[*Translation*]

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, I have all the statistics here. I have about 10 pages of statistics and I have a few other books from which I could quote. As we all know, Mr. Speaker, it all depends which side we want to look at and what point in time we want to consider. As I said before we can approach this from just about any angle. Those in favour of capital punishment are saying that the number of crimes has increased. Those against are saying the number has not increased. The point is, we have to know what periods the statistics are supposed to cover and how they are interpreted.

Mr. Speaker, what we are really talking about is human lives, and if we have to consider a human life in terms of statistics, I repeat, that is very sad. Fifteen years after the last debate on the subject, we still have no other alternatives, no other solutions to the problem, and here we are debating on whether to reinstate capital punishment, while in other areas we have made fantastic progress. Mr. Speaker, we can use statistics to prove that capital punishment does not act as a deterrent, while those who are in favour of capital punishment can use them to prove the death penalty does help reduce the crime rate. I think, however, we should consider the context from which these figures were taken.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: One last question by the Hon. Member for Montreal—Sainte-Marie (Mr. Malépart).

Mr. Malépart: Mr. Speaker, I would like to know whether my colleague from Saint-Léonard—Anjou (Mr. Gagliano) shares my view that this debate is useless and will not do anything to prevent young criminals from committing further offences in future no matter how the vote turns out. Does the Hon. Member agree with me that we should first deal with three issues if we really want to reduce the criminal rate and the number of murders? First we ought to spend months and months debating the establishment of full employment policies for the benefit of poor people, programs to find jobs for everybody. Second we ought to introduce legislation to ban all violence on TV, including NHL telecasts where we see hockey games which promote violence among young people. Third, we ought to be here to undertake a real reform of our penal system, a real reform of the judicial system. Personally I think that such debates would make it easier for us to reach the objectives we have in mind, they would be more practical than simply deciding to take someone's life.

Mr. Gagliano: Precisely, Mr. Speaker, this was the whole thrust, if you will, of the remarks I made earlier concerning capital punishment. I think that this debate, instead of channelling all our energies . . . I said at the outset that when I first came here, my first day as a new Member in Ottawa, the first question put to me by a news reporter was whether I was for or against the death penalty. As a new Member I was not asked whether I had any suggestions to make to solve the unemployment problem or something else. So instead of putting so much energy to decide whether capital punishment should or should not be restored, I fully agree with the Hon.

Member for Montreal—Sainte-Marie (Mr. Malépart) that we should solve the unemployment program.

I say we must take a closer look at our rehabilitation system. We must have a closer look at it. People are often allowed to go free and they go on to commit other crimes. We should have a look at that, and at our judicial system as well. The penitentiary system we have now was probably designed hundreds of years ago. Do we really need the same system, or should we have a new one to meet the needs of today's society?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Would the House give unanimous consent to allow the Hon. Member for Duvernay (Mr. Della Noce) to ask a short question?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Della Noce: Thank you for your patience, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I want to say the Hon. Member for Saint-Léonard—Anjou (Mr. Gagliano) is to be commended, but I do not agree with him at all. As far as figures are concerned, he does not know what he is talking about, although I agree that figures can be made to say what we want them to say. However, his figures do not prove a thing. And I wonder whether the Hon. Member knows the difference between first-degree murder and unpremeditated murder. When he talks about possible errors, I do not agree, and perhaps I could give an example. If I go on the highway and I am driving too fast, and the policeman fails to stop me, are we going to stop writing speeding tickets because the policeman is no good at his job? Maybe we should get another policeman. I wonder whether the Hon. Member has considered that if there is the possibility of a judicial error, something he has failed to prove and will not be able to prove, even if he takes Marshall and Coffin as examples . . . Coffin is one of Senator Hébert's favorites and Marshall is a guy who perjured himself and anyway, he was not given a death sentence. I wonder whether in the case of a judicial error we should not consider revising our laws instead of ignoring the principle of justice altogether. I want to ask the Hon. Member . . . Even if the Hon. Member for Montreal—Sainte-Marie (Mr. Malépart) was referring to the consequences for the future, and there will be consequences, because before, the annual figure for people sentenced to 25 years in our penitentiaries was five, while today, this has risen to nearly 60, I wonder whether in 10 years' time, we will see that three-quarters of our prison population with 25 year sentences. I think it would be interesting to pursue the matter. My question to the Hon. Member is this: Would we not be better off reforming our laws, instead of giving up altogether on the principle of justice which is something to which Canadians are entitled? Surely, we cannot deal with crime without sentencing the criminal?

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, the difference between the Hon. Member for Duvernay and myself is that we both agree—and I said as much in my speech—that we must take a closer look at our judicial or penal system. A closer look at this aspect is definitely in order. That is the point I think should be debated here. That is where the problem lies. How does killing