

Capital Punishment

In calling for a vote against this motion, I say that we have to recognize at the same time the concern of Canadians about violent crime and the link with it of possible imperfections in our criminal justice system and make a commitment to review that system and be ready to make improvements in it so that there is effective prevention of crime. If that is not possible, that there is then swift arrest, trial and meaningful punishment by way of imprisonment for those found guilty.

I take seriously the views of those that are different from myself on this basic question. I say to Members of this House that we must recall, in the closing minutes of this debate, that here it has long been established that we do our best for our constituents and for our country when we exercise our best judgment on fundamental questions of the kind we are dealing with today, the question of whether the death penalty should be restored.

Here, Mr. Speaker, is the opportunity for all of us to bring together the best of heart and mind, of conscience and judgment. Let us listen to the voices deep within that call upon us to strive to do the best for our country and its people.

I call upon Members of this House to reject this motion. In rejecting this motion, it will mean striving for the best in our society and for ourselves. Surely we can do no less. I say that the Order calls upon us to vote. We cannot put off the decision any longer. Let us listen to those voices within us. Let us listen to those voices calling upon us to do the best for ourselves and our country. Let us join together to vote to defeat this motion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Carlo Rossi (Bourassa): Mr. Speaker, before we conclude this debate, I would like to say that I believe Hon. Members had an opportunity to express their views.

Before we vote, Mr. Speaker, I think that all Members should personally search their conscience and, should they vote according to their conscience, knowing my colleagues, I am confident that they will all say no to capital punishment. I am convinced of it.

Some Hon. members: Hear, Hear!

Mr. Rossi: Mr. Speaker, I believe that as good and conscientious Members, all of us in this House should have a unanimous vote: No to capital punishment!

[*English*]

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. In order to facilitate the vote tonight and to make it as clear as possible, the Hon. Members of the House will know that we are first going to vote on a motion moved by the Hon. Member for Yorkton—Melville (Mr. Nystrom) seconded by the Hon. Member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson). I am suggesting that you seek the unanimous consent of the House to withdraw that motion so the only vote we will have today is on the main motion.

• (0100)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to allow the Hon. Member to withdraw the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Amendment (Mr. Nystrom) withdrawn.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 57, it is my duty to interrupt these proceedings and put every question necessary to dispose of the motion now before the House.

The question is on the motion of Mr. Mazankowski, seconded by Mr. Lewis.

[*English*]

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All those in favour please say yea.

Some Hon. Members: Yea.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All those opposed please say nay.

Some Hon. Members: Nay.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five Members having risen:

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Call in the Members.

• (0120)

And the division bells having rung:

Mr. Speaker: Before reading the question to the House, and having regard to the special nature of this vote, it would be my intention to proceed with the taking of the division by rows, as was done on Monday, June 8, 1987, when the House disposed of a previous amendment.

Therefore, as is customary, Hon. Members in favour of the motion will be asked to indicate their position first, followed by Members who are opposed.

[*Translation*]

I would ask all Hon. Members in the first row, on my right, who support the motion to rise together. The clerk will call their names. He will start with the Hon. Member closest to the Chair, who will resume his seat once his or her name has been called and recorded.

[*English*]

When the taking of names of Hon. Members in the first row to my right has been completed, I will ask Members in the second, third, fourth, and fifth rows on my right to proceed in a similar manner.