

The Address—Mr. Jelinek

only be successful at the Olympics or in any sporting event when athletic excellence by a few is part and parcel of general fitness for everyone. I know of no better incentive for such a program than the Olympic games themselves.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to change to yet another topic of immediate importance, that of capital punishment. Although I will vote on this matter as the majority of people in my riding would have me vote, my own strong, personal views can best be summed up in this radio editorial given by Mr. Robert Holiday last week on CHFI in Toronto, following a recent incident in that city:

Another policeman is dead, another woman widowed, another son fatherless, another bill to abolish capital punishment, another provision that killers of policeman be hanged.

The single death of a policeman is not likely to make any difference to the majority of the Members of Parliament who will be voting on the capital punishment legislation.

There are in this country too many people that believe hanging for murder is cruel and inhuman punishment for a man or woman convicted of such a crime. These people, it appears, have no regard for the victim or victim's family. That argument, however, I will leave for another time.

What makes this new five-year ban before parliament so meaningless and what makes me bristle, is the attitude of the federal cabinet during the five-year ban which has just expired.

There was a provision for capital punishment to be levied against convicted killers of policemen and prison guards, but was a man so convicted during this five years ever hanged? He was not.

The new legislation prepared for this new twenty-ninth parliament has a similar provision.

But of what use has this provision if the federal cabinet during the next five years refuses to recognize the will of parliament and again, as it has in the past, vetoes that legislation and commutes the death sentence imposed on the policeman or prison guard killer? Men and women hyped by speed and armed with weapons walk our streets with violence in their minds and murder in their hearts. You and I walk these same streets unarmed, protected only by the men recruited to keep law and order and when these men give their lives while protecting our lives and our property, who pays? Does the law of the land demand payment? Yes, it does.

Who then should have the right to abrogate that law? The federal cabinet, in an aberration for which there is no sensible reason and which cannot be justified, does and has exercised that right repeatedly. It is time to re-examine this masochistic trait. We teach people that the age of maturity is 18. If a person after he or she reaches that age chooses to become an operative outside of the mainstream of society and is convicted of killing a man who maintains the law of the land, you cannot justify commutation after you attempt to justify life for this miserable human.

You are doing an injustice to those who live within the law and to those who maintain it. A killer has no right to inflict his presence on this society after he has been sentenced to death for the murder of a policeman. For if he lives, he is living proof that society has no desire to protect itself or protect those hired to protect lives and property. To let him live makes a mockery of the law, makes a mockery of those who enacted the legislation and those who elected the enactors of the legislation.

• (1800)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger): Order, please. It being six o'clock, I do now leave the chair until eight o'clock.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

[Mr. Jelinek.]

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

Mr. Terry Grier (Toronto-Lakeshore): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a great privilege to rise in this House at this time to make my maiden speech and to speak for the first time on behalf of the voters of the constituency of Toronto-Lakeshore whom I have the honour to represent. The sense of occasion is for me enhanced by my recollection that my grandfather sat in this House some years ago for the constituency of Welland. He was elected in the years 1925, 1926 and 1930 and to this day George Pettit remains the only Conservative to have won the constituency of Welland since the year 1896. I only hope that some of his obvious ability to engage and retain the confidence of his electors will have passed on to my generation.

As a teacher of political science, I have had occasion in recent years to refer to the importance of the office of Speaker and the skill of the present incumbent. In extending my congratulations to the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker, I can only say that since coming here my views of their importance and skill have been reinforced.

Since the election, many commentators have sought to explain what took place and to analyse the collective motivation of the voters on that occasion. Tonight I simply want to add my observations and say that, in my judgment, for many voters, both in my constituency and across the country, the election was a collective search for fairness. I believe that people in great numbers felt that somehow the social and economic system pressed upon them unfairly. Many people were defeatist and apathetic about the possibility of effecting substantial change. Successive government failures, both by Liberal governments and by their Conservative predecessors, rendered voters cynical and indifferent to the possibility of change. I suggest, aside from any partisanship, that such an attitude is not good. We, as parliamentarians, must produce and show the voters in this country that the political process is capable of solid achievement.

In a number of areas this sense of unfairness and a collective groping for a fairer system manifested itself. Wage and salaried employees, and these constitute the great majority of our labour force, knew almost instinctively that the tax system in Canada was pressing upon them most heavily while at the same time other groups enjoyed tax allowances and concessions of no visible social utility, and that the revenues produced by the tax system were in large part being funnelled to individuals or enterprises better off than the average citizen.

Canadians across the country in this election campaign knew instinctively that they were paying more than their fair share of Canada's taxes and that they were, and indeed still are, getting less than their fair share in return. There is nothing much very new about this, but in an age of slogans about equity and justice it sticks in the craw. Moreover, it erodes people's sense of willingness to contribute of themselves and of their resources to the collective well-being of the country. When that willingness to contribute to a country's well-being is worn away, a nation's strength is sapped. For that reason, as well as for the reason of equity, I believe, as my leader pointed out on so many occasions during the campaign, that this parlia-