

Oral Questions

Mr. Trudeau: When the hon. member talks about loopholes, there are no loopholes when the guidelines themselves indicate that they apply to certain persons and not others. If the hon. member had made himself familiar with the guidelines, he would have seen that indeed we proceeded through several stages and covered an increasing number of people. The people who hold judicial or quasi-judicial offices have not been included. I understand the House would like to see them included. I am indicating that the government is prepared to go that route. We thought it would be nice to have the opposition debate the bill which will be given first reading today, to give their opinions on it, and then we would know how far they are prepared to go regarding guidelines for members of parliament themselves.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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TRADE**GATT NEGOTIATIONS ON AGRICULTURAL ISSUES**

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar) Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council in his capacity to answer questions respecting our trade negotiations. Mr. Robert Strauss, the United States negotiator to the GATT negotiations now taking place in Geneva, has said there will be no agreement at the talks unless considerable movement on farm issue comes into being in the next few weeks. As far as the minister knows, have there been any improvements or movement on farm issues in terms of the main negotiating countries? If there has been movement, what implications do they hold for Canadian agriculture?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, despite what Mr. Strauss has stated, I believe it is premature to forecast the pattern of proposals and counterproposals. There is dissatisfaction not only with the agricultural offers which have been made; there is dissatisfaction in fisheries and other related fields. In a sense, we are at a prenegotiating state. Recently at the meeting in Washington there was an understanding and the timetable was agreed to during which the period of June 30 to July 10 would be used intensively by the participants in order to develop a negotiating framework which might be put to the summit in Bonn later in the month.

Mr. Murta: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Deputy Prime Minister can be more specific on this question. One very important farm commodity is pork. Pork producers and their associations want greater access to international markets, especially the Japanese market. Since Japan tabled its offer list some time ago, can the minister inform the House if pork is on that list?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I do not have the list, but I can tell the hon. member that there has been considerable dissatisfaction expressed by quite a number of participants in the negotiations at the Japanese offer. Certainly, in the case of

[Mr. Clark.]

Canada, it is not expected that we would be able to maintain our offer list to Japan or our offer list generally unless Japan improved its performance, which we hope will take place.

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POST OFFICE**PROPOSED CLOSURE OF POST OFFICE IN NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**

Mr. Wally Firth (Northwest Territories): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Postmaster General. It concerns the likely closure of the post office on Vale Island at Hay River in the Northwest Territories. The previous Postmaster General made some effort to prevent the closing of this post office. Can the Postmaster General report anything on this matter to the House? Specifically, will he do whatever he can to keep this post office open? It is an essential service to a few hundred people on Vale Island, including two or three government departments and a Crown corporation, namely, the Northern Transportation Company, Limited.

[Translation]

Hon. J. Gilles Lamontagne (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, the question of keeping that post office open is still under consideration. In a way, we agree with the hon. member from the opposition that this is an essential service in Vale Island, and we are doing our best to try to maintain an adequate mail service.

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[English]

TRANSPORT**SHORTAGE OF RAIL CARS IN INTERIOR OF B.C.**

Mr. G. H. Whittaker (Okanagan Boundary): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. In view of the fact that there is a shortage of rail cars in the forest industry in the interior of British Columbia, that out of 786 cars which were ordered only 335 were received, and that this results in 100 per cent more lumber awaiting shipment from this very important industry of British Columbia, can the minister tell the House what he has done in reply to an appeal by the Interior Lumber Manufacturers Association to him and to the railways for more boxcars?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I met with representatives of the forest industry in Vancouver several weeks ago to discuss this entire question. The existing situation is a difficult one in terms of numbers of cars. Even though, in the particular case of Canadian National, more products are being moved than last year, the waiting time for cars to be returned from the United States has increased very rapidly. This is largely because of changes in the situation in the United States. I discussed this matter with the railway presidents at a meeting last week looking into the question of whether more cars ought to be obtained immediately, in light