachings in the New Testament. Members opposite say that nowhere in the New Testament does Jesus Christ endorse capital punishment. I challenge Hon. Members opposite that nowhere in the New Testament does Jesus Christ say that the state does not have the right to take another person’s life.

**Mr. Cassidy:** Let he who is without sin throw the first stone.

**Mr. Domm:** Having said that, if Hon. Members opposite support capital punishment because of teachings in the Old

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Testament, then I challenge them to show me why the person who supports capital punishment because of teachings in the Old Testament is any less Christian than someone who supports or is against capital punishment because of teachings in the New Testament.

Let us deal with the idea that was brought forward here today in debate by the Right Hon. Leader of the Official Opposition when he talked about capital punishment being barbaric or being uncivilized. This is the “capital punishment is murder” argument all over again.

What the abolitionists assert here is: “Uncivilized barbarians kill; all killing is uncivilized and barbaric; therefore judicially ordered executions are uncivilized and barbaric.”

That quote is from Les Bewley, a retired Vancouver criminal court judge and columnist for the magazine *Canadian Lawyer*. He also stated:

This contraption may sell, but only to those who have forgotten, or never knew, that civilization depends upon the rule of law—that code which prohibits anti-social, harmful and murderous acts under pain of punishment by a court of justice and denies to the individual the right to enforce his own justice, vengeance or revenge. To assert that execution is merely barbarism or revenge is to deny the very meaning and process of civilization and to murder reason itself.

The other argument is that capital punishment is murder. I have heard that not only on this side of the House but from members opposite as well.

**Mr. Cassidy:** That’s what you said a minute ago.

**Mr. Domm:** Let me tell the Hon. Member what Mr. Bewley said on the topic. He said:

“Murder is killing; execution is killing; therefore execution is murder.” That’s like: “Confining a person is unlawful; judges confine people, therefore judges are breaking the law”—The murderer is prosecutor, judge and jury, all without lawful authority. Only such killing can be called murder.

In absolute contrast, society provides an accused murderer with all the rights and safeguards he has denied to his victim. If then, after proof of guilt beyond a reasonable doubt, society sentences him to death, that is not murder; it is as far from unlawful killing as it is possible to get. To call this murder is to speak a lot of nonsense.

Let me tell Hon. Members that that quote is also from Les Bewley and is contained in *Canadian Lawyer*. The article appeared in *The Globe and Mail* on March 19, 1987.

I also want to read Hon. Members one little article which I think can say it best. I worked over the weekend trying to figure out where we got where we are, why we are not satisfied—

**Mr. Cassidy:** Because of people like you is why.

**Mr. Domm:** —that the vote in 1976—when I say “we” I mean the Canadian people. You might not represent the Canadian people.

**Mr. Cassidy:** I certainly do.

**Mr. Stewart:** No, you don’t, look at the percentages.

**Mr. Domm:** I am telling you that the Canadian people—