

these things should not be done at the cost of the peace of mind and the livelihood of thousands of people all through our fair province of British Columbia.

I rise heartily to support the appeal made by the hon. member, and I so state.

Mr. JAMES SINCLAIR (Vancouver North): As the original seconder of this motion I believe I should say a few words.

I do not represent very many farmers; my riding is principally an industrial riding; but as a British Columbia member, especially as a colleague of my very good friend the hon. member for Fraser Valley (Mr. Cruickshank), I feel that I should add a few words about the present deplorable situation.

The house first knew of this matter some two weeks ago, when the hon. member for Fraser Valley had a warm exchange with the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mitchell), as a consequence of which he announced that he intended to adjourn the house the following Monday. In the evening he co-opted the aid of the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Gibson) and myself in his cause, and explained how for the past three months he had been endeavouring to get action on a situation which he saw as long ago as January was going to affect the packing of this crop. He has made the point, which may have been missed a bit, that the lumber strike was only the last blow as far as the shortage of containers was concerned. The root of the trouble was a price ceiling matter last winter, when manufacturers of wooden goods on the west coast found that the ceiling price on wooden containers was so low that it paid them better to put their logs into lumber. Because of that, over the last winter, when our cooperages and our box factories should have been building up a stockpile in anticipation of a heavy field crop, very little was done. He pointed out that he wrote repeatedly to the various government agencies explaining our situation, and finally, on April 30, because of the dire emergency, Donald Gordon did give this open price permit to the manufacturers, too late, however, to be of effective use, since the strike opened on May 17.

My colleague the hon. member for Comox-Alberni and I were very much impressed with these arguments. Each of us has our own connection with this dispute. The hon. member for Comox-Alberni represents the riding in British Columbia which has without doubt the greatest number of loggers in it. He himself is connected with the logging industry. In my riding we have the greatest number of sawmill workers. Certainly the hon. member for Fraser Valley represents the berry growers of

British Columbia. Each of us over the weekend telephoned to our friends; the hon. member for Comox-Alberni, to the operators; myself, to the union leaders; and the hon. member for Fraser Valley, to the berry growers. We thought through these telephone conversations we had achieved some sort of settlement, and as a consequence of that we interviewed a committee of the cabinet on Monday morning, saying that we thought that if an appeal were made by the government to both sides of the dispute to save this fruit crop, action would be taken. The Acting Prime Minister (Mr. Ilesley) made a straight appeal on behalf of the government and the people of Canada that afternoon; and the operators immediately agreed. That morning I had telephoned to the head of the I.W.A. in Vancouver forewarning him that the government was going to make this appeal and, because I have a very great sympathy with these sawmill workers in my riding, I suggested to him that he should be the first to say, "Yes, the union are not striking against the food producers, the union are not trying to sabotage the farmers; the union's strike is against the operators, and we will agree to go back to the box factories on the terms suggested by the Prime Minister", with the understanding that whatever final settlement was made in the timber strike would be made retroactive for those who went back to the box factories. I was very much disappointed, and I am sure the people in general were, when Mr. Harold Pritchett, leader of the I.W.A., refused that offer, because I am convinced that the people I represent, the people residing in the sawmill towns of Fraser Mills, Port Moody, Barnett and North Vancouver, do not want to see the fruit industry of British Columbia ruined. Actually the box industry is a very small part of the timber industry of British Columbia. All told, it may require 50,000,000 feet out of a total cut of 3,000 million, or not more than two per cent of the total, and the opening of these few cooperages and box factories would have very little effect on the eventual ending of the strike. So I say in all sincerity that I think the union leaders, not the rank and file, have certainly alienated public opinion in British Columbia by their refusal to accept the appeal made by the Acting Prime Minister on behalf of the government and the people of Canada two weeks ago Monday.

A year ago we had an almost similar situation in British Columbia, a container strike, but this time it was the American Can company's employees who were on strike. As the hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Reid) has already pointed out, it was his riding which was affected the most. Instead of strawberries