

head from the available quota for the district. The other reason is the decision taken by the local ration boards.

Mr. REID: The suggestion was made that perhaps, in view of the fact that country people are at a disadvantage as compared with city residents in obtaining canned fruit, and there being a large amount of fruit likely to be on hand, sugar might be taken from the soft drink industry and used for food purposes. Another criticism was this. It was stated that the supply of sugar in the United States was very plentiful, and the question was asked why we should allow cherries to be imported during these times if there are ample supplies of sugar in the United States. Why not import sugar instead, and take some of the sugar from the soft drink industry and put it into food?

Mr. ABBOTT: I am not in a position to deal with the soft drink question, but as to sugar supplies in the United States, it is completely erroneous to say that there is a large supply of sugar there. As a matter of fact they are complaining that we are getting too much sugar. Eighty-two per cent of our supplies of sugar have to be imported, and the raw sugar has to be brought in by boat, and we are depending upon allocations of shipping from the United States for the quantity of sugar we get. They are now complaining that our situation is better than theirs and that we are getting more sugar than they are.

Mr. REID: What distribution has been made to the soft drink industry?

Mr. ABBOTT: That information was given the other day in answer to a question.

Mr. ILSLEY: There was a thirty per cent cut from the year before. You cannot cut soft drinks too much. It is down a lot this year as compared with last year, and thirty per cent is a substantial cut. The figures were given in a return to the house a few days ago.

Mr. WRIGHT: I recognize the difficulty in getting an even distribution of sugar, but there is considerable complaint, and I would bring to the attention of the government the position of people in the outlying districts who depend entirely on canning sugar for the preservation of fruit. They are in a position where they cannot get canned goods. They are probably from twenty to thirty miles from the nearest source of supply and have always depended on canning wild fruit. This small allotment of sugar will certainly mean that they will not be able to put in anything like their accustomed supply of fruit. They are not in a position to get fresh fruit during the

[Mr. Abbott.]

winter months, and many of these people have large families and depend entirely on the fruit which they can. Some additional allowance should be made in such districts. You are allowing eleven pounds in each of the 500 districts and some of them will be entirely urban.

Mr. ABBOTT: Very few.

Mr. WRIGHT: Some of them will be mostly urban; others will be almost entirely rural. If it is possible, I think the government should provide an additional allotment of sugar for the rural areas, especially in northern Ontario, northern Saskatchewan and Alberta, and areas such as that, as well as parts of the maritime provinces where the people are entirely dependent in the winter on canned fruit.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): I should like to support the plea of the hon. member for an increased allotment of sugar in the parts of the country he mentioned. You will see there tons of rhubarb going to seed and waste just because the people have not enough sugar allowed them to can it. These people who normally can wild fruit and rhubarb are not able to do so this year, and I would urge the minister to have a rearrangement made of the present set-up so that the people in these outlying areas can preserve this fruit. It would help in the conservation of essential foods for the use of these people and indirectly help the whole nation. But the people who normally can this type of fruit, rhubarb, wild fruits, and so on, are not able to can any under the present set-up. I trust the minister will see that these people get a larger allotment of sugar.

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: If I may go back to meat, the return to which I have referred names only four packing companies as being paid more than the ceiling price for meat.

An hon. MEMBER: Who were they?

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: The Swift Canadian company, Canada Packers, the Pacific Meat company and Burns Company Limited. I would ask the minister if these were the only firms from which the Department of Munitions and Supply bought meat at higher than the ceiling price? This return says that wherever the ceiling price was pierced the prices board was taken into consultation, so that I presume the minister's department has that information. Did any other firms receive more than the ceiling price for meat? I do not see how these firms could secure more meat, if the higher prices was paid for that purpose, unless by reason of that fact they went out and paid