

capita, by a considerable amount, as they actually got under the system we did follow. But we could do what I have said.

Mr. GRAYDON: What does the minister mean when he says they would not have got as much?

Mr. ILSLEY: Because only about eighty per cent of the public applied. Under this other system 100 per cent would have got sugar, whether they applied for it or not. The point I am trying to make is—

Mr. GRAYDON: Is the minister going to give sugar to people who do not apply for it at all?

Mr. ILSLEY: They do that in other countries.

Mr. GRAYDON: I did not advocate that.

Mr. ILSLEY: Oh, no, the hon. member has not advocated anything.

Mr. GRAYDON: Oh, yes, I have.

Mr. ILSLEY: Well, if the hon. member has, it is purely negative. I am interested in constructive suggestions as to the best way of rationing sugar for canning purposes.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): Then do not go to the Conservative party for it.

Mr. ILSLEY: I do not care where I go for it. We did want as much canning to be done as could be done, and that was the reason for this joint advertising under the auspices of the wartime prices and trade board and the Department of Agriculture. We did that advertising because we wanted to conserve as much fruit as possible. Applications came in for 210,000,000 pounds of sugar, instead of the 106,000,000 pounds which had been used in the previous year. We sold the desirability of canning fruit; in fact, we oversold it. There is no doubt about that. Perhaps it would not have been necessary to encourage the people to can fruit. I do not think it would have made much difference if we had said, maybe you will not get the sugar you require.

Mr. GRAYDON: Will the minister do that again next year?

Mr. ILSLEY: Perhaps we will not.

Mr. GRAYDON: I do not think you should.

Mr. ILSLEY: Perhaps we will not. You correct your errors as you go along; everybody does that. But the main point is how to handle this rationing of sugar for canning purposes. Could we do what we did last

year? Could we allow people to go into a grocery store and make out a slip, hand it to the grocer and get what they needed for canning purposes? That went on for two months, and we know the abuses that developed in that time were serious. It was quite obvious that that should not be repeated. Should we make a flat distribution for the whole population? Should we make a per capita distribution for all applicants? Should we advertise for applicants, try to get people to put in their applications in the spring, as we did this year? That was the real purpose of the advertising, to get persons to put in their applications early in the year so that we would know who wanted sugar and would be able to make as good a distribution as possible. Should we make each one the same as the others? I do not know about that. What we did was to give all the ration districts the same amount per capita of applicants.

Mr. GRAYDON: You gave each ration district the same amount, having in mind the number of applicants?

Mr. ILSLEY: That is right; the same amount per capita of the applicants. Some were rural districts predominantly; some were urban districts predominantly, but nearly all were both rural and urban. We said to the ration boards, "You know your local conditions; you have so much sugar; make the distribution in the most equitable way you can." Some of the ration boards went at it and made things rather difficult for themselves. They varied it as between rural districts and urban districts; they applied various rules which they thought were equitable, and went at it in that way. Others took an easier way. That was decentralization of authority. We have been told time after time that we should not try to run everything from Ottawa. We handed this over to 550 local ration boards, and that is the thing the hon. gentleman denounces us for doing.

Mr. GRAYDON: Just a minute; my hon. friend should not put words into my mouth again.

Mr. ILSLEY: Exactly; he said, do not pass the buck.

Mr. GRAYDON: I did not suggest anything like the minister says I did, and he knows that very well. I am trying to find out from the minister why certain sections are getting more sugar than others, and I think he ought to answer that question.

Mr. LOCKHART: I think I have given away about as much time as I should. While I cannot suggest anything that might be an