

Mr. Gilbert: Yes, we need Mr. Nixon.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Which Nixon?

Mr. Stevens: Isn't it odd that the government is so obsessed with the leader of another country that even during debate on this important issue it is that leader's name that is the first name to flash into their minds when any question comes up that ministers may feel in the slightest is a little embarrassing or damaging to their position on this issue. Let me reiterate what I was saying. The fact is that the government under the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) lost support in the country partly due to the fact that it did not maintain a law and order type of government during the five years it was in power.

Mr. Speaker, my point is simply that it is wrong for any government to come into this House and pretend that somehow it is a retentionist government, slip a bill through, and then at committee stage go to the lengths that the Solicitor General did to attempt to amend that bill into an abolitionist bill. I believe his true intentions, the intentions of the Prime Minister and of the government were shown clearly through those attempted actions of the Solicitor General. That is why I feel every member of the House should commend the hon. member for Louis-Hébert for introducing the amendment that we are considering today—because, bear in mind, she has done so as a member of the party that is supporting a government that is really a 100 per cent abolitionist government. I believe it is important that we first refer to the two main aspects of the hon. member's amendment. She is suggesting that the crimes punishable by death be extended to include "a male person, where such person causes the death of a female person while committing or attempting to commit rape."

During an earlier speech by the hon. member for Broadview, a member of the NDP, in which he spoke on this amendment I was most startled—

Mr. Gilbert: On this amendment?

Mr. Stevens: Yes.

Mr. Gilbert: I did not speak on this amendment.

Mr. Stevens: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I may correct my mistake. I had the right party, but the wrong riding. I was referring to the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin).

Mr. Gilbert: You probably have the wrong ideas too, but go ahead.

Mr. Stevens: During his speech on this amendment I was most startled to hear him comment that he felt that somehow the death penalty was not a deterrent. I was startled because, surely, the argument as to whether the death penalty is or is not a deterrent could be used with respect to any penalty, be it imprisonment or a fine. With equal weight you could argue that the fact that people are fined for speeding on the highway, or jailed for robbing banks is not a deterrent, so why have either penalty?

I would suggest it is wrong to feel that you can distinguish between a deterrent in one sense, as long as it is not taking a life in the form of capital punishment, but in the other sense it is a deterrent if one is penalized by a fine or

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imprisonment. But let me be a little more specific, because I find this question of whether there is a deterrent is really one of colouring. During our consideration of Bill C-132, which deals with foreign ownership takeovers in this country, at committee stage I was rather amused, to put it mildly, to hear NDP representatives on the committee propose two amendments with respect to infractions that might ensue under that bill if it is enacted. Both of those amendments were offered by the NDP because they said they would be a better deterrent against an offence being committed. In both cases their remedy was, granted, not capital punishment but the raising of the fine from \$5,000 to \$100,000, and in the second case raising the fine from \$10,000 to \$100,000 with possible imprisonment from six months to one year. In that case the representatives of the NDP had no hesitation in indicating that this penalty was a deterrent at which all people in business would shudder, if it was ever accepted. But they now suggest, as the hon. member for Greenwood has done today, that the ultimate deterrent—you can lose no more than your life—is not a deterrent.

Having thrown out that general observation concerning the point raised by the hon. member for Greenwood, I owe it to this House to refer to the specific figures on murder which were published by Statistics Canada in 1971. They show what has transpired with respect to the number of murders reported by the police to Statistics Canada, and homicidal deaths, on a per 100,000 of population basis. In 1954, murders in Canada reported to Statistics Canada were one per 100,000, and yet by 1971—I point out each year in the interim it is almost consistently up—the rate had reached 2.2 per 100,000. Under the column "Homicidal deaths," for the year 1954, the rate is shown at 1.2 per 100,000, yet for 1971 the rate was 2.4 per 100,000—an increase of exactly 100 per cent. Mr. Speaker, how can those who say that the death penalty is no deterrent justify their stand when the facts themselves show that the death rate in this country, as far as homicidal death or murder is concerned, has gone up?

● (1630)

The second thing that alarmed me, if it did not dismay me, was the fact that the hon. member for Greenwood said words to the effect that the amendment before us which proposes the death penalty in cases of rape where a death has occurred should not be taken too seriously. Often, he suggested, the girl provokes or even invites the man in this situation. He seemed to pass this off rather lightly, and suggested that we must bear in mind that in many cases the poor, unfortunate rape victim wants to vindicate herself. How, after her death, she is able to do this I am at a loss to know. How can the person who is raped and dead, as she would be before this amendment would have effect, vindicate herself? Be that as it may, I should like to refer to the figures because it is so convenient to be emotional but ignore the facts.

If we look at the Statistics Canada "Murder Statistics, 1961-1970" publication we find they have a separate heading under "Murder incidents and victims". One of these headings is "Sexual assault and rape". We find that between 1961 and 1970 there were 86 victims of rape involving females. Of that number—and I believe this is significant—21 were young girls under the age of 15 years;