



Question Period

Susan Kadis, M.P., Thornhill

November 21, 2007

Mrs. Susan Kadis (Thornhill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, does the justice minister believe that the death penalty is always wrong?

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is very clear what the law is in Canada and there are certainly no plans to change that law.

Mrs. Susan Kadis (Thornhill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for at least 30 years, Canadian governments have had a policy of seeking clemency for Canadians on death row in foreign countries. Why has the government decided to ignore that long-standing policy? What credibility do we now have in fighting for Canadians who are facing the death penalty in places like China and Ethiopia when the government says it is okay in Montana and Mississippi?

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to hear that the Liberals now want us to stand up on behalf of human rights in China. This is certainly a departure from some of their previous comments, but we will have a look at individual cases. Again, we want to send a message out to anyone who is in the business of being a mass murderer or a multiple murderer in a democratic country where there is a rule of law that they cannot necessarily count on the assistance of the Canadian government.