

but extremely disturbed at his comments this time, particularly when he talked about the fact that he did not know what was going on in the negotiations and that he was concerned they were being conducted in private. I wonder if the Hon. Member has ever negotiated anything himself in his career, either as a Parliamentarian or otherwise? I would be interested to know that. I certainly have and I can never remember a case where I have carried on those negotiations in public.

In addition, I know the Hon. Member's Party has a close association with the Canadian Labour Congress. I wonder if the Hon. Member could tell us if he knows of any member of the Canadian Labour Congress who advocates carrying on its negotiations in public? I would be interested in knowing that. I hope the Hon. Member will tell us. Perhaps he could identify those members of the trade union movement who advocate carrying on negotiations with employers in a public forum.

The Hon. Member knows that when trade unions negotiate, they do it confidentially. They do it in private. When they arrive at the result, they announce it to their membership. It becomes public knowledge after the membership has had a chance to vote on it. The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), the Minister for International Trade (Miss Carney) and the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) have indicated that that is exactly the process which will happen here as well. I would like to know from the Hon. Member if he has ever negotiated anything in his life. Second, can he tell us what trade unions which support the New Democratic Party advocate carrying on their negotiations with employers in public?

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I assume the question was put in a way that does not deserve a direct response because the answer is very obvious. One of the major differences with negotiating a contract, working conditions or wages is that the negotiators have the full confidence of those they represent.

● (1700)

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Riis: In other words, the negotiators of the contract are chosen because of their proven ability in the field. They are chosen because of their expertise and because they have the confidence of the people they represent, both on the management side as well as on the labour side. The point I was making earlier is that such is not the case in Canada today. Canadians do not have confidence in the Government of Canada to negotiate a good deal for them. Hon. Members need only ask the cattlemen in my constituency if they believe the Government of the day is representing their best interests. I can tell Hon. Members what their response will be. It will be no.

As I indicated in my speech, I was on the telephone as late as today speaking with a number of large forest operators. I asked them if they know what is going on in terms of these free trade talks. I asked them whether or not they have confidence in the Government, and they told me that they do not have any confidence in the Government. I did not bother contacting the

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number of small operators who have been betrayed by the Government. The small operators, and I am talking about small sawmill operators, perhaps those with 40 or 50 employees, were never informed or included. In fact, they were not even considered as part of the council, either nationally or in British Columbia. I say that they were not involved; they were not consulted. They were not involved in the process in any meaningful way.

In closing, the least the Government could have ensured was that all forest operators in the softwood industry, particularly in those areas which will be impacted by this decision, were made aware of the procedures so that they could be exempted. I refer particularly to those small companies that pay exorbitant stumpage rates under the small business program in the province of British Columbia. In a sense, they have been betrayed.

Mr. Blenkarn: Mr. Speaker, I think the House Leader of the New Democratic Party ought to be advised that we have had three motions of confidence in this session. With respect to each motion the Government received the confidence of the House, which is the confidence of the people in our system. When the Hon. Member is talking to cattle operators, brewery people, chicken producers and timber operators in his riding, I hope that he will let them have some confidence in Canada. I hope he will give them the confidence that they will have access to a market 10 times larger than they presently have, which will make them more prosperous.

That is what the Canadian Chamber of Commerce has said, as well as the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. That is what the Canadian Manufacturers Association has said. That is what every economic group in Canada has been saying, from the Economic Council of Canada down to the Macdonald Commission Report which, as he knows, was a Liberal report. Why would the Hon. Member not have confidence in Canada? Why would the New Democratic Party not have confidence in Canada? Why would the Hon. Member not talk to his people and give them some confidence? Perhaps if he gave them some confidence he would not have the unemployment that he has in his constituency.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, granted, there have been three votes of confidence in this session. However, the people of Canada will have an opportunity in 1988 to indicate whether or not they have confidence in this Government. As the polls indicate today, the people of Canada do not have confidence in the Hon. Member or in his Government. However, I will leave that point for another time.

The Hon. Member asked whether or not the suppliers and manufacturers—Canadian firms—want access to the United States market. We have access to the United States market in softwood. We have access to the United States market in shakes and shingles. The Americans have stopped access to these markets. What has the Government of the Hon. Member done about it? How has the Government reacted? We have access which is why these groups say: "What does free trade