

*The Address—Mr. Reid*

girls and paid them decent wages, the employment of white girls in the British Columbia canneries was a success. The employment of women on the land would be a success too if leadership was given from Ottawa. We need not look to the various provincial governments to give leadership in these things. In my opinion the provincial governments today are nothing but glorified municipal councils; when they attempt to do any of these things they find themselves immediately up against officialdom and red tape, and cannot deal directly with members of the government but are referred to officials of some department or other.

My next proposal is this. I would prohibit the various members of the wartime prices and trade board from making statements to the press from time to time as to what articles are to be rationed or not rationed. One day we will read that a certain commodity or article is to be rationed, and the next day that statement will be contradicted. What has been the effect of issuing these statements? It has been to send a rush of people to the stores to buy up the article which the press statement said is likely to be rationed. Why not adopt the system that they have in Great Britain? There, when an article is to be rationed, an announcement is made over the radio on a Sunday, at a time when all the stores are closed, that the new order will go into effect the following Monday morning.

Next I would develop further the national nutritional scheme. Under the Minister of Pensions and National Health a body has been set up to investigate nutritional schemes, and now would be the time perhaps to make many changes in our diet. The people of Great Britain have found that through the many changes in their diet that have been brought about by rationing, and through the eating of essential foods provided them, they are enjoying better health than they ever did before. I was talking to some doctors who have recently returned from Great Britain, and they tell me that various ailments seem to have disappeared over there under rationing and the government's nutritional programme which saw to it that the essential foods were placed before the British people. In this country the Department of Pensions and National Health, under the minister and Doctor Pett, much has been done. But the question of absenteeism is arising. Attention has been drawn in the press to the number of girls in the civil service at Ottawa who are absent from work through illness. I also came across an article by Marion Harlow, entitled "Canada Fights 'Hidden Hunger'". Miss

[Mr. Reid.]

Harlow is assistant director of the Nutrition Services of Canada's Department of Pensions and National Health, and speaking of a survey which has been made of the health of workers in war industry she has this to say:

Our surveys revealed that many of the younger workers, both girls and men, dash from bed to the plant. Then, by midmorning or earlier they stave off the pangs of hunger by swallowing cake or pastry and soft drinks or coffee bought at the canteen.

That, she claims, is the cause of a great deal of illness and consequent absence from the offices or factories which employ them. Doctors will tell you that more suffering in this country comes from over-eating than from under-eating. The nutrition campaign should be carried further than it has been, though I commend the Minister of Pensions and National Health for having inaugurated a scheme. I am not advocating a lower standard of living.

Then, too, I would add to those who could be employed on the land, the group of conscientious objectors. Something like fifteen hundred in all are so designated. The majority of them are in the province of British Columbia, being given work under a reforestation scheme. The objective is an excellent one, and I am not opposing it, but in these days, when there is so much need of help on our farms, these fifteen hundred men should be sent to the farms and made to work there.

The Prime Minister in his address the other day drew to the attention of the house and the country the great submarine menace and the need for ships. I was not surprised at all as to the need for ships. Last year, when some of us proposed in this chamber that more ships, especially wooden ones, should be built, we were laughed at, although at that time the lack of ships had created a bottleneck; and things are worse to-day. I then proposed to the Minister of Munitions and Supply (Mr. Howe) that he proceed with a programme of building wooden ships, and was rather rudely turned down. I am going to change the direction of my appeal at the present time, and am going to make it to the three ministers of defence, the Minister of National Defence for Naval Services, the Minister of National Defence for Air, and the Minister of National Defence, who we were all sorry to hear had met with an accident and who we hope will soon return to the house. I say to these three ministers that a joint programme should be carried out with the cooperation of the three departments, and a better policy as regards the construction of ships should be put into effect. I do not know what is happening in other parts of Canada, but in British Columbia we are a little worried