

*Criminal Code*

Canadian society, I believe that we should retain capital punishment for people like Dion or Marcotte, or for cases where there is no possibility of rehabilitation.

Mr. Speaker, how can the hon. member for Hochelaga (Mr. Pelletier) say that society has evolved and is so much better when these days, in 1964, in 1965, young people 17, 18 and 19 years old put bombs in garbage cans, endangering the lives of children, women and innocent people?

I ask myself then whether the present civilization is so much ahead of that of 500 or 600 years ago?

Has society really evolved when, during the last war, a democratic country, in the name of civilization and christianity, threw two atomic bombs and exterminated the population of two Japanese cities, Nagasaki and Hiroshima? Men, women, children, elderly people were wiped out by two atomic bombs. Do you think it does the United States credit to have dropped two atomic bombs in the world?

Mr. Speaker, I sincerely believe the United States will always bear a stigma for having used the atomic bomb, for having killed innocent people.

Has society so evolved, when we consider what is now going on in Indonesia and in Viet Nam, when we see people who want to kill women, children, in short, to wipe out the population in those places? Has civilization evolved so much? Are the murderers in those countries better than those in Canada?

Let us be logical and consider the facts.

I understand that people may have their opinion and I respect it, but when we receive petitions from police forces as, for instance, the metropolitan Toronto police, in favour of the retention of capital punishment, we must think it over seriously.

I have before me the text of a lecture delivered by the Reverend Father Kelly where he said:

St. Thomas said that in this life, punishment must be remedial rather than punitive.

Mr. Speaker, it is also for a remedial purpose that we say that capital punishment should be retained, in certain cases to prevent those people from repeating their crimes or else from committing crimes and murders as soon as they get out of jail or are released under the Parole Act.

Mr. Speaker, there is also the punitive aspect. A person who dies by hanging is not

[Mr. Caouette.]

punished for a long time since right after the hanging his punishment is over. He is no longer a danger to society, to our people.

Last night, the hon. member for Dollard (Mr. Goyer) told us that society had evolved in the sense that the member for Hochelaga outlined this afternoon. On the other hand, the hon. member for Charlevoix (Mr. Asselin) stated also last night that capital punishment should be retained.

Mr. Speaker, we will have to reconsider this, even if the resolution carries today or Monday. We will have to come back on this matter because, eventually, the government will have to reconsider abolition if ever it takes place, next week or next month.

Mr. Speaker, we must protect the Canadian society and not legislate without due reflection, and it is in that sense and for those reasons that we will vote against the resolution.

**Mr. Auguste Choquette (Lotbinière):** Mr. Speaker, what can a representative of la belle province say about the death penalty, if not once again to claim a special status?

In our confederation, the premier of Quebec and his Minister of Justice, Mr. Wagner, were the only provincial leaders, I believe, to proclaim their opinions loudly on this controversial subject.

Mr. Wagner even went as far as to ask for a national referendum, a preposterous idea that was quickly drowned in the stormy waters of public opinion.

Do the strong views of those public men have any influence on the population as a whole and especially the people of Quebec? Will they affect the stand to be taken by members here from that province, including this one, when the house is called upon to vote for the abolition or retention of the death penalty?

I rather believe that the utterances of the Quebec authorities merely reflect the general opinion of the citizens of that province, whose representatives in this house seem to favour—I would say the majority of them, perhaps a small majority—the retention of capital punishment.

I would even be so bold, Mr. Speaker, as to tell you about my optimism concerning the vote to be taken. I feel that the house will maintain the status quo and if, by any chance, it should pass the resolution as it appears on the order paper, my impression is that it would not be passed by the Senate.