

Criminal Code

nations of the world and that what we do in the direction of progress is bound to have some effect and influence elsewhere among nations. I ask hon. members, even if they have some little doubt, to support this resolution and see to it that we give the best possible example in this connection.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I must say a few words about the suggestion that this question be sent to a committee. In my opinion there is no need for this to be done. Personally I have no difficulty in arriving at a decision and I imagine this applies to most hon. members. However, if hon. members really believe that they need more information, then the suggestion that this question be sent to a committee for study is one that should be followed. I hope they will not think this necessary and will pass the resolution as it is.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Henri Latulippe (Compton-Frontenac): Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Lewis: Yes.

Mr. Latulippe: I should like to put a question to the hon. member which is also directed to other hon. members, like the hon. gentleman from Quebec West for instance.

Does the hon. member recognize that all authority comes from God? Should we not imitate God, punish evil and do justice?

Is it not the right and the duty of society to punish evil and protect itself, even though this requires that criminals must pay with their lives their debts to society, which is duty bound to see that Divine justice is respected?

Mr. Sauv : There is only one God.

● (5:50 p.m.)

[*English*]

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, may I say very simply to the hon. member as seriously as he asked the question that in all the teaching I received about God and about the duties of all men to God the central point was that mercy and charity in the human breast and human mind are the most obvious and most essential characteristics of a religious and godly life. This is as true for society collectively as it is for every individual in society. Second, all the teaching I received on the subject has taught me that it is not right for me to state certain ideas and seek refuge in the assertion that they come from God but that it is much more important for me, as it

[*Mr. Lewis.*]

is for all members in this house, to use the intelligence and the conscience which God gave us to arrive at the conclusion at which we are intended to arrive as human beings exercising our own wills.

[*Translation*]

Mr. L.-P. Neveu (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, in this important debate, I am happy to have the privilege of expressing my views before such a distinguished audience.

I do not pretend to be the strongest light in the debate but I am happy to bring to it my humble contribution.

I know that my hon. colleagues on both sides of the house are making very well documented speeches which will help to better explore that very controversial question.

I heard from all corners of the house excellent speeches dealing objectively with that matter, trying to find a solution as well as to exchange ideas to get light which we hope will be strong and brilliant.

However, someone, on the side of the party to which I belong, particularly impressed me this afternoon, and that is the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Marchand), whose speech was very intelligent, clear, to the point, truly magnificent.

I am pleased to add, in passing, that this man represents not only an asset for our party, but for politics in general which I consider to be the science of the common good.

We noticed that the minister advanced convincing arguments which will probably influence several of us who did not have any definite opinion. We saw that, as in the past, our colleague stands out again with his intelligence, his effectiveness, his honesty and his greatness.

On the combined harmony of those three factors depends the emotional and mental equilibrium of individuals.

Like many others, I believed that it was necessary to punish, that it was necessary to apply the death penalty. I was emotionally sensitive to crimes of all kinds which were committed. I also wanted that the method of punishment be adopted. But after thinking it over a little, after studying the human being instead of the human soul, I could not help but reconsider my decision because, as someone said earlier, to ask for punishment, members of society at large and those in charge of the administration of justice should feel above reproach. It is extremely difficult to