

That brought that conciliation effort to a standstill. The operators could not see what good could result from proceeding with the discussion when the strike was on.

Then the Minister of Finance (Mr. Ilsley) made a most earnest appeal to both parties to this dispute; and I must say that I was hopeful that both the disputants would take it to heart and a settlement would be arrived at. For when a minister of finance, speaking for the dominion government, makes such an appeal to disputants, it appears to me he would likely receive the support of the general public, and it has often been pointed out that no strike can last very long if it has not the support of the general public. However, the Minister of Labour on May 29 had to come to the house and give the replies which he had received from the disputants, and he read a statement from the Interior Lumber Association, from which I want to quote a word or two—*Hansard*, page 1986:

Negotiations on behalf of the owners have been conducted by Mr. J. H. Ruddock, industrial relations officer, Interior British Columbia Lumber and Box Manufacturers Association.

Then followed a long wire, at the end of which appear these words:

Furthermore present strike in largest box producing plant in interior British Columbia called in face of valid agreement which that plant has with Canadian Congress of Labour and which agreement has never been terminated either by C.C.L. or I.W.A. Under all circumstances in fairness to all concerned and particularly to avoid heavy loss to growers we again urge instructions be given for unconditional resumption operations leaving result to legal processes of conciliation and arbitration.

Again and again, to both parties to the dispute, the suggestion has been made, backing up the appeal of the Minister of Finance, that for the sake of food, for the sake of saving destructible food, the dispute should end and the matters in dispute should be subsequently settled.

At the very beginning of the strike I received a telegram from the president of the British Columbia Fruit Growers Association which I want to put on the record. It is dated the 18th, and the house will remember that the strike began on the 15th:

Tree fruit industry of British Columbia facing grave crisis through strike of International Woodworkers Association which has closed down all box mills in interior and thus shut off supplies of shoo. Record crops of tree fruits in prospect. Every day's stoppage of mills means many thousands of containers will not be available. Only by operating at full capacity every day until end of season can needs be met. Only small proportion of season's requirements now supplied and consequently enormous losses impend unless mills resume operations immediately.

My understanding is that there is in sight a \$20 million crop of fruits and vegetables in the southern interior of British Columbia, not including the area for which the hon. member for Fraser Valley speaks. The packing of early cherries began a few days ago at Osoyoos and Oliver, at the southern end of the Okanagan valley. I understand there is shoo in sight which perhaps will take care of the cherries and a portion of the apricots, but there is no shoo in sight at all for everything that follows—peaches, pears, plums, prunes, apples.

Now this disastrous dispute is a serious enough question in relation to the housing problem which is common to all Canada, and we must remember that these British Columbia mills send the necessary lumber a good many hundred miles east of the Pacific coast. The delay in the housing situation is a very serious matter, but it is a matter of delay. The lack of shoo with which to make boxes and crates to send this perishable crop to market is not a matter merely of delay; it is not delay at all, it is destruction, and that is what makes it such an extremely serious thing today. It is impossible for me to foretell what possibility there will be of scraping together unusual and unexpected containers with which merely to get this stuff to the markets. It is possible that if it could reach the markets it could be taken away in small quantities by other means, paper bags or something of that sort, but that will not help us in the problem of getting the stuff to the market; and, Mr. Speaker, it is destructible stuff we are talking about.

We are being told every day of the need of producing every bit of food that is possible. Our particular international difficulty, true, is in respect of wheat and flour, but if wheat and flour are short, the people must tend to turn to something else. There is no question that vegetables would be the next thing they would turn to, and fruit to the extent that it is a valuable portion of the diet of the ordinary healthy person.

Besides all that it should be remembered that the area for which I speak has this one industry prominent in its work. Secondary industries have cropped up in support of the main industry; but it is not only the fruit growers who own this crop which may be destroyed who are in this lamentable difficulty; but it is all the labour they employ, it is all the stores in the town to which people, for lack of money, may not be able to go and buy their requirements; it is all the people of the interior of British Columbia from the Canadian Pacific main line to the international boundary and from the Alberta boundary to