

### *Capital Punishment*

As I said at the outset, the vast majority of murders in Canada are family murders. They very often arise in connection with alcohol or drug abuse. They are impulsive murders done at a time of stress.

Basically what we need to do is provide more services to assist families. Certainly unemployment puts a lot of stress on families. While the Government appears to be very content with a 9 per cent unemployment rate even now five years after the recession, I certainly am not and the unemployed are not. There are other stresses on families too, including housing. All these matters should be addressed. Probably there should be much more concentration. Although we are a prosperous country, we do have families who are finding life very difficult economically and otherwise. We need to look at all our policies that are designed to reduce sources of stress and strain for families.

A faster response and better service in case of domestic quarrels is very important. We have all heard from police that they consider themselves more at risk going into a family quarrel situation than in many other situations. As a civilized country, we have to be prepared to put some money into training and resources in view of the fact that the vast majority of murders are family murders. As well, where the link comes in with organized crime is that so often these family murders are associated with drug abuse. We know who the people are who have a vested interest in encouraging drug abuse because there is a large profit motive for them, even if they are destroying families in the process.

● (1340)

**Mr. Allmand:** Mr. Speaker, is the Hon. Member aware of a recent study completed in the month of April by Professor Kenneth Avio of the University of Victoria? The study found that when a Government resolves to execute its criminals, those who die come disproportionately from the ranks of the poor, the minorities and the powerless. After studying 440 capital murder cases which occurred in Canada between 1926 and 1957, he came to the conclusion that even if capital punishment were justified in principle, something which it is not, he says, the spectre of its uneven application would haunt all of us. I wonder if the Hon. Member would comment on the findings of Professor Avio.

**Miss Nicholson (Trinity):** Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of that particular study, but I am aware of other studies which have reached the same conclusion. For instance, there was one edited by Thorsten Sellin and published by Harper & Rowe in 1966 which showed that capital punishment was disproportionately inflicted on black offenders during the period 1930 to 1965. There was another study done by Wolfgang, a comparison of the executed and the commuted among admissions to death row. This New York study done in 1962 showed that blacks convicted of murder were three times less likely to have death sentences commuted than white offenders convicted of the same offence.

I would suggest that this is not simply because of racism but because of low educational levels and poverty. These are the people who cannot afford to buy high-priced legal help or, as someone has said, to pay for the very high-priced legal fictions that enable the rich and in some cases the crime bosses to walk away from crime.

**Mr. Friesen:** M. Speaker, in her previous response to another Hon. Member, the Hon. Member for Trinity (Miss Nicholson) said that the Government was content with the 9 per cent unemployment rate. When has the Government ever expressed that?

**Miss Nicholson (Trinity):** Mr. Speaker, it was as late as this morning in question time when the Minister of State for Finance (Mr. Hockin) was congratulating himself on the Government's performance. I have yet to hear any Minister, when mentioning the unemployment rate in the House, express any conviction on the need to bring it down further. If the Hon. Member has heard such statements and I have missed them, I would be very pleased to have him tell me.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Questions and comments are now terminated but I will allow a short question to be put by the Hon. Member for Surrey—White Rock—North Delta (Mr. Friesen).

**Mr. Friesen:** Mr. Speaker, was that not an expression of pleasure in the improvement it brought to those who are now employed rather than unemployed as a result of the economic policies of the previous Government?

**Miss Nicholson (Trinity):** Mr. Speaker, under other circumstances, I have great regard for the Hon. Member. However, for him to try to introduce this kind of thing into a debate of this kind is regrettable.

I repeat that we are into the fifth year of recovery and I do not think that a 9 per cent unemployment rate in the fifth year of recovery is anything of which to be proud.

**Mr. W. R. Bud Jardine (Northumberland—Miramichi):** Mr. Speaker, I present my views on this motion with some mixed emotions. While I feel it is important to speak out, I find it unfortunate that it has become necessary to do so.

I begin by saying that I am a very proud Canadian. It has been my privilege along with my family to have lived in five of our provinces, to have travelled the length and breadth of our country, visiting each and every one of our provinces and the Northwest Territories and Yukon.

As well, I have lived in three other countries and I have lived in three of the southern States of the United States. I lived there in the late 1950s when the black citizens of that country could not sit on the park benches, could not use public water fountains and could not sit at the front of the bus. It was indeed a sad time in the history of that great nation. I personally felt offended by that visible slight to others, by man's inhumanity to man, and I felt proud to be a Canadian. I was