

# CANADIAN CIVIL LIBERTIES ASSOCIATION

## A STATEMENT OF CONSCIENCE

ON

# CAPITAL PUNISHMENT



Capital punishment is an exercise in senseless violence.

The killing of even the worst killers will gain nothing for society that could not be gained by less violent means, for example, by imprisonment.

Scores of studies in many countries over long periods of time fail to show that capital punishment reduces the number of murders.

This is also true of the killing of policemen. A 25-year comparison of more than 80 similar American cities showed that the death penalty made little difference to the rate of policemen killed. In fact, in places using the death penalty, the rate of police homicides was slightly higher.

We share the grief of those whose dear ones have been murdered. We share the anxiety about the innocent victims of brutal crimes. But understandable distress must not divert us from facing facts.

The death penalty cannot help yesterday's victims and it is unlikely to save tomorrow's targets. What it is certain to accomplish, however, is the legitimization of useless killing. That is a result we must strive to avoid.

The Canadian Civil Liberties Association and the undersigned concerned citizens\* call upon the Parliament of Canada, once and for all, to abolish capital punishment in this country.

**The Honourable Emmett H. Hall, former Justice, Supreme Court of Canada; National Honorary President, Canadian Civil Liberties Association**

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**The Honourable Leonard Evans, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Province of Manitoba**

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**Donna Hill, former Secretary, Joint Labour Committee for Human Rights**

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**Julian Major, Executive Vice-President, Canadian Labour Congress**

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**Dr. W. Gunther Plaut, Rabbi, Holy Blossom Temple of Toronto**

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**Judge Robert Sauvé, Chairman, Legal Services Commission of Quebec**

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**Lynn R. Williams, Director, District 6, United Steelworkers of America**

**Gordon Wilson, International Representative, United Auto Workers**

Help to further the aims of this statement.

- 1) Write a supporting letter to the Federal Minister of Justice, Ron Basford, and to your local M.P., House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario.
- 2) Make a financial contribution to offset the cost of this campaign. (Cheques should be made payable to the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, 229 Yonge St., Ste. 403, Toronto M5B 1N9)

Please cut along dotted line



Canadian Civil Liberties Assoc.,  
229 Yonge St. Ste. 403,  
Toronto M5B 1N9

Enclosed is my contribution of \$ .....

Name .....  
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\* Although the signatories to this statement were recruited by the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, they include people from a wide variety of constituencies across Canada. Since there was not enough time to enlist the support of organizations, all of the signatories are participating as individuals. Affiliations are listed for identification only.