

Mr. SINCLAIR (Vancouver North): You dodged the draft in the shipyards as long as you could.

Mr. ARCHIBALD: During the last war the camps were cleaned up by the I.W.W. They put blankets in the camp and had better meals served in spite of the opposition of the camp operators. We now come to another cleaning up process. During the war these men did not go out on strike. They abided by the rules laid down, and now they are asking for a square deal. I notice in these disputes that the blame is always placed on the industrial worker. I am not saying that that is done all the time in this house, but a great many times the strikers are blamed. In this case they are blamed for not separating the box industry in order that the box manufacturers may be supplied. Once you start that sort of thing, it will be just the thin edge of the wedge to break the strike.

These men live under constant fear. The very nature of the work makes their life in camp bitter and harsh. After years of struggle in the camps, these men have realized that the social conditions in the camps must be changed. These men live an isolated existence and they have a great deal of difficulty in forming a home. They work in the camps for three or six months completely isolated from their families, and then they come in and blow all their earnings. I do not blame them because I would do so myself if I were in their position. By means of this strike, they are trying to attract the attention of the people of the country to the conditions under which they live. This is one of the most dangerous occupations in the country, even more dangerous than mining. It is almost like war when you get up on the rigging and are working under high speed and constant tension.

Mr. J. L. GIBSON (Comox-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to take part in this debate because I felt that the hon. member for Fraser Valley (Mr. Cruickshank) had presented the case very well for the fruit growers. I sincerely hope that the Acting Prime Minister (Mr. Ilsley) and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mitchell) will see fit to consider his recommendation to open the box factories. I know they are both too old hands at this business to walk into any obvious trap which would result in dissension being created between the government and the workers. From my own experience I have a feeling that the leadership of the unions might conceivably be anxious to have the government and the workers come to blows. That would be a most unfortunate thing to have happen.

The hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Archibald), with his vast experience in the lumber industry, has made some harsh statements with regard to the conditions under which the men live. I am glad that he took a partisan stand on the matter because I expected that that would be exactly what he would do. I happen to be familiar with the lumber industry and I can say that it pays the highest wages of any industry in Canada. One of the recommendations made by Chief Justice Sloan will result in dishwashers in the camps, the men in the kitchen, being paid \$7 for an eight-hour day. That does not sound to me to be exploitation, especially when compared with the conditions that exist in other parts of Canada.

My hon. friend said that wages did not increase in the lumber industry during the war, but I would point out that there has been an over-all increase of 57 per cent. Of all the workers in Canada I think the loggers were probably the better treated. The operators were well treated at the same time. The lumbering industry is the one industry in Canada that has the least to complain about. As I say, wage costs increased 57 per cent. The cost of manufacturing or producing a thousand feet of logs increased 107 per cent at the same time.

My hon. friend said that there were no strikes in the industry during the war, but I found that it was not until Russia entered the conflict that the labour leaders in British Columbia began to be concerned about whether Canada produced any lumber at all. They certainly were not the least bit concerned about Great Britain getting any. I can assure the house about that.

I have tried to take some part in the settlement of this strike in British Columbia. My constituency has probably a higher percentage of lumber workers than any other in the province. I am probably a poor politician, but I took it upon myself to reply to the telegram which Mr. Pritchett sent to all members of the house asking for our opinion on this strike. I took it upon myself to wire back my views on the matter in specific terms. I did not quibble about the situation at all. I told Mr. Pritchett that I believed it would be a very fair settlement if there was a fifteen cents an hour over-all wage increase, but I said that I thought the forty-four hour week should continue for the present because we needed lumber so badly. That was about two weeks before Chief Justice Sloan brought in his recommendations.