

one of reciprocity within the framework of the negotiations, and certainly it would be alien to that principle to introduce fish quotas as part of the negotiating process.

With respect to the other question, I cannot assure the hon. member that I could put aside a day for a debate, because of the press of business; but the budget debate will be coming forward and I will undertake at that time to give the House, or have one of my colleagues give the House, as complete a statement on the progress up to date and the difficulties, so that hon. members in that debate, if they so wish, may reply and express their views.

#### GATT NEGOTIATIONS RESPECTING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

**Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the minister. With time running out in the negotiations, what can Canadian farmers expect from the MTN after the negotiations have concluded? Can the minister indicate in general parameters what we can expect in terms of agriculture?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, it is much too early in the field of agriculture to say. We are attempting to increase access, for example, in the European community for agricultural products and, as the hon. member knows, there is a parallel discussion going on with respect to grains related to the negotiations at Geneva. But it is not possible to say at the moment what agriculture can expect, any more than it is possible to say what manufacturers in the country can expect at the conclusion of the negotiations.

We are pressing ahead to secure the greatest possible access to other markets for all products; that is to say, industrial products, agricultural products and fisheries, and in return for that we expect to be asked to make reciprocal decisions. We have to balance both together at the end of the day to ensure that Canada has received a good deal.

**Mr. Murta:** Mr. Speaker, the minister's general comments this morning give one some indication that the talks are not going very well, that all countries have really bogged down, especially in some of the very important areas, and maybe agriculture is one. Japan is of particular concern to agricultural producers because of the protectionistic policies that it has adhered to in the past.

My question is this: in the specific area of Japan, have we gained any access at all to the Japanese market in the areas of meat, and specifically we are talking about pork and pork products?

● (1122)

**Mr. MacEachen:** Mr. Speaker, I regret that I cannot reply specifically on the question of meat and pork products with regard to the Japanese market. Let me say that, in general, the initial Japanese offers made in the negotiations were, in our view, unsatisfactory and in concert with, certainly, the United States and the European community we have been pressing

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Japan to improve its offer. Some improvement has taken place. We would press for further improvement, particularly in view of the very heavy current account surplus that Japan is presently running with the rest of the world. This is one of the objectives that is certainly behind the negotiations at Geneva, to gain greater access or to sell more in the Japanese market in view of the very great sales being made by Japan in the rest of the world.

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#### POST OFFICE

##### ADDITIONAL PERSONS TO ASSIST MEDIATOR-ARBITRATOR IN SETTLING LABOUR DISPUTE

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Minister of Labour. In attempting to get a just resolution of the postal dispute, the Acting Minister of Labour indicated last week that he accepted the need to add to Judge Tremblay two persons, one representing the union and one representing the Post Office.

Considering that the Acting Minister of Labour has indicated that the government would not add two additional mediator-arbitrators with authority to sign the final report but, instead, has recommended simply the addition of two assessors or advisers, can he tell the House whether the government had any further thoughts on this important matter over the weekend?

**Hon. André Ouellet (Acting Minister of Labour):** The answer is no, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Mr. Speaker, one would hope that if the government does not think during the week, it would do so on weekends.

In a much more serious vein, I have a supplementary question in light of the minister's answer. Considering that the assessors the government is recommending will have no authority to sign the final report, will the minister agree that as a consequence they will not have the bargaining power that is essential, either with the union or the Post Office on the one hand, or with Judge Tremblay on the other, that is necessary to get a final settlement which does justice to the workers and brings continuous peace in the Post Office?

**Mr. Ouellet:** No, Mr. Speaker, I do not agree with that line of thinking by the Leader of the New Democratic Party. I feel that the addition of two assessors will be very helpful and constructive with regard to the work that must be done by Judge Tremblay. We must remember that the responsibility of the mediator-arbitrator, in the final analysis, if he cannot bring the two parties together by successful mediation, will be to draft a collective agreement in his role as arbitrator. This collective agreement will be imposed on both parties. Having two assessors to help him in his work while acting as mediator could be very helpful and constructive. However, adding two persons to the team to draft a collective agreement could result in three collective agreements. That would be very bad.