

Privilege

House. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that you might want to do that.

Finally, as I suggested earlier, the offence in question is probably a contempt rather than a breach of privilege since I do not think that voting twice is in our traditional codified limits or list of banned practices. Why would it be since it is so unthinkable?

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have a chance to intervene in this point of privilege.

The accusation I do not understand at all. Early this morning, having heard the comments of the government Whip last night, I looked at *Hansard* and read it clearly. I noticed on both occasions to which he refers that when the actual vote was taken it is very clear who voted in support of the motion to declare a Magna Carta day and who voted against it.

Not only is it clear in *Hansard*, which of course is our official record, but the Speaker indicated some concern and the member for Regina—Lumsden got to his feet to clarify the situation. He stated: "I did not rise on the first vote." That was the vote in favour of the motion.

"I did not rise on the first vote," he repeats.

Third, he stated: "I did not vote the first time."

In other words on three different occasions, in case there was any element of a doubt, he rose and indicated that he did not vote in the affirmative.

I cannot imagine how much clearer one could get, both in terms of how the vote is recorded and on three occasions the comments of the hon. member.

Turning to the second point regarding the hon. member for Windsor—St. Clair, again, at the time the Speaker asked: "I would like to ask the hon. member for Windsor—St. Clair whether he is opposed or in favour of this bill." He asks that because there had been some heckling from the government side at the time in terms of whether he had voted in favour or not.

The hon. member for Windsor—St. Clair then rose in the House and said, again, to clarify very, very clearly: "I thought it was really quite clear", he said. "I stood fully erect against the vote."

Again, it was recorded in *Hansard* that he voted against the motion and stated clearly in the House that the hon. member voted against the motion.

Then the Acting Speaker of the day said: "That is all I wanted to know." It was clarified.

Normally, we do not have to stand up and clarify how we vote as a response to some heckling from the government members. But because of the seriousness of the vote, because it was looking at the pros and cons, presumably, of declaring June 15 Magna Carta day for Canada, recognizing that this was a day in our history when a very cruel king imposed taxes that were unfair, and so on, the people had risen against that particular initiative. Whether that was an appropriate thing to do or not, it encouraged the members to take their—

• (1540)

Mr. Speaker: I heard the hon. member with his usual learned appreciation of history yesterday. The issue here is not whether the king had risen; it is whether the members have risen. I would ask the hon. member to keep to the point.

Mr. Riis: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do take this matter very seriously. I suspect my hon. colleagues take it seriously as well.

I simply want to conclude by saying that yesterday we went to extraordinary lengths to ensure the voting practice of certain members both in terms of how *Hansard* records it, as it always does, but, more appropriate, the fact that the two hon. members in question actually stood in the House and on a number of occasions made it very clear how they had voted.

[Translation]

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few comments regarding the suggestion that some members of this House might have voted twice yesterday, which is against the rules and, in my opinion, shows a certain—

[English]

I guess the better word to use is the word "contempt" for the House, if they did in fact vote twice.

I have some difficulties with the argument put forward by my colleague on the government side. I must share with him some of my concerns.