

order that the ration administration here would be in a position to decide how the sugar could be located.

As a result of this request for applications, 8,763,185 persons made application for canning sugar, for a total of approximately 210,000,000 pounds, which was about twice the amount of sugar available. The problem then arose as to how that quantity would be allocated. As I said last Friday the decision taken was that it would be allocated to each local ration area, 550 in all, on the basis of 11·34 pounds for each applicant from that area, and that fixed the quota for that local ration area. The method of distributing the sugar available in each area was left to the local ration board, and the instructions given to the local board, which went out on May 7—I have before me a copy of the letter that was sent to each of the local ration boards—outlined the general manner in which the distribution should be made. I quote:

In making your decisions as to the amount of sugar per person which will be granted to the consumers in your territory, we suggest you keep the following in mind.

The foods administration is of the opinion that rural residents have a legitimate claim to more sugar per person for canning than the urban population, owing to the inaccessibility of fresh fruits and certain other supplies during the winter months. It is not possible to lay down rigid instructions, but we are acquainting you with this opinion so that in allotting your sugar you may provide sugar per person at a slightly higher rate to rural residents than to urban residents. Of course, your final distribution must not exceed the total amount of sugar granted to your board. If you feel from your knowledge of local conditions that an equal amount per person would be more acceptable you may make your arrangements on that basis.

That was the general letter of instructions to all local boards. In the result there was, of course, a variation between the amounts allowed in different local ration areas, and I think one of the greatest causes for dissatisfaction has been that in two local ration areas, one alongside the other, one applicant in area No. 1 would receive eleven pounds while her neighbour across the road in area No. 2 might receive only ten pounds.

Mr. LOCKHART: Did the hon. gentleman say that rural areas were to get more than urban?

Mr. ABBOTT: That was left to the discretion of the local ration board, but the general instructions sent to the local boards by the ration administration at Ottawa were as I have read.

Mr. SHAW: May I ask whether the board insisted on the sugar being used for canning purposes?

Mr. ABBOTT: It would be physically impossible to check every applicant to see whether the sugar was used for canning. It would be very difficult to enforce that provision.

Mr. SHAW: Last year they checked up. Of course, you do not have to check everyone, but my point is that there is a fifty per cent increase in the number of those who applied for sugar for canning purposes, and if you do not insist on its being used for canning purposes, I am afraid there will be bootlegging in sugar.

Mr. ABBOTT: I am advised that the regulations require that coupons not used for sugar for canning purposes shall be surrendered. I am not in a position to say what steps the board proposes to take to see that that regulation is complied with.

Mr. SHAW: I would urge that some type of check be made, because it is not fair if this sugar is not being used for food purposes.

Mr. ABBOTT: It would be difficult, I should think, to make any widespread check. Last year it was on an honour basis, and people were allowed to sign slips for canning sugar. There was no definite limit put on and for that reason a check-up was made, but it would be nearly impossible to make a coast to coast check under this system. The distribution has been left to the local ration boards, which are continuing in existence.

Mr. FRASER (Peterborough West): Last year was it not really householders alone who could get sugar for canning purposes? If you bought fruit last year they would give you a pound of sugar for a pound of fruit. This year the landlady in a boarding house who wants canning sugar must get all her boarders to sign the card.

Mr. ABBOTT: That is right. Perhaps I might complete what I was saying on the general system of allocating sugar, pointing out why these differences arose in different areas. The first reason why there would be a difference between one local area and another would be the percentage of persons applying for less than the general allowance varying from area to area. As I mentioned in connection with the ration district I discussed last Friday, my own district of Westmount, there were in that area a considerable number of applications for less than ten pounds, while in another area the average might be well above ten pounds, in which case there would be no amount available for higher applications, and in those areas it would probably be more suitable to make a flat allocation per