

In addition, there were two attempts in recent weeks to take hostages. These, I presume, are now barely noticed in the B.C. penitentiary because they have become so commonplace. The technique in one case was to start a mattress fire in order to lure one or more guards into the cell. This method was used in an American prison last week and it ended in death for four people. We were more fortunate in B.C. because the penitentiary guards there have greater experience. They fought the fire from outside the cell and the inmates got the smoke, not the hostage they had expected.

Let me turn to another aspect of this proposal. I find it remarkable that no serious contingency plan has been prepared to take into account the instant effect of the passage into law of Bill C-84 which provides for 25 years' imprisonment, without hope, for those convicted of first-degree murder, and 15 years—possibly 10 or 20 years—without hope, for those found guilty of second-degree murder. To my mind, this trade-off for abolition is inhuman in its effects both on inmates and the staff. Perhaps the army is being prepared to enter our prisons and assist in dealing with the explosive situation there.

What is likely to happen is that we will return to the medieval practice, dropped 15 years ago, of caging men in tight security locking them in their cells for as long as 22 or 23 hours a day, and put an end to programs which might have rehabilitated a few of them? We are already seeing the abandonment of the practice of issuing day passes to prisoners with possibilities of rehabilitation, brought to an end because of careless handling of this valuable technique for rehabilitation. Yet the only real protection society has is the prospect that convicted criminals will return to the streets better than when they were sentenced, not worse, as is the case after long imprisonment with poor treatment services.

A number of abolitionists resort to the specious, yes, childish whimper, "If you favour capital punishment, you should be prepared to spring the trap." Mr. Speaker, by the same reasoning, those who would abolish it should become guards to look after desperate killers who have nothing to lose if they kill again in the course of a 25-year sentence.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mrs. Holt:** There are other stock lines which are used ad nauseam. One is that the death penalty is simply legalized murder. Mr. Speaker, that is as stupid as it would be to suggest that arrest and imprisonment are nothing more than legalized kidnapping or legalized slavery.

I agree with Von Den Haag that the application of the death penalty to those guilty of premeditated killing is the mark of a society which holds dear the life of its citizens. It is the society which holds life cheap which imposes weak penalties for taking life.

● (1200)

There is another point that must be raised in this debate, and that is that those who attempt murder, intend to kill. When statistics are used in this debate, few recognize the significant fact that there is a large statistic of people who fail in their attempt to murder, though they may succeed in maiming or injuring their victims for life. Take the case of the UBC and Florida criminologist, Dr. Charles Eich-

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man, 38, who beat his wife Cora, 48, almost to death. She had a good life ahead of her, having completed her education to the Ph. D. level in education. She had a considerable amount to contribute. She now lies in an institution in Regina. This was not murder, but partial murder, because in this institution she is unable to do anything for herself. She cannot even think. They use the word "vegetable". Eichman was given a ten-year sentence, and if when he comes out he succeeds in a subsequent murder attempt, this will be regarded as his first murder. When he comes out he will be the better prepared to finish the job because of the lessons he will have learned in prison.

There are two reasons why attempted murder is not murder. The first is because the killer was a bad shot, or did the job badly. The second is that medicine was too good; it saved the life. Attempted murders have quadrupled in Vancouver since modified capital punishment came into effect in 1968. In Canada it has more than doubled. Montreal statistics and general reports indicate that murder and attempted murder has increased as much as or more than in Vancouver.

Candy Knowles, 16, a constituent of mine who lived only a few blocks from my office, died at the hands of a man who once served time for attempted murder. This man's name is Edward Donald Bigelaie. He shot his girlfriend and knifed himself in Toronto in 1960. The girlfriend did not die that time. After 11 years in prison he was released on a pass and never returned. In Vancouver, as Mile Lewis, about age 30, he dated Candy Knowles. The girl's former boyfriend, a postman, was threatened by Lewis but wrote it off as idle talk. Something happened to stop the murder—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner):** Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but her allotted time has expired. She may continue with unanimous consent. Does the hon. member have unanimous consent?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mrs. Holt:** On September 20, 1974, the man who had attempted murder in Toronto succeeded in his second attempt. Candy Knowles bled to death from six bullets that he fired into her. Her cries for help were unheeded by people passing by.

The remarkable speech by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), which influenced so many members of this House, requires answering. He accuses the retentionists of engaging in "specious philosophy" in discussing the fact that if capital punishment saves one innocent life, it is worth while. He called it "compelling rhetoric". However, he set it aside because of a fatal flaw, namely, that we would be experimenting with human lives.

So much that the Prime Minister said in his speech could have been said by the retentionists. What he said could more appropriately apply to the abolitionist philosophy and I repeat it in that light. It is compelling rhetoric, but it contains a fatal flaw, namely, that the abolitionists in this House who want to remove the final and ultimate punishment would be experimenting with human lives. I repeat, the abolitionists, not the retentionists, are experimenting with human lives.