

say to the Solicitor General (Mr. Allmand) that we have not the liberty to do otherwise.

Mr. J. R. Ellis (Hastings): Mr. Speaker, my intervention in this report stage debate, particularly with regard to motion No. 13, will be very brief. I have not spoken to date, but the letters I have been receiving from my constituents indicate that I should put on record some of my feelings.

The amendment offered by the hon. member for Burnaby-Richmond-Delta (Mr. Reynolds) deserves the support of all members. Before commenting on that, I want to make a brief statement regarding the speech made by the hon. member for Hamilton-Wentworth (Mr. O'Sullivan) just before the dinner hour. I look at this very bright young man and realize that at half my age he has a maturity that belies his years. In my opinion the speech that he made shows a responsiveness that is not felt by members of the cabinet. I came here in 1972 at the same time as this young member. In 1973 we were faced with a vote. The history behind it is well known. It was also supposed to be a trial period in 1967. It was not a trial period. There had been no attempt to use it as a trial period. It was merely a façade.

When it was brought back in the second time in 1973, we were told this would be the second five years of a ten year trial period. We were asked to vote for it. The vote at that time was basically the same vote as we are faced with now. Anyone who voted for that bill was called an abolitionist. Tonight, voting for the same bill, one is termed a retentionist. I find that ironic and difficult.

In 1973, I voted with the cabinet on second reading to support the bill in principle. I did so with some reservation, on the promise by the Solicitor General (Mr. Allmand) that he would provide some protection. Instead what did he do? He tried to bootleg the bill through committee. I was disgusted with what I term a dishonest action on the part of the Solicitor General. On third reading I changed my vote and voted with what was then termed retentionist. The vote at that time carried. Frankly I do not have a great deal of hope that the vote tonight will carry. However, I am convinced more than ever that it is absolutely necessary to curb the growing crime rate in this country and to have something on which the people of Canada can rely. It is now three years since the Solicitor General promised he would carry out that bill. After all, he brought it forward. Now his hair shirt is bothering him.

The Solicitor General and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Basford) brought in a public relations package with a real fanfare. They termed it the peace and security package. Bill C-83 was a ripoff. There were more amendments to that bill than any other bill in the past.

Canada wants protection. I polled my riding, as I am sure many other members did. The figure happened to be 81.4 per cent in favour of retaining capital punishment. That is a little higher than the national average. Nonetheless that is the percentage of those in my constituency who want capital punishment retained.

I do not particularly think that capital punishment is a deterrent, but that does not matter. As far as I am concerned, we need to support the police at a time when crime is rising.

Capital Punishment

I was a member of the board of police commissioners in the city of Belleville for four years. I was instrumental in enlarging the police force there. After having hired some of those men I can say that it is a police force that stacks up against any other police force, and is finer than many, in any city of comparable size in Canada. I have a tremendous amount of respect for them and a high regard for and faith in their judgment. They, like many others, want to have the protection of capital punishment.

Like the hon. member who preceded me, I am going to be brief. I would have liked to have gone on at some length. However, there is one question I have to ask. Why does the government want to continue with this confrontation? It recently had a confrontation with the air traffic controllers. Not long ago it started a confrontation with the people of Canada as a result of the Anti-Inflation Board. Now there is the worst confrontation of all, the matter of capital punishment.

Over 75 per cent, possibly 80 per cent, of all Canadians want capital punishment. If between 15 and 20 million Canadians want capital punishment as opposed to the lives of eight, ten or a dozen individuals who are murderers, or maybe something quite a bit worse, our legislative priorities are out of whack. As far as I am concerned, if the people of Hastings will sleep a little better at night should capital punishment be retained, then this member will vote for capital punishment as often as he has a chance to do so.

● (2100)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The motion is in the name of the hon. member for Burnaby-Richmond-Delta (Mr. Reynolds). Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the said motion will please say yea.

Some hon. Members: Yea.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. Members: Nay.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to the order made on Tuesday, June 29, a recorded vote on the said motion stands deferred.

We shall now turn to mention Nos. 21 and 22 in the name of the name of the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin).

[*Translation*]

The House will now consider motions Nos. 21 and 22 standing in the name of the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin).

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière) moved:

Motion No. 21.

That Bill C-84, An Act to amend the Criminal Code in relation to the punishment for murder and certain other serious offences, be amended by deleting Clause 7.