

your right to say it. And that is not the attitude of those armchair socialists to my left in the New Democratic Party. The hon. member for Saskatoon East (Mr. Ogle) rose in a throe of smug pomposity, and told us that we do not know about these things. He knows about them, he has talked to people, he has been there and understands the situation.

An hon. Member: You sound a bit agitated.

Mr. Crosby: Well, I can tell that smug and pompous member of parliament that I have been there too. Five years in legal aid, the defence of murder case after murder case—

An hon. Member: All of which you lost.

Mr. Crosby: I walked through the jails, Mr. Speaker, where the guards were afraid to go in the cell with the accused person. So I walked the walk and I can talk the talk, and I can tell you that I am in favour of this matter going to a committee, I am in favour of the reinstatement of capital punishment, and I defy anyone to deny my right to say that in this House or anywhere else.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An hon. Member: Who is denying your right to speak? You are speaking now.

Mr. Crosby: Mr. Speaker, in Canada it is one man, one vote, and every Canadian has a right to their view on capital punishment. Be they smug clergymen, be they dishwashers in the lowest restaurant, they have their right to their view on capital punishment. It has been proved time and time again that the majority of Canadians support the reinstatement of capital punishment. To deny the expression of that view in this House is to deny our democracy, and I am not listening to any empty rhetoric—

An hon. Member: Who is denying anything?

Mr. Crosby:—in this House that places it on some other basis, that says a man or a woman does not have the right to hold a view, the right to express that view and to have it recognized in this House.

An hon. Member: Have you been in some other debate?

Mr. Crosby: We have heard talk about the Third World, and I am interested in that. I am concerned with the plight of the children in the Third World, about those who do not receive enough to eat, who are starving and dying every day. We know about that, but in Canada we have starvation, we have problems. If you do not believe that, come with me and I will show them to you in the heart of the city of Halifax, and I suspect in the heart of Saskatoon as well. There are these problems, but we cannot deal with every problem in the world. If we were to pray to the Almighty, we would pray for the knowledge, wisdom and capacity to allow us to change what we can change and not waste our time attempting to change what cannot be changed by us.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Capital Punishment

Mr. Crosby: I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that one of the things we can change is the law with respect to capital punishment, if that is the desire of the people of Canada. We have heard statistics throughout this debate. The Solicitor General (Mr. Kaplan), whom I would otherwise admire, has said that there is evidence that capital punishment is not a deterrent to murder. Well, I can tell him through you, Mr. Speaker, that he does not know that. You do not count it on just the—

Mr. Kaplan: I did not say that.

Mr. Crosby:—simple statistics of the murders that have occurred. We do not know what evil lurks in the hearts of men.

An hon. Member: The Shadow knows.

Mr. Crosby: We do not know who is deterred from what action. No one can stand in this House and say, "Look, I have the answer", I can tell the Solicitor General that he does not have the answer. I do not want to be mean to him, but several months ago in the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs the Solicitor General described the prison population. I asked him at that time to remove from the prison population those offenders—those convicted criminals—who were beyond rehabilitation, who were dangerous even in the confines of the prison, to other inmates and to the guards. I said that in Dorchester penitentiary that situation existed then. In the same smug, arrogant way that he is telling this House about capital punishment and the fact it is not a deterrent to murder, he told me that that was not necessary, that the best course of action was to keep those prisoners in the prison population and that this would lead to their rehabilitation. Several months and one murder later he was back in this House saying that they are making a list of the most dangerous offenders in our prison population and they are going to isolate them. The trouble is, Mr. Speaker, that was one murder later.

Having said that, I recognize, as I think all members do, that there are many views on this subject. There are people who are opposed and there are people who support the restoration of capital punishment. I think something that has been totally lacking in this debate, particularly among the members of the New Democratic Party who have spoken, is respect for the different views on the subject. I would have thought that that would prevail in this House during the debate—respect for different views.

I have here a memorandum from the Canadian Council of Churches referring to the work of the task force on capital punishment that involved a great many societies in Canada. I respect their view. I understand what they mean. I understand their concern. I can see why they want capital punishment to remain abolished in Canada. I respect their view. But I expect them to respect my view, and my view is that, as a member of Parliament, I must represent the people who elected me. I intend to do that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!