

which the law now says should call for the supreme penalty.

Canadians may well see law enforcement officers embarking upon an altogether different approach, not being willing to risk their lives in endeavouring to stop crime or to apprehend criminals in the way they did previously, because they now know that parliament has ignored their wishes that the death penalty be retained, has ignored the wishes of the great majority of the Canadian people, and has even ignored the attitude of the supreme court of the United States which recently indicated that it still believes, contrary to an earlier decision, that there are crimes which call for the forfeiting of one's life.

This parliament is ignoring the will of the people. We are saying to the people that we are superior to them and that we know better than they do what the law of the land should be. In other words, once elected we are disregarding their views, and every time we do that we drive another nail into the coffin of democracy because there is just no way people can continue to respect this institution if it has no respect for the institution's point of view.

There can be no doubt in the mind of the public that this parliament has indicated, by the votes which have been taken up to now, that it has no respect for the great majority of the public as far as capital punishment is concerned. I regret this deeply. I do not believe that parliament and parliamentarians today are highly regarded, because all too often we ignore the wishes of the Canadian people on crucial issues which they really believe in; and the more often we do that, the less likely it is that we can raise the standard of parliament and improve its relationship with the people. If we do not do that, all the talk about participatory democracy, people's politics, and so forth, are just hollow words. They are words politicians can say, but when it comes to the crunch politicians really do not believe in them. If politicians do not believe in them, before very long, if it is not happening now, the public will be so sour about parliament and parliamentarians that it will say that parliament is just incidental and is not really important.

● (1540)

The public will say that what we really have in this country is a benevolent dictatorship under which every four years the people are given the opportunity to elect members to carry out their wishes, but it turns out that those wishes are ignored or superseded when it comes to really important matters of the day.

The one amendment that was passed provided that capital punishment will be retained for individuals who commit murder a second time. That is some small benefit to employees of penal institutions, but is of no major benefit to prison employees and law enforcement officers. It will be of benefit to prison employees if the government carries out the sentence, but nothing in the history of this government shows that such punishment will be carried out even when it is written in the statute. That concerns me, as it does many Canadians, and I am sure it is the reason so many people believe there should be capital punishment. As the murder statistics grow, an increasing number of policemen and employees in penitentiaries have

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been killed, so the public want to see the death penalty carried out.

In the end, Mr. Speaker, I think all of us in this House will be sorry that parliament did not react the way the public has indicated it should act. A growing number of crimes that were at one time punishable by death will become statistics in the days ahead as a result of the stand we have taken.

I feel sorry for the people who have assumed the responsibility of working in our penitentiaries. Some have been there for many years and would like to leave, but because they must have security for their families cannot leave now and start all over again. Inmates who have not committed murder will be forced to stay longer in penal institutions when in some instances it would be more realistic to shorten their period of imprisonment. Indeed, I believe that about one third of all inmates should not even be in institutions. Surely there are other methods just as appropriate for rehabilitating criminals who are not guilty of vicious crimes. The government felt it would have to be harsh on all criminals in order to secure agreement for abolition of the death penalty, so now they are all to suffer and become charges on the state. We should be moving toward releasing them on parole, with proper supervision, to prepare them to become contributing members to the community.

The whole matter is very sad, Mr. Speaker, because it ignores the rights and views of Canadian citizens who pay the bills. It is sad because we adopt a hard line when we should be moving toward greater rehabilitation, and inmates who are not hardened criminals will become so if they remain in our institutions for a longer period of time. It is sad because parliament is going to mean less to the Canadian public: it really is not an institution that mirrors the view of the people who sent us here. As a result of the voting on this legislation that has taken place up to now, we have become very unrepresentative and this damages the faith and respect that people have for the institution. It is a sad day for parliament and Canada, and I am sorry that a parliament has acted this way with the legislation.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and his cabinet must take a great deal of the responsibility for parliament's action. There is no other way that as many individuals as are in the cabinet could have voted one after the other in favour of the abolition of capital punishment, especially if a member voted a different way when he was not a member of cabinet. It is an indication that freedom of vote does not exist in the cabinet. That being the case, it reflects on parliament. That is probably the saddest thing of all, Mr. Speaker.

One area of this parliament that should be most reflective of the view of the general public is the executive branch, the cabinet. After all, they make the laws of this nation, and if they do not appreciate what the public wants, God help them and God help parliament. There will be less respect for parliament and the public will not want to participate to such a great extent, in days ahead, in the democratic process.

● (1550)

After all, a person's vote will not mean much if after a general election the representative pays no heed to the