

Capital Punishment

● (1600)

We talk about our undefended border; it certainly is. Anybody can come into this country from the United States through miles and miles of the undefended border. It is all very well to have rules for immigration if a visitor wishes to come in through the formal channels and be examined, but it is clear that there are many roads open into Canada which are not officially scrutinized. If we have an incident in this country this year, next year, or in the future, what will we do then? Are we inviting people to come here and commit crimes? It may be that some countries instil fear in their criminals by imposing severe penalties. Canada will be putting every visiting dignitary in a danger that would not exist in his own country or in many other countries. I think I referred already to hired killers. They come into the same category.

If I may summarize what I am trying to say to the good minded abolitionists who are voting for this bill, it is that they owe something to the protection of the citizens of Canada. I have never criticized the motives of an abolitionist. As I said earlier, our ideas are very close, that is, the removal of the offender from society, permanently. I am simply saying that the method of long prison terms—even for the rest of one's natural life in prison—is not a satisfactory way of removing a killer from society permanently. There is only one way to do that and it is by some form of state execution. It does not need to be hanging. I think the press has done an injustice to the people of Canada because every time the media mention capital punishment, especially on television, there is a picture of the noose in the background. The noose may not be the answer.

An old friend from Vancouver, the Hon. John Valentine Clyne, wrote to me saying that he had done a study when he was on the bench about methods of execution. He had compared hanging with the gas chamber and one or two other methods—and for whatever reasons that he was unable to give me in the letter—it was his conclusion that hanging was probably the most satisfactory.

I sense, Mr. Speaker, that you are about to rise so I will close my remarks with a final appeal to the abolitionists in this House who also represent the innocent citizens of this country that they give final consideration to the innocent people in Canada who desire, deserve, and demand the protection of the state.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An hon. Member: Five o'clock.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, in accordance with the undertaking that I gave a little earlier that there are no more speakers this afternoon, I move the adjournment of the debate and, if that is acceptable, I will move the adjournment of the House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. It is moved by Mr. Sharp, seconded by Mr. Drury that the debate be now adjourned.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Clarke: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I am not sure I understood the government House leader properly, but if he said he was moving the adjournment of the debate then I do not think it would be acceptable, but if he meant to adjourn the sitting for today that is quite a different thing.

An hon. Member: That is what he said.

Mr. Clarke: I did not hear him say that, Mr. Speaker. In his incompetent way he has bungled it again. Perhaps he could repeat it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The minister, by adjourning the debate, was postponing it until Monday morning when it would start again, to make sure that if something happens during the week end there is no difficulty. The debate is suspended until the next sitting of this House. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to and debate adjourned.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed we call it five o'clock?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It being five o'clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday next at 11 a.m., pursuant to the order made this day.

At 4.08 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.