

*Capital Punishment*

have gotten together again in order to filibuster any discussion on the subject of—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** Order. That is not a point of order. The Hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General of Canada has the floor.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Tardif:** Mr. Speaker, this was hardly a point of order—

[*English*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** Order, please. Would Hon. Members resume their seats, please?

**Mr. de Corneille:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to ask how we can discuss that as a point of order when in fact it has insulted the Members on this side who are debating this subject with all sincerity.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** Order. The Chair has ruled that the point raised by the Hon. Member for Peterborough (Mr. Domm) was not a point of order, and the Chair invites the Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General of Canada to continue his remarks.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Tardif:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I must remind my hon. friends of the Opposition that if they only spend five minutes on the subject, it is likely because they have nothing to say. For that matter, in case they are interested, I wonder why there are only six of them present in the House now.

With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I shall continue my remarks.

As I was saying, capital punishment was abolished in 1976 in this country, which means that we can look back to seven years of statistical data. What, then, is the current murder rate? If Canada had witnessed a disproportionate increase in the murder rate since the abolition of capital punishment, I could understand why some members want one more debate on this issue, but what are really the facts? I refer Hon. Members to "*Murder Statistics*", a booklet published by Statistics Canada in August 1979. Tables I and II of this document provide full detailed information on the number of murders committed over the last few years. Table I deals with murder incidents, while Table II deals with individual murder cases. The incidents refer to the circumstances under which a murder was committed, irrespective of the number of the victims. On the other hand, individual murder cases found in Table II refer to the total number of murder victims per year. Well, in each case, the murder rate in 1978 was the lowest since 1974, that is, two years before capital punishment was abolished. I should add, for the information of my hon. friends opposite, that the

1978 data are the latest available. Now, let us have a look at these data.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** Order! I regret but I have to inform the Hon. Member that the time allotted to him has expired.

**Mr. Pierre Gimaïel (Lac-Saint-Jean):** Mr. Speaker, I simply wish to take a few minutes to point out to what extent the issue now before us may appear to be a fundamental choice for society.

**An Hon. Member:** The question!

**Mr. Gimaïel:** Of course, when I say a fundamental choice, I mean that the fact that a society may or may not have capital punishment is a measure of its progressiveness.

**An Hon. Member:** Filibuster!

**Mr. Gimaïel:** The Hon. Members who spoke before me, Mr. Speaker, have shown beyond a reasonable doubt that there has been a steady progress, not only in Canada but in almost all of the democratic societies of the world, and this goes to show how much enlightenment is part of our everyday life.

I listened earlier to the Hon. Member for Simcoe-South (Mr. Stewart), who would have capital punishment reinstated. We are reminded that the same Hon. Member had suggested earlier that the Durham Report should have been implemented in Canada, in other words that there should be one official language in Canada.

[*English*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** Order, please. The Hon. Member who was given the floor to make a speech should not be interrupted.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gimaïel:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I was saying, we are faced with the same kind of bigotry, because indeed there are people in our society who like to promote confrontation. They will not face the facts. We have two languages in this country, because some of the people have French as their mother tongue while others have English. If there are criminals in our society, it is because of deficiencies in society. Why should society resort to the same tools as were used by murderers to wreak vengeance on them? What benefit can society derive from seeking vengeance, Mr. Speaker? None at all, and if there is one thing—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin):** Order, please. Pursuant to Standing Order 24(2), it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings.