

very closely with them. We have already had discussions with the government of Ontario. These discussions are quite advanced, and we will be quite happy to make our contribution to the expansion of the systems which will be recommended by the provincial authorities concerned.

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MARINE TRANSPORT

WITHDRAWAL OF DART CONTAINERLINE SERVICE FROM HALIFAX—HOLDING OF INQUIRY

Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport concerning the withdrawal of Dart container service from the port of Halifax. The minister met with the Premier of Nova Scotia this week and heard his concern about the future of container traffic in the port. Can the minister confirm published reports that he will direct the Canadian Transport Commission to conduct an inquiry into the withdrawal of the Dart container service from the port of Halifax, and will he also indicate when that inquiry may take place and what will be the terms of reference for the inquiry?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, it would take too long to report on everything which took place, though I think we agreed on most items. There still are difficulties respecting the assessment of freight rates. The Premier of Nova Scotia would like me to look into the way the rates are distributed on the road from Halifax going west. I will. Secondly, he would like me to look into the cost of icebreaking. I said I would. He would like me to cost recover that. I said I might in another cost recovery package.

The main item of discussion was the presence of CN in Cast. In this instance, we had a debate which was similar to a previous debate in this House on the role of Crown corporations. I defended the presence of CN in Cast, as in Halterm. The Premier asked me to start an inquiry. I did not agree to that, but I said that he would have an opportunity to present his case before the CTC because CP Ships must get authorization under section 27 of the act. The premier can present his case in that particular place.

QUERY RESPECTING WHARFAGE CHARGES

Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West): In a press release dated March 2, 1981, the minister indicated that he had assurances from the National Harbours Board that it would move very quickly to expand container facilities in the port of Montreal for both the Cast shipping group and CP Ships. Now there is a rumour in Halifax that the National Harbours Board will dramatically increase wharfage rates applicable to container traffic.

Will the minister indicate whether this increase in wharfage charges will take place, and will he give us some assurance that no further steps will be taken by the National Harbours Board or any other government agency to aid the port of

Business of the House

Montreal in its competition for container traffic with the port of Halifax?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, like many other members of this House I do not like the tone of the question. The premier and I looked at the wharfage charges in Montreal and Halifax and found that they were the same in most instances. By the way, I will give this information to members and also to the press in the coming days so that they can see that there is no discrimination whatsoever against Halifax in the present system. With respect to the port of Montreal, I am on record as asking the province of Quebec to make the proper water lots and the land available to the port of Montreal so that it, too, can be more successful than it is at this time.

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● (1500)

[Translation]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

TABLING OF EXTRACT OF MINUTES OF MEETING OF COMMISSIONERS OF INTERNAL ECONOMY RESPECTING SALARY REVISIONS

Madam Speaker: I am pleased to table excerpts from the minutes of a meeting of the Internal Economy Commission held on Monday, March 9, 1981, to deal with the salary review applicable to House of Commons staff as of April 1, 1981.

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[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

WEEKLY STATEMENT

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, I wonder if I could ask the government House leader about his intentions for tomorrow and next week with respect to government business.

While I am on my feet, may I ask him to designate March 18 as an allotted day.

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, to the usual question, the usual answer—the Constitution. Next Wednesday will be an allotted day.

Mr. Knowles: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. On March 4 Your Honour very kindly wrote me a letter with respect to the motion I introduced in the House on December 19 concerning extra pay for employees who worked extended hours during that all-night debate. You have made it clear, Your Honour, that we cannot question you from the floor or get answers from you in the House, but in view of the wide interest that there is in this matter, I wonder if arrangements could be made for a copy of the letter which you wrote to me, and maybe you wrote it to others as well, to be tabled or even