

Routine Proceedings

NAYS

Members

nil/aucun

• (1720)

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I declare the motion carried.

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, point of order. I have already taken part in such a debate several times. I would just like to reiterate what I have already said: I find this a very bad precedent that we are setting in our political system, a political institution of British origin.

[English]

I think it is a bad move to have voted to give permission to a member to introduce a bill for first reading. I understand the reason it was done. I am not questioning their reason, I cannot question it, but I think it is a bad precedent. It is very bad, in our British parliamentary system, to vote to give permission to a member to introduce a bill because some day there will be bills that may not be acceptable to a lot of people and we could use this precedent, and those that were created before, to stop a member from even considering the possibility of discussing something that may be absolutely unacceptable to some members of the House.

I, as one who believes in freedom of thought and freedom of discussion, believes that a member should not require permission to present any bill for first reading. I think that there are other ways of doing what they are trying to do today. I leave it to them to decide how to do it, but I object very much and I will always object to having a vote in order to decide whether we will give permission to a member to introduce a bill for first reading, not in the British parliamentary system.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. With respect, I have listened to my hon. colleague's intervention and I appreciate the point that he is making. He said that he thought it was inappropriate that members not permit the introduction of a bill at the first stage. Yet, I recall that he just voted against the introduction of a bill at first stage, the goods and services bill.

Perhaps he was referring to the private members' bills only, but I am somewhat confused as to the point he was making since he voted against first reading a few moments ago.

Mr. Prud'homme: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is correct. I said that I object to such a vote on private members' bills and I thank my hon. colleague very much for obliging me to clarify my statement. Yes, that has always been my position in the House of Commons concerning private members' bills. As for government bills, that is another matter, and I thank the hon. member for clarifying the situation.

As a matter of fact, a few minutes ago I had a long discussion with the officers of the table to make sure that I have been consistent with the past because, as you know, I am getting old and I may lack some memory. But I have been consistent. I have always stood the way I just did for private members' bills.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Kamloops has a few minutes to explain the bill.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I would appreciate a few moments to explain the intent of the bill. This bill, as hon. members would recognize, refers back to 1215 when King John, a very arrogant and insensitive king, had imposed a very horrible tax time and time again on the people. The people spoke up and objected to these excessive levels of taxation that King John had introduced.

It is for that reason, particularly in light of today's discussion, that I introduce this private members' bill to declare June 15, which was the day the Magna Carta was declared in 1215, as an appropriate gesture. I appreciate that with these bells the Liberals have at least assisted the New Democratic Party in sending a message to this government, that it too is imposing a dastardly, mean, cruel tax on the people of this country and it time that we send the government a very clear message.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Riis: Just as the people said they would not stand for it during the time of King John, we are saying that the people of Canada will not stand for it at this time either.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!