

forget that prior to the 1967 legislation there were private members' bills introduced. There was a private member's bill introduced on one occasion at least when we went over the whole matter of capital punishment and decided in our own way where we stood and expressed our position. I feel that it is very important that we should do so once again at this time, because this is a debate which is not confined to this House but which is profoundly shaking Canadians and the Canadian conscience from one coast to the other.

● (2150)

I want to say at the outset that I believe the people on both sides of this debate are very sincere and earnest as to where they believe the truth to lie. But I want to say, also, that I was exceedingly grateful for the speech which was made by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang) this evening, because I felt that in that speech he did what should be done in a debate of this kind. He gave a very dispassionate, quiet outline of the situation as he saw it and he endeavoured to keep the temperature down. That is what we should try to do in this debate.

I feel that one of the things that has made it very difficult, both outside and inside the House, is the way in which emotions have been whipped up to the point where it has been practically impossible for many people to regard this matter in a logical way. It has been practically impossible for them even to consider facts, because we were unfortunate in that a few very horrible crimes occurred in this country at the time when this legislation was brought forward for consideration. With our usual Canadian way of doing things, although we got off to a slow start in considering the matter it did not take long before the hot-liners, the press and the media in general whipped up excitement about the matter until people were no longer able to look at it in the right context and perspective.

Certainly, I feel that as a result, in many parts of this country people got the idea that any time their little girl went up to the mailbox to post a letter, a rapist might be lurking behind any one of the trees between their home and the corner. Women got the idea that there was not a street in Canadian cities where it was safe for them to venture forth once darkness fell, and strong men got the idea that everyone was running round with weapons and lying in ambush for them.

I know that we have had an excess of crime in recent years. Canada is not the only place where crime has increased, crimes of all kinds and particularly crimes of violence; but I know also that it has not been proven anywhere by figures that the rate of murder has increased in this country or in any other country. I know that what the Minister of Justice said tonight was accurate according to the best research that has been done, that there is no proof that capital punishment acts as a deterrent.

I know that these things are true from the facts and figures that have been worked out painfully and slowly by the researchers. Consequently, I was grateful tonight when the Minister of Justice brought this debate to a quiet consideration of facts, figures and alternatives before us as we think about how best to protect society from people

who have committed murder. After all, that is the question at which we are looking.

I do not think it helps one little bit to quote the words of Jesus Christ who was, above all, a man of peace, good will and forgiveness, in such a way as to shut out any hope of mercy on this earth for a person who has committed murder or any hope of just or civilized treatment on the part of his fellow humans. I do not think that is helpful in this debate, nor does it help to pick out some of the particularly spectacular crimes and act as though these were the general rule and imply that there were many more of them than we hear about. As I say, a climate of quiet reasonableness is the one in which we should be discussing this matter.

May I call it ten o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

NATIONAL PARKS—BANFF AND JASPER—LACK OF ACCOMMODATION FOR SUMMER EMPLOYEES—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON HOUSING POLICY

Mr. Joe Clark (Rocky Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I am going to discuss tonight an accommodation crisis in two townsites which are virtually completely controlled by the federal government, a contempt for democratic rights which is a continuing affront to this Parliament, and a warning of the way in which power can be abused.

On March 26 I asked the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien) for an outline of the government's housing policy in the townsites of Banff and Jasper. You must understand that because they are located within national parks, Banff and Jasper have virtually no power to govern themselves. If the people who live there want a pothole repaired, they have to go to Ottawa for authority. One of the critical matters which Ottawa controls is the disposition of building lots and building permits.

While the state may have no business in the bedrooms of the nation, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development personally controls and decides on the number of bedrooms there will be in Banff and Jasper. For several years there have been too few beds and too little accommodation to meet the needs of the people who have to live there because they work there. In summer, that shortage becomes more acute because of the summer help needed to meet the growing flow of tourists, drawn in part by the deliberate tourist advertising of the federal government.

When I asked what the minister was doing, he replied that he was reviewing the matter. Some days later he tabled in committee a statement with two major proposals: first, the response to the summer crisis would be to let local businessmen provide temporary accommodation with