

and did not put their rents up, and therefore they were caught by these freezing orders. This freezing order later became general. The first freezing order selected certain localities where rents were on the way up and something had to be done about them. I presume that a fair selection was made. At that time, in September, 1940, the board was much smaller and was not working under the terrific pressure under which it has worked since the price ceiling, and I would be surprised if the selection of places was not very carefully done. I believe that it was very carefully done, and after exhaustive investigation. I forget who the rentals administrator was at that time; it may have been Mr. Justice Martin, of Saskatchewan; it was for quite a long time. At any rate the board went into these matters very carefully and did not have anything like as many things to attend to as they have had since the price ceiling, which set in in 1941. I do not think there would be any basis for a claim of discrimination on regional grounds. There is certainly a basis for claims of discrimination on individual grounds; there always is under any freezing order; but you have just to decide whether you will freeze or not, and if you do not you never can control.

Mr. REID: What about canning sugar?

Mr. ILSLEY: I will leave that to my assistant.

Mr. ABBOTT: I suppose it is not necessary for me to repeat the explanation I gave last Friday with respect to the general basis on which sugar was allotted for canning purposes. But perhaps I might remind members of the committee that it was decided that the available supplies of sugar would permit the allotment of approximately 100,000,000 pounds for canning purposes this year. That was about the amount used last year. The board had three courses open to it as far as canning sugar was concerned. It could say, you will have to provide your canning sugar out of the ordinary ration. Or, second, it could decide to allot so much sugar to everybody in Canada, and incidentally that is the procedure which is followed, so far as I know, in all other countries. Or it could ask consumers to estimate their requirements, and thereby find out how many people proposed to do canning. Beforehand the estimate was made that about thirty to forty per cent of the population did home canning. In the actual result it turned out that eighty-four per cent of the population applied for canning sugar.

Mr. REID: Of course, they were asked to do so.

[Mr. Ilsley.]

Mr. ABBOTT: Oh, yes, there is no objection to that. The procedure followed in the United States, I understand, is that a flat allocation is made per consumer, to each holder of a ration book, whether he is going to do any canning or not. That, I am told, is the system followed in every other country, including Germany, where sugar is rationed. It was felt here that this third alternative, of asking the public to send in applications for canning sugar and allocating the sugar to those applicants, would provide a more equitable and better way of distributing the supply of sugar which was available for canning.

Mr. LOCKHART: Would the hon. gentleman permit an interjection? The hon. member for New Westminster referred to definite appeals having been sent out to home canners to can larger amounts, and I wish to say that the housewives collected every possible jar that was in their possession in order to try to do what they thought would help out the general situation.

Mr. ABBOTT: I think my hon. friend is perfectly right. The board did ask people to do as much home canning as possible. I may not be quite right on this, but I think, when that appeal was made, it was not certain what amount of sugar would be available and it was hoped there might be a larger amount. Incidentally it was desired to know how many people would do home canning. As I say, the estimate was that thirty to forty per cent of the population did home canning, and in the result it turned out that eighty-four per cent either did or claimed they were prepared to do home canning.

Mr. STIRLING: Does the hon. member mean eighty-four per cent of the eleven and a half millions?

Mr. ABBOTT: Precisely. About 8,000,000 people made applications for canning sugar, or at least applications were made on behalf of that number. Those applications were called for. The country was divided into 550 local ration areas; and these areas were asked, after the applications had been sent in, to tabulate them, to reduce the quantities asked for to the nearest five pounds, and in the case of applications which were higher than twenty-five pounds for a rural resident or fifteen pounds for an urban resident, to reduce the quantities applied for to those amounts. These were the instructions sent out to the local ration boards, to tabulate their applications on that basis and to advise the ration administration in Ottawa of the result; that was in