

Inquiries of the Ministry

ister tell the House if there has been any improvement in the postal situation in Montreal and also if there has been any report on the second study session by postal sorters, which I understand is taking place in Montreal today?

Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, as a consequence of arbitration proceedings put through on an accelerated basis yesterday, the non-reporting members of the Lapalme Company are now back at work and deliveries are being made in the regular way. In respect of the study sessions, I understand these have been called by the Union of Postal Sorters to explain to the employees the terms of the offer made by the government in respect of the current wage negotiations. These study sessions are not interfering with postal sorting.

TRANSPORT**RECOMMENDATIONS BY FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE ON ATLANTIC TRANSPORTATION**

Mr. Charles H. Thomas (Moncton): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Transport. On February 4, in reply to my question, the minister indicated that the federal-provincial committee on Atlantic transportation had met or was about to meet, and that he would ask it for some recommendations as soon as possible. I ask the hon. minister now, has the committee met and, if so, has it made any recommendations to him?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): No, Mr. Speaker, no recommendations have come forward as of this moment. I understand they made a good deal of progress at the meetings my hon. friend refers to and that they are meeting again, I believe, on the 5th and 6th of this month. The provincial representatives have assured me that they will have some recommendations coming out of this two days of meetings.

ACTION ON RAILWAY FREIGHT RATE INCREASES

Mr. Thomas M. Bell (Saint John-Lancaster): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the minister what action, if any, the government is taking with respect to the recently announced freight rate increases by all carriers in all parts of Canada?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, there are procedures [Mr. Allmand.]

established for dealing with these matters. They are not ones with which the government can involve itself directly.

Mr. Bell: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the seriousness of this matter does the minister not feel that, in conjunction with his colleagues, he should speak to the carriers or contact the Canadian Transport Commission about this increase announced yesterday and the frightful ones coming in the future?

Mr. Speaker: Order. Although the question period has just about expired, the Chair will recognize the hon. member for Crowfoot on a supplementary.

Mr. J. H. Horner (Crowfoot): I should like to address a supplementary question to the Minister of Transport, Mr. Speaker. In light of the government's proposed fight against inflation and its efforts to reduce costs, will he assure the House and the country that if the CTC is not prepared to roll back the announced increase in freight rates—and the minister has the jurisdiction to do this—he and the government will consider rolling back the announced increase in freight rates which will cause prices to increase?

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Speaker, I might argue with the claim that we have the power to roll back prices. In any event, the Prices and Incomes Commission has indicated that it will be investigating the freight structure of the railways and is going to use the mechanism of the Canadian Transportation Commission to accomplish that end.

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.

• (3:10 p.m.)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**NORTHERN INLAND WATERS BILL****CONSERVATION, DEVELOPMENT AND UTILIZATION OF RESOURCES**

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development) moved that Bill C-187, respecting Inland Water Resources in the Yukon Territory and Northwest Territories be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

He said: Mr. Speaker, a short time ago I had the pleasure of announcing a major step in the development of the resources in