

Friday, June 7, 1946.

The house met at three o'clock.

LABOUR CONDITIONS

SEAMEN'S STRIKE—DISRUPTION OF TRAFFIC ON INLAND WATERWAYS

Hon. HUMPHREY MITCHELL (Minister of Labour): I understand an hon. gentleman is going to move the adjournment of the house to discuss another matter, so I thought I had better get in first. The hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart (Mr. Coldwell) sent me notice of a question in reference to the movement of six hundred men into Cornwall, and I think I should answer immediately because this does affect the situation to a great extent. Immediately I read that statement in the newspapers I got in touch with the operators, from whom I received a telegram. I think it would be better to read this telegram, and also a telegram I have received from the union. This is the telegram from the operators:

Referring to newspaper reports of to-day and with reference to our telephone conversation of this morning ship owners say that no arrangements have been made for a mass movement of men into Cornwall. They say that they have available at least six hundred men many of whom are returned men ready to man their ships and that any attempt to man any vessel or vessels will only be made after full and proper notice to the proper police authorities and in full cooperation with them. Meantime strikers are pursuing their acts of lawlessness the latest of which was the attack on the steamer *Birchton* last night in the Soulages canal, when they seriously injured the cook, smashed up the galley throwing the galley stove overboard and committed other acts of vandalism. Also strikers last night forcibly removed the crews of the steamers *Houson*, *Stewart*, *Richards*, *Mapleheath*, *Grainmotor* and *Kinmount* while they were lying peacefully at dominion government property at Coteau.

(Signed) George R. Donovan, Secretary,
Dominion Marine Association.

I also received, in reference to the same matter, the following telegram from Mr. J. A. Sullivan of the Canadian seamen's union:

View with alarm press release from ship owners in Montreal in which they state that they have organized and are prepared to move into the city of Cornwall six hundred thugs. They quote in their statement that they intend to get the ships out of Cornwall with or without the aid of the authorities. Such open defiance must be checked. They have accused this organization of violence but with their own words they have proven that they are the lawless ones. Surely it is time for the government to act in stopping such a procedure.

I have read these telegrams, Mr. Speaker, to give my hon. friend and this house some indication of where the Minister of Labour sometimes sits in these disputes.

[Mr. Fulton.]

Mr. COLDWELL: What a hot spot!

Mr. MITCHELL: I have always taken the view—although sometimes my hon. friend has accused me of sitting on the fence; in this instance I would say it is a hot stove—that it is wise to be a conciliator. I suppose I have been chairman of more commissions on labour disputes than any other labour man in this country. To be successful, one cannot take sides. He has to bring the parties together. I thought I had done that this week—until this press story this morning, and the incident which took place yesterday on the St. Lawrence.

I told the union and the employers that I thought this carry-on or attitude by both sides was unwise. In my judgment it was stupid—and I say that to both sides. Sooner or later the dispute will be settled; it will have to be settled. Unless there is cooperation of both parties to the dispute, whoever presides over that dispute has an almost impossible task. I hope even at this late date that both sides will act like grown-up men, instead of children on a sand lot.

FOOD

WASTAGE THROUGH LACK OF CONTAINERS— MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 31

Mr. G. A. CRUICKSHANK (Fraser Valley): Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to move the adjournment of the house under standing order 31 for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the immediate threat of wastage of the current crop of small fruits, tree fruits, vegetables, butter and egg production and the fish pack in the province of British Columbia, because of the lack of necessary wooden or wood product containers.

Mr. SPEAKER: Standing order 31 states, in part:

(2) The member desiring to make such a motion rises in his place, asks leave to move the adjournment of the house for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, and states the matter.

(3) He then hands a written statement of the matter proposed to be discussed to Mr. Speaker, who, if he thinks it in order, and of urgent public importance, reads it out and asks whether the member has the leave of the house. If objection is taken, Mr. Speaker requests those members who support the motion to rise in their places and, if more than twenty members rise accordingly, Mr. Speaker calls upon the member who has asked for leave.

(4) If less than twenty, but not less than five, members rise in their places, the question whether the member has leave to move the adjournment of the house shall be put forthwith, without debate, and determined, if necessary, by a division.