

### *Capital Punishment*

military tanks to carry out their day-to-day duty of law enforcement.

No, Mr. Speaker, I have not come here today to glamorize the situation, but I must tell you as one who has worked as an undercover police officer in the midst of the illicit drug trade that the value placed on human life by this group of people is negligible or none. The lack of respect for human life is borne out by the statistics of those murdered annually in North America's illicit drug trade.

● (1320)

This is just one area of criminal activity that has no respect at all for human life. Others include loan sharking, prostitution, gambling, extortion, kidnapping and, the worst, terrorism.

When I refer to war, I am certain that if a foreign power were to jeopardize the lives of our citizens we would not hesitate to implement capital punishment against the invaders as we protect our citizens. What is the difference between a foreign invader or a criminal invader within our own society?

I believe that we, as legislators and leaders, have a responsibility to protect our citizens from those who would seek to destroy life. Capital punishment is a necessary part of this protection, based on the ultimate action taken by the enemy. In this case, the enemy is obviously those who deliberately plan and kill innocent members of our society, including our friends and sometimes our families.

It is with the utmost respect that I say to the legal profession and the judiciary of this land that until one has been exposed to the arena of war on crime in the streets of the cities of this nation, one cannot truly evaluate the severity of the situation. One cannot truly understand the criminal mind from reading a police report, or hearing witnesses, regardless of how articulately they may be presented not until one is on the front lines and sees these individuals in action. No written words or statements after the fact can truly describe what is being dealt with.

Some say that in the minds of the law enforcement agencies capital punishment is a question of revenge as they seek to get even. I can say unequivocally that this is the furthest from the minds of police officers and correctional officers. Like other members in society, they only seek to improve their profession and work toward a society that is free of crime and violence. I believe, as the majority of Canadians believe, that we are bound to protect the essence of law and order in our Canadian cities if they are to remain safe 24 hours a day.

No person or group seeks revenge during a time of war. The only true objective is peace and safety. War criminals are not extradited for the sake of revenge but to remove those from society who deliberately plan the removal of human life and refuse to live within the normal bounds that society has established. In most instances, we do not hear the abolitionists question the handling of war criminals. Consistency must prevail.

The aspect of capital punishment as a deterrent has been much discussed. Is capital punishment a deterrent to premeditated murder? I believe that we are dealing with a question of justice, not utility. I also believe that the deterrent factor is very selective and marginal at best.

As a learned judge once wrote, "The death penalty is a warning just like a lighthouse throwing its beam out to sea. We hear about ship wrecks but we do not hear about the ships that the lighthouse guides safely on their way. We do not have proof of the number of ships it saves but we do not tear the lighthouse down".

I believe that deterrence is a factor. But the position we must take when dealing with certain crimes is that they are so terrible, so abominable, so outrageous to the public that only the ultimate penalty indicates clearly to those perpetrators that society will stand up and defend itself against these types of acts.

We must be very careful in the selection of which crimes are to be punishable by death. Even then, we should only turn to capital punishment as a court of last resort. On behalf of those who are retentionists, I am certain I can safely say that if an alternative method of dealing with these heinous crimes was to present itself and provide the protection sought by us, we would accept an option without question.

I want to briefly address the question of public opinion. We know that polls and other methods of measuring public opinion clearly indicate that in excess of 70 per cent of Canadians seek the reinstatement of capital punishment for selected acts of criminal murder.

I know that there are the pseudo-intellectuals of our Canadian society, as in all societies, who feel that the Canadian population is uninformed, basically in the stone age in their thinking. With all due respect to this so-called elitist group, they have lost sight of what is basic to our Christian Judean philosophy of life. They have become, in most cases, sectarian humanists who feel that all rules, regulations and laws, regardless of how permissive they are, must not infringe on the rights of the individual even when it comes to upholding civil obedience in our society. The fact that everyone is doing something does not make it right. They, like the previous Government from 1968 to 1984, would allow minorities to impose their will on the majority. This is not what Canadians want. They want traditional values based on the sound Christian Judean philosophy to run this country.

Canadians want both leadership and laws from the House of Commons that will not force them to form vigilante groups, or to arm themselves in their homes and businesses in order to fight off the wave of violence and crime that is gripping our society. I can refer to the incidents in Calgary, Montreal and Ontario where people have felt the necessity to arm and defend themselves as a result of the actions taken by the criminal element. We must deal with this question definitively and immediately.