

Point of Order—Mr. Clark

is untrue and that stands on the record. He has not until this point risen to remove that inaccuracy, that untrue statement. I would ask him on a point of order, in the interest of maintaining order in the House of Commons, to stand in his place now and indicate that the accusation which he made against the hon. member for Okanagan-Similkameen is untrue.

Madam Speaker: Just before the minister rises, I want to repeat that I accept statements of all hon. members and that the House accepts statements of all hon. members. One member says that this is his perception of the fact and another member says that he has a different perception of the fact. This is perfectly legitimate in debate. I would ask the minister not to debate this, but only to reply to the question asked in the way he now sees fit.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Madam Speaker, in law, as people who have had a chance to finish law school will know, there is an old principle which says that in case of any divergence between the French and English version of a text, the version in the language used by the speaker should prevail. Thus, when I spoke in the House that evening, I said on page 18296, according to the French version of *Hansard*—since I spoke in French—I said, and I quote:

Monsieur le président, je pense que le député a mal saisi le sens de la question. Il n'était certainement pas à son fauteuil lorsque le vote a été tenu. Il faudrait le lui demander.

The English version quoted by the member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) reads as follows, and I quote:

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member misunderstood the point of order raised. He was certainly not on the floor of the House when the division was called.

[*Translation*]

There is a difference between "fauteuil" and "floor". When I said the member was not in his seat when the question was put—which is exactly what the member for Yukon said earlier—it was because the member was talking to another member at that member's seat. So he is corroborating exactly what I said on the evening of June 9, and since my statement has been corroborated by the member for Yukon, it is up to the member who raised a point of order to withdraw his statement.

Madam Speaker: If I understand correctly, the French text already reads like the corrected version the hon. member for Okanagan-Similkameen is demanding, if he is, in fact, in a position to do so.

Mr. Clark: Madam Speaker—

Madam Speaker: The Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Clark: Madam Speaker, I am trying to give the President of the Privy Council a chance to correct the record,

because, in quoting his own words, he accused the member for Okanagan-Similkameen of not being in his seat when the question was put, although the member was in his seat.

Some hon. Members: Certainly not!

[*English*]

Mr. Clark: There may well be, Madam Speaker—if I may have some quiet from the Member of Parliament who embraces communist principles when speaking for the Liberal Party in Canada.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Epp: He wasn't the only one.

Mr. Clark: Perhaps he was not the only one. The Prime Minister points to himself.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: There may well be a problem of translation. In English it does say that the member was not on the floor. In French it says the member was not in his seat. That, as I recall, was the language that was used by the President of the Privy Council. In fact, the Member of Parliament for Okanagan-Similkameen was in his seat when the question was put.

• (1520)

Some hon. Members: No, no!

Mr. Clark: He then moved, he then moved.

Some hon. Members: No, no!

Mr. Clark: He then moved, during the voting, to speak with one of his colleagues, the hon. member for Prince George-Bulkley Valley (Mr. McCuish). He was in his seat.

Some hon. Members: He was not in his seat and you know it.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Clark: The facts are quite simple, Madam Speaker. In English, the member for Okanagan-Similkameen stands accused of not being on the floor. In French, the member for Okanagan-Similkameen stands accused of not being in his seat. In fact, he was on the floor and he was in his seat at the time the question was put. He then moved and was back into his seat again when the opportunity came for him to vote.

It would clarify all of these matters if the President of the Privy Council would accept the word—I see that the Prime Minister is walking out on a parliamentary question—of the member for Okanagan-Similkameen and correct the record in French and correct the record in English.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker—