

Mr. Pagtakhan: Mr. Chairman, I thought I should rise on a question of privilege. If the Government intends to invoke closure, it will be a betrayal of democracy and a reflection of the pusillanimity of the will of the people.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Chairman, I want to seek clarification from the Deputy Government House Leader. He indicates that there were some packages or some offers that were made. I have been in the House of Commons all day. When not here, I have been watching on the monitors in the lobby. I do not recall hearing a presentation put to the House of Commons. Perhaps I am wrong. I would ask the Deputy Government House Leader, if he did make an offer to the House of Commons, what that offer was?

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Chairman, during the meetings that I had with my hon. friend we reached agreement on certain terms. Those terms were drafted, copies were made available to my hon. friend and were made available to the Liberal Party. My hon. friend knows very well that his Party was unable to agree to those terms. They are here and they are available.

I do not think we have to negotiate on the floor of the House. Those negotiations took place with my hon. colleagues opposite. I say without equivocation that the offers were made, the offers were drafted. We believe the offers would have been acceptable to allow for exactly what my hon. friends wanted, that is the tabling of the amendments, the putting of the amendments, the divisions on a recorded basis so that everyone would know who stood for what. Unfortunately, they were not taken up.

The Deputy Chairman: I must say that if there are going to be further negotiations in regard to this matter, I wish it would be done behind the curtain. There are other Members who would like to speak on Clause 2. If there are to be further negotiations I would hope it would be done behind the curtain.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Chairman, I want to make it perfectly clear there will not be any further negotiations. I want to say that I take some offence. We have had some discussions. I thought these discussions were in confidence. Obviously they were not.

I guess what I am saying is that any suggestion that there might be some overtures made by the Government to the Opposition, after the Deputy House Leader stood in the House and indicated that there were attempts made earlier when in fact we had some discussions but I

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

was not aware these were public discussions—I guess they are now—

Mr. McDermid: You asked.

Mr. Riis: He stood up in his place and said these offers had been made.

Mr. McDermid: Had they?

Mr. Riis: In the House.

The Deputy Chairman: Order, please. I would hope that further negotiations, if there are going to be negotiations, would take place behind the curtain.

Mr. Riis: There will not be any further negotiations.

• (2220)

Mr. Clark ((Brandon—Souris): Mr. Chairman—

Mr. Langdon: Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order. I would simply like to direct a question to the Deputy House Leader. There are a total of 21 amendments which we would like to be able to present to the House and have voted—

Mr. Deputy Chairman: I am afraid that that is debate. The Hon. Member will have an opportunity to present his case later.

Mr. Langdon: Let me finish my point of order, Mr. Chairman. My point of order is simply to inquire of the House Leader if he is in fact saying it is not possible for us to put such amendments because he intends for the debate to remain on Clause 2 throughout the entire time.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: I recognize the Hon. Member for Brandon—Souris on debate.

Mr. Clark (Brandon—Souris): Mr. Chairman, I am happy to have an opportunity to address the issue of free trade once again, and I do so primarily as a western Canadian with a special interest in agriculture.

I had a chance to speak on this matter before the election, but there have of course been changes in circumstances since the election. It has been a most unusual election and in fact a very historic election. There is probably one other election in Canadian history that has been fought on a single issue to the extent that this one has, and that was the election of 1917.

The fact that this election was fought on a single issue to the extent it was and the fact that the majority is as