

the facts as they are presented. The facts as they are presented indicate quite clearly that in no jurisdiction in the world, where there is an opportunity to compare, is capital punishment a deterrent. Therefore, as an individual I am in an embarrassing situation. I am now going to indicate how I hope to extricate myself from this position.

**An hon. Member:** What did Burke say?

**Mr. Reid:** I want to deal with Edmund Burke and John Stuart Mill. This, of course, is the argument which all Members of Parliament memorize as soon as they become members, that is, the Member of Parliament is not a delegate with specific instructions to do this or that. The Member of Parliament is elected to exercise leadership and judgment. He is here to interpose, by definition, his interpretation of the common good above those who have elected him. I accept that definition. I accepted that definition when I voted for the abolition of capital punishment the last time and for the partial ban which has just ended.

I understand there have been changes in the rules of the House of Commons in that second reading is no longer the approval in principle that it was before the rules were changed. The motion to commit a bill to committee for further study does not commit one to the principle of the bill. The real debate, or real conflict of opinion should come when the bill is returned from committee for third reading. I believe that any reasonable interpretation of the existing Standing Orders will bear out that interpretation. In any event, my credential for making that statement is that I was a member of the committee which made the recommendation to the House of Commons which was subsequently accepted. That was our interpretation.

I intend to vote for the bill at second reading. I want to say to the House that I shall not vote for the bill when it comes down at third reading unless there are provisions to provide for those individuals convicted of murder and sentenced to prison with no possibility of parole for at least three-quarters of the sentence. For the other one-quarter of the sentence attempts should be made by the parole board to integrate these people back into the society in which they will have to live. I do not say whether that period should be 25 years, 22 years or 20 years, but it must be for a significant portion of a person's lifespan. I also believe that it is a useless experiment if we do not also provide some means for the rehabilitation and re-education of that man and, since we have women's lib, that woman back into the mainstream of society. If that is not done it is likely that the person will end up committing another murder or some other crime within a short period of time.

I take a philosophical position on capital punishment and the question of abortion which I developed only after being elected to this House of Commons when both these issues were brought forward for decision. I have taken what can be termed a conservative position on both these issues. I only wish the Conservative party would follow my logic and accept it as well. My position, basically, is that human life is far too precious to be wasted. I am an optimist about the way in which human nature can improve itself and develop. Accordingly, I am opposed to

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abortion of any kind on the ground that once conception has taken place there is a potential human being who has every right to grow and develop.

I am opposed to capital punishment by the same logic. Anybody who has made a mistake, however heinous it may be in the way of murder, there is a possibility for something useful to come from that person. I hold this position very carefully, Mr. Speaker. I do not mention it to the House lightly. I wish those people who are retentionists would take that argument to heart and follow it through.

It has always been a matter of some shock and even surprise to me that those people who are in favour of abortion on demand are also in favour of the abolition of capital punishment, a position with a logic in which I can find no sense at all. The logical position is that one is either in favour of abortion on demand and capital punishment, or one takes the position which I have enunciated, that one is opposed to abortion on demand and also to capital punishment.

I have made my decision, Mr. Speaker. I had not made it before I began to speak. I will support this bill at second reading. I will support it at third reading only if it is suitably amended to provide for long sentences without parole until the end. Otherwise, I am inclined at this time to submit my judgment to my constituents and the people of Canada. They are looking for some sign or symbol that their interests are going to be considered. They must feel that even though it may not be effective, we in this House have moved to protect society from the criminal element.

**Mr. Knight:** I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Would the hon. member entertain a question?

**Mr. Reid:** Yes, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Knight:** Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that some members of this House had the good sense not to become either lawyers or professors, would the hon. member inform us what he means by a mandatory sentence of at least three-quarters of the period?

**Mr. Reid:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. It was my idea that if the proposal of long-term imprisonment without parole, which will be moved in committee by the hon. member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme) and the hon. member for York West (Mr. Fleming), were accepted by the committee and reported back to the House as an integral part of the bill, one might consider taking 20 of the 25-year period in which there would be no parole and five years to integrate the person back into society. That is my position.

• (1630)

But I do insist that for a significant part of this time in prison he would not be let out. If you have taken somebody out of society for a significant period of time, you must also provide him with some way of returning to society, of coming to grips with a society which he will not know, having spent 25 years away from it. It is senseless to put somebody away for 20 years or 25 years and then suddenly release him back into a society and environment of which he has no knowledge and over which he has no control.