

*Amendments Respecting Death Sentence*

votes on whether a measure is to be passed or rejected, this majority decision should stand. This subject was thoroughly and fairly debated only a year and a half ago and was fairly voted upon. Because some people did not like the result, the subject matter of the bill was brought before us again, although many serious and pressing social and economic problems have not yet come up for debate. If this procedure is to be followed, a swapping game might take place in the house. It would be much better to vote against one's conscience and get on to other things that are equally important and pressing.

I object strongly to the bill itself because it seems to me to be a silly compromise where-by the death penalty is considered to be sometimes right and sometimes wrong. We have heard a great deal from those who object to the harshness of the ultimate punishment. In fact those who put forward this argument go so far as to object to punishment as such. This train of thought has always been a mystery to me, since it seems very obvious that human beings must be checked in their wrongdoing to other human beings, or our progress in civilization will be halted.

I disagree with those who say that this bill represents a step forward in our society. If a child is allowed to go unchecked, his demands upon the people around him will become completely unbearable. I agree that it would be a lovely world if everybody could have everything he or she wanted, including good looks, beauty and brains, but there are some things that even this government cannot give to everyone. Until we attain this perfect world, there will be envy and jealousy, and these emotions will continue to be directed toward other people, according to the violence of the personalities involved. Our society must have some rules to check these extreme actions. I hope we can reach the stage when no one will need to steal or want to steal and when no one will want to murder, but as long as these crimes are committed, society must show its objection to them.

I do not agree that punishment is not a deterrent. It certainly is for me, and I am a human being. This opinion has been expressed by many, many people to whom I have spoken on this subject. I object strongly and completely to the theory that abolition of the death penalty constitutes social progress. I like progress, I like speed and I like change in some things, but I do not want to be

[Mrs. Wadds.]

prevented from enjoying a walk by myself in our countryside or on our city streets. It is surely reassuring to see a well-groomed policeman to remind citizens and visitors from other lands that we have law and order, and that we have people here to protect it. It is a reminder that laws must be obeyed and that human beings will be protected as they go about their work and their pleasure.

It is surely equally distressing to see these law keepers having to go about in pairs. This is a shocking reminder that we know there are people in society who will use violence to remove the enforcers of law, and that there are people determined to break our laws as they personally see fit or wish to do. I agree with those people who consider that the murderers of policemen must be punished in the most severe possible way, and that the death penalty must be retained for those who commit this crime, but this very admission overlooks the repeated argument that the death penalty is not a deterrent. Surely if this bill has any reason for being presented, it is to protect policemen and guards and to lessen the number of murders of these men. No one can disagree with this aim. But if the death penalty is to be a deterrent to hardened, determined criminals who will even go so far as to murder policemen and guards, then surely it must be admitted that it is some deterrent to the less hardened and the less determined murderers who only want to commit easier murders on old, defenceless people or children who have no weapons, knowledge, experience or training in how to defend themselves.

● (10:00 p.m.)

Surely, Mr. Speaker, the whole point of this debate is to arrive at fewer murders, to improve our control of murder. If the death penalty is accepted as a means of improving our control of murder against one group of citizens, how can it not be an improvement in our control of murder against another group of citizens? Our whole democratic process is based on equal respect for human beings. If we are to retain the death penalty for those who murder policemen and guards because they are so important in maintaining law and order and respect for law and order, why should we not give such important people special priority in all things? Where do we draw the line? They are important, it is quite true. By this line of reasoning, they have a right to first and immediate attention from doctors, dentists, butchers, bakers, everyone who can keep them strong and in