

measure. Attitudes can be changed, and even if our prisons often fail to rehabilitate, the system has proven successful now and then. We do not kill someone to teach him how to live. Where the debate takes a more serious turn is when we consider the protection of society and the risk presented by repeat offenders. In the majority of cases the most dangerous individuals are precisely those whom an honest judge will never sentence to death.

Mr. Speaker, I am against restoring capital punishment, but I want to make it clear to the people of Abitibi and to the Government that I look upon murder as a very serious crime and that federal and provincial government authorities must do everything possible to reduce and prevent murders, and to protect each and every one of us.

I fail to understand Canadians and Members of this House who want to reinstate capital punishment. Surely there are among them some who are so afraid of death that they would prefer a quick and sudden death to death at a set time for which we would have time to get prepared, like those who will be sentenced to hang if capital punishment is restored.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, a court system cannot be based on vengeance. And I conclude: We do not kill someone to teach him how to live. I will be voting against the reinstatement of the death penalty.

● (0010)

[English]

**Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great honour that I take part in this debate tonight. It is a crucial one in the life of this particular Parliament. It is also one which separates individual Members from their Party disciplines and policies.

When the Parliamentary Secretary introduced the motion a short three months ago, he quoted from Edmund Burke, an 18th century politician and philosopher who outlined many of the principles by which we govern today. The Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Turner), in his speech immediately following, also quoted the same lines, so too did my Leader, the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) when he spoke to the House on that first day.

Last Monday night, the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) used the same arguments, as did many Hon. Members throughout the course of the debate. I would like to repeat those words because I believe they describe the decision-making process we have been going through and hopefully will complete sometime within the next hour. Edmund Burke said: "Your representative owes you not his industry only but his judgment. He betrays instead of serving you if he sacrifices it to your opinion". What Mr. Burke was saying was that, as a Member of Parliament, I owe the people of Thunder Bay—Atikokan more than just my time and effort. I owe them more than just the opportunity to have their words repeated in this Chamber. I owe them my judgment and my well-thought out, reasonable conclusions. That I believe is why they elected me

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as a Member of Parliament in 1984. Like Edmund Burke, I believe it is up to us as parliamentarians to present the complete picture, not just opinions or gut feelings. It is my job as a Member of Parliament to listen to the voices of my constituents, weigh the facts and offer my judgment.

My job does not end there, Mr. Speaker. The scientist sees an object and ponders the obvious. The object is broken down and analysed. From the individual parts, the scientist distils the essence of that object. Therefore, the scientist presents the reality of the object and not just the immediate appearance. In this debate on the return of capital punishment, it is our job to be like the scientist.

My constituents in the riding of Thunder Bay—Atikokan, like the constituents of other Members of this House, have a problem. Murder and crimes of violence are occurring in our society. The quick solution many people see is to kill the murderers, then others will not be killed. Therefore, in their minds, the problem is solved. But the problem cannot be solved that easily. Killing one murderer does not prevent another from committing the same crime. Even Charles Dickens, citing the statistics of 167 persons who were under the sentence of death at that time, including 164 who had witnessed the public execution, had wondered whether it was a craving for notoriety which produced the incentive and impulse to commit murder.

State execution does not help the family of the murder victim come to terms with its loss. Even more important, it does not bring the victim back to life. The problem, therefore, has not been solved. As parliamentarians, as social scientists, if you will, we must distil this problem in our society beyond the obvious gut solution. We must break it down, distil its component parts and reach a final solution, one which will actually work.

Let me ask you, Mr. Speaker, what causes murderers to commit their crimes? Do we understand the pressures which result in crimes of passion, or anger, or poverty or desperation? Even in the case of those premeditated, planned murders, is death the only solution for the prevention of future murders? Can we rehabilitate? Is death the only way to protect society from a murderer repeating the crime? Instead of looking at the obvious, we should be spending our time in this Chamber looking at the parts and answering the questions I have outlined. My constituents agree. They have told me they believe it is honourable to explore the reasons for crime and the means to eliminate it beyond the obvious solutions.

Jennifer Tett of South Gillies, Ontario, said: "Why not turn our energies to confronting the causes of increased crime? Killing someone for revenge or public safety is not an answer. Eliminating the underlying reasons for the violent crime is where debate belongs". How can we as a national community create the conditions where murder is not encouraged, where it is not tolerated? How can we create a society where the taking of life is a thing of the past? Perhaps in my community we can start by taking violent newscasts from Detroit off our cable television and replacing it with those of communities to the