

and the handling of the fruit, permission will be given to allow the fruit to go to the United States.

Mr. REID: I am glad the minister mentioned something about fruit going to the United States, because there again the house has not been given information as to the price set for fruit going to Britain.

I do not think anyone will disagree with the attitude the farmers take, namely that they should be allowed an increase the same as those who strike for higher wages, and just as high a price as they can obtain, owing to the fact that all costs have increased. The fruit growers know about the market in the United States, and see a better local market this year on account of the fact that the price ceiling has been lifted on berries. I should be interested to know if the officials in the minister's department have set a price on berries which they have agreed to ship to Britain. I doubt if much of the fruit about which the minister has spoken will go to Britain, unless the price to the growers from the British authorities is as favourable as that which can be obtained on the local market.

As to the present strike, it is most unfortunate that the farmers must suffer loss. When the man who works for wages goes on strike he does not draw pay during the strike period, and in this way he sustains a monetary loss, according to the number of weeks or months he is idle. But in respect to the berry growers, the situation is more acute. The grower plants a crop, lays out either his own capital or that which he can borrow, and looks forward to harvesting the crop when the fruit is ripe. If anything goes wrong, there is a loss not only of food but also of financial returns to the farmer. Those returns must be obtained within a period of two to four months. If the crop spoils, then that farmer's entire livelihood, for the whole year, disappears. It is not just the income for one or two months, but the year's income that he loses.

I listened to the Minister of Agriculture this afternoon when he referred to jam instead of butter being put on bread. It is high time that at least some members of parliament should revise their views as to the value of fruit in the nation's diet. I do not know how many members read a report which was sent out only a few days ago on experiments in foods undertaken by the Department of National Health and Welfare in connection with the food conditions among Indians. What did they find? They found that a diet of flour, pork, sugar and tea was most deficient, but

that when the Indians produced fruit, berries and so on, their improvement in health was very manifest.

Fruit is of greater value than some in this house and others outside have given to it. It contains vitamins and acids the body requires, and it is time we added more fruit to our food menus, rather than thinking of it as something extra to be taken and therefore not to be classed with potatoes, wheat and other grains.

Last year during the strike of employees of the American Can company farmers of one district in my constituency had to stand by day after day and see their crops rotting, although they were told that there was an ample supply of cans in the warehouse in Vancouver. I remember a delegation of farmers coming to me and saying, "Mr. Reid, if something is not done by the government, or if these men will not allow us to obtain cans, we are going to take the law into our own hands." They were serious about it. Those farmers from the municipalities of Delta and Richmond were prepared to take their guns, or staves and pitchforks, and move into the city of Vancouver, there forcibly to take cans from the warehouses. I advised them not to attempt to do any such thing. But I did say this, "You have a lesson to learn from the trade unions." I do not know whether that lesson will ever be heeded by the farmers. But if only the farmers could organize on the same scale and to the same extent as those in the labour unions—well, I ask you, Mr. Speaker, just how many in this country would eat? What would happen if the farmers did not get their just requirements, or what they actually need to enable them to produce the necessary crops?

To return to a discussion of the lumber strike and the effect it has had on the farmers in the Fraser Valley, it is a little unfortunate that action has been delayed until this discussion developed in the house—because every member from British Columbia, individually, has been appealing to the government for the past two weeks. The matter cannot wait much longer; otherwise the entire crop will perish.

The statement of the Minister of Agriculture that permission will be given for the shipment of at least 500,000 tons to the United States does not entirely solve the problem. There is also the question of the shipment of eggs, which require new crates, and the supply of these is short.

Added to that is the matter of fish shipments. The hon. member for Vancouver North (Mr. Sinclair) has pointed out that