

## Blame it on the truckers

by BRIAN LOCKHART

There are times when I am amazed at how little we pay for some items in this country.

My local grocery store had limes on for .89 cents the other day.

That may seem like a reasonable price for a single small piece of fruit. However, when you consider what it took to get that tangy green piece of citrus fruit on the store shelves, .89 cents is a real deal.

Someone had to grow that lime on a farm or plantation ? and it wasn't local. Most likely those limes came from Mexico or South America.

Someone had to tend the orchard, prune the trees, and keep the plants healthy.

Workers went out to the orchard to pick those limes, and they had to be paid. From there, they box them up and deliver them by truck to a local depot of some sort.

Then they start the long journey through North America ? thousands of miles by truck, until they arrive at the Ontario Food Terminal in Toronto.

Someone in Ontario drove a truck there and picked up those limes, then drove back to whatever city or town they are destined for.

Someone had to receive those limes and unload the truck. Another person took those limes from the back room and placed them on the shelf for customers.

All those people had to get paid, and those trucks don't run on water and fresh air. There are massive transportation costs involved, and yet you can still get the lime for .89 cents.

The only reason you can buy a lime at that price to sprinkle some juice on your fish dinner or finish off your after-dinner Mojito, is because there is a carefully planned and well executed transportation system that allows that fruit to make it all the way across the continent to your local grocery store.

You have most likely noticed the rising cost of food in your grocery store. Some products, are starting to get to a point where many people just pass them by.

I shudder at the cost of inviting a group of friends over for a summertime barbecue.

The trucking industry is already facing a crisis due to a shortage of drivers. Many older drivers have retired and many others have given up the job during the COVID pandemic.

Now the federal government has put more restrictions on cross-border trucking requiring all truckers to have proof of vaccination or go into quarantine when they return ? thus pulling another trucker off the road for two weeks.

I don't know why anyone wouldn't get vaccinated. I've had my shots. But not everyone thinks the same along those lines.

Getting vaccinated is for your protection, not the other guy.

Going after truckers doesn't seem to make a lot of sense. The borders are still open if you happen to fly. I've got friends who just posted a lovely photo of themselves on a beach in Cuba, so people are still getting around.

I have other friends who hosted relatives from overseas. They didn't quarantine, I saw them out and about the day after arriving from Europe.

If the schools are open and it is deemed safe to put 30 unvaccinated kids in a classroom together, why is a single person who happens to be driving a truck considered a risk?

Putting more pressure on an industry that is already struggling will only lead to more problems, and not just at the grocery stores.

Pretty much all goods arrive by truck.

Everything from electronics to car parts are delivered through the use of that complicated transportation system.

Creating a shortage of supply will only mean an increase in prices and even more inflation. That along with rising cost of fuel means that the cost of goods will go through the roof as demand exceeds supply.

For the most part, I think the government is doing what they can and what they should to combat the pandemic. They are following the advice of the medical world.

But if they get into a micro-management situation like they are with the trucking industry, the consequences will far outweigh the benefits of quarantining one single trucker who just made his way back from Arizona with a trailer full of goods.

If this continues that .89 cent lime is going to be costing you \$8 in the future.