

Criminal Code

do so. May I just put the resolution on record again:

Resolved, that it is expedient to introduce a measure to amend the Criminal Code for the purposes of

(a) abolishing the death penalty in respect of all offences under that Act;

(b) substituting a mandatory sentence of life imprisonment in these cases where the death penalty is now mandatory; and

(c) providing that no person upon whom a mandatory sentence of life imprisonment is imposed shall be released from imprisonment without the prior approval of the Governor in Council.

In clause (a) this resolution advocates abolition of the death penalty in respect of all offences under the code. Mr. Speaker, I wish firmly to point out that it is not the wish of the majority of the Canadian people that the death penalty be abolished for treason. It is not the wish of the majority of the Canadian people that the death penalty be abolished for premeditated murder. It is not the wish of the majority of the Canadian people that the death penalty be abolished for murders committed by armed robbers who have, of course, premeditated these crimes that terminate in fatal results. I point out that there is a rash of these crimes, especially bank robberies, of an intensity in our cities and metropolitan areas the like of which we have never witnessed before. My constituents did not send me here to make it easier for armed robbers to murder bank clerks and their public clientele by lightening the penalty for crimes of this kind already provided for in the statutes.

Mr. Cowan: Would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Alkenbrack: After I have finished. Neither did my constituents send me here to make things easier for the contract killer, the mercenary journeyman killer who goes from place to place, the hired tool of the underworld who kills for a price. These men are the servants of a Mafia narcotics racket of the underworld, and of the perpetrators of planned bankruptcies and arson. It is evident that these contract killings are increasing in number. I would think that of late this government has had enough experience with the underworld, to warrant the preservation of capital punishment to use against the underworld whenever needed.

Neither do the people of Canada wish us to abolish capital punishment to make it easier for the cop killer, another special class of murderer, the one who hates our policemen. Our police forces at all levels across the country have requested by letter and by

petition that this parliament maintain capital punishment. I have had several telegrams, as I am sure have all hon. members, the latest of which comes from a Quebec police force totalling 6,000 men.

What about the protection of our prison guards who will be in a very precarious and vulnerable position at the hands of murderers in our penitentiaries, who would then have nothing to lose if they murdered their guards? I have statistics here regarding this particular matter, but I do not think it is necessary to put them on record. Surely hon. members will not act here in such a way as to jeopardize the lives of the policemen and prison guards of Canada.

I remind hon. members that just retribution is already provided for in the statutes for these other types of murders, often perpetrated by armed robbers robbing defenceless neighbourhood shopkeepers in our urban areas, for those who attack and murder elderly people in our urban areas, and elderly farmers on our rural back concessions,—pillaging and murdering because they think these people have money and valuables hidden in their homes. No, Mr. Speaker; for these reasons do not ask me to support clause (a) as it is presently worded.

Now, what about clause (b)? It asks that we substitute a mandatory sentence of life imprisonment for those cases where the death penalty is now mandatory. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this covers and applies to the remarks that I have just made, because clause (b) is asking for a reduction in the severity of the retribution. Yes, we can actually say that clause (b) is asking that a generous measure of impunity be granted the perpetrators of the crimes that I have just generally outlined under clause (a). No, Mr. Speaker, for the above reasons I cannot support clause (b).

• (7:50 p.m.)

Now let us turn to clause (c). It provides that none of these murderers, or no person upon whom a mandatory sentence of life imprisonment is imposed, shall be released without the prior approval of the governor in council. Now, Mr. Speaker, you would expect this final clause, if it had any regard for the safety of persons and property in Canada, to read that no person upon whom the mandatory sentence of life imprisonment is imposed for these capital types of crime would ever be released from prison. But no. In spite of the fact that we have a good, astute, firm, yet conciliatory National Parole Board, here we