

# Capital punishment - Jupp yup, Abbott nix

By SID RODAWAY  
Times Staff Writer

Mississauga North Liberal MP Tony Abbott may be opposed to capital punishment but he told a gathering of small independent businessmen Monday night that he would support the calling of a national referendum on the death penalty if he felt the public wanted it.

"So be it. If the public will is for a referendum then I will support one," he told 80 members of the Mississauga Businessmen's Society. He was responding to the angry calls from several members for a return to hanging for capital crimes.

The society had invited both Abbott and Mississauga North Progressive Conservative candidate Alex Jupp to speak after their regular dinner meeting at

Mavroux Restaurant and Tavern on Dixie Road.

Jupp made it clear that he supported the reinstatement of capital punishment. "We must be responsible for the consequences of our own acts and that includes the responsibility that those who take a life should lose the right to their own life," he said.

Abbott replied during a subsequent question period he is not "sentimental" about the issue. "I have opposed it because I never believed capital punishment is much of a deterrent, if any.

"Well if we can't hang them, we'll shoot them," responded one angered member of the audience.

Abbott said that a free vote had been staged in Parliament and all party leaders, including the Conservative's Joe Clark, had voted along with the

majority for abolition of capital punishment.

Abbott denied allegations from one businessman that some of those voting for abolition had been "whipped into it" by the party.

But Jupp agreed that

the 1976 vote was not truly a free vote because it was a government bill under debate and all of the Liberal cabinet was obliged to vote for it.

On other issues Jupp attacked the Liberal government record of spending,

claiming that the annual interest on the \$50 billion federal debt had risen from \$62 per capita in 1968 to \$278 per capita in 1978.

Abbott argued that Jupp had exaggerated Canada's economic problems.