

HOW FOOD CONTROL DEVELOPED IN CANADA

REVIEW OF FOOD BOARD'S WORK HAS BEEN PREPARED

It Shows How Policy of War Rationing in Canada Differed Materially From That of United Kingdom or United States.

[Continued from page 8.]

tion of such profit, in many cases, would not have any effect on the retail price of these commodities. For example, if the profit of twenty-five cents per barrel of flour had been eliminated, and the millers had manufactured at cost, it would not have affected the price of bread. About 250 pounds of bread are made from a barrel of flour, therefore, this twenty-five cents distributed over the pounds of food products from a barrel of flour, would have been one-tenth of a cent per pound. This could not be reckoned in price control. It would have been a matter of taking the profit from the miller and giving it to the baker. On the other hand, on account of the difference in manufacturing conditions, costs widely varied and it was necessary to allow sufficient profit to enable enough mills in Canada to produce the flour required. Out of this number, some mills, because of advantages arising from location and the efficiency of their management were able to make considerable profit on the invested capital. The consideration of public policy involved in such profits opens up, if at all, another question which comes within the domain of taxation.

SUGAR PROBLEMS.

"Sugar formed a different problem from the three main foodstuffs. More than in those articles of diet, the difficulty was that of equal distribution. The strictest regulation was only necessary during a few months, yet during that time it took the form of the most intensive control of any one food.

"The sharing of the world's available supply of sugar among the Allies was one of the great food difficulties of the war. The great bulk of the raw sugar was imported. The Allied nations had to find an adequate method whereby they could equitably share with each other the available supplies. For Canada this was accomplished by the establishment of the International Sugar Commission of New York, on which the British Government had a representative. It was not possible to have a Canadian representative also on this Commission, because Britain would then have had greater power than any other nation. Nevertheless it was absolutely necessary to have some one to represent Canadian interests. In November, 1917, there was instituted a sugar division of Canadian food control and a New York representative was appointed who advised on available supplies. He was also charged with the exceedingly difficult task of equitably dividing supplies allocated to Canada among the sugar refineries of the Dominion.

"The plan that the International Sugar Commission followed was briefly:—

"First, they made a survey of the world's supplies. These, during the year of 1918, were confined almost entirely to the Western Hemisphere, as the supplies in the East Indies and other sugar-producing countries were not available. Certain allocations were then made to Great Britain, France, Belgium and Italy; quantities were set aside for neutral countries and the remainder was divided between Canada and the United States. Our domestic problem resolved itself into dividing this supply between the various sugar refineries, and then establishing a system of distribution and control of consumption which would spread the available total as equitably as possible, having regard to the vital character of the use made of sugar.

RIGOROUS SUGAR ORDERS.

"The first survey of the International Sugar Commission was made in March, 1918. By May 1, regulations had been put into force in Canada designed to meet the situation. About the middle of June, however, the International Sugar Commission found it necessary to make

a complete re-survey. When this was accomplished it was calculated that, due to many conditions which had come into existence after the first survey was made, there was a total shortage of sugar of about one million tons. It was therefore imperative to re-allocate, and by July 15, the Sugar Section of the Food Board had new orders in force to meet the changed situation.

"Rigorous control of all manufacturers and public eating places was instituted, with a system of distribution to wholesalers and retailers, which, on the whole, proved eminently successful. Had it been possible when the International Sugar Commission made the first survey to have gauged the situation correctly, the problem in Canada would have been very much easier. As it was, the work was accomplished under tremendous pressure and under difficulties which it was impossible for the public to appreciate.

"One of the marked features of the work was the co-operation of the sugar-consuming trades, and their loyal acceptance of regulations.

"The sugar representative at New York had, from time to time, to assume the responsibility of accepting for Canadian refineries quantities of sugar as they became available, and to arrange for a guarantee of purchase of the total, or part of a crop of some of the producing countries. The Commission was besides faced with the task of finding shipping tonnage. Even when sugar was landed, port and railway embargoes, and many other obstructions to its final transportation had to be overcome.

"The whole problem of sugar supply has been one of the most strenuous, and considering the difficulties, one of the most successful of Canada's domestic war-time food efforts.

"The price of raw sugar, and the quantity available for Canada, were at no time within the control of the Food Board.

"The prime instrument of compulsory control of domestic trade was the issuance of licenses without which trading in foodstuffs was prohibited. This control steadied prices and equalized distribution.

Home supply in every district throughout 1918 was plentiful, yet the quantities of foodstuffs exported showed a remarkable increase. By December 31, 1918, 78,016 licenses had been issued.

"The ideas underlying licensing were to make regulations easier through securing the direction of supplies from the producer down to the consumer's table; to carry out orders for the prevention of excessive profits; to prevent reduplicating transactions, and thus securing a more even flow of distribution; to keep the dealers in food on good behaviour under penalties of forfeiture of licenses; and to permit the small dealers in carrying out orders from being unfairly handicapped by larger and more favourable placed competitors. A large office organization and the machinery for such a novel procedure had to be made with careful fore-consideration. In the fall the Board had the satisfaction of knowing that not only were practically nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand dealers, other than direct producers like farmers and market gardeners, under license, but that the system was working admirably. Licensing presented a delicate piece of social machinery.

ENFORCEMENT OF ORDERS.

"Altogether up to November 11 seventy orders were issued. Subsequent orders have been largely revocations. This is not a large number considering that in the first three months of 1917 alone over 130 orders were issued by the British Ministry of Food.

"It became necessary early in the spring to establish a section of the Board for the purpose of enforcing the orders. A considerable staff of inspectors was appointed, whose duty it was to watch for and prosecute infringements of the regulations.

"Their work did not supplant that of provincial authorities. It only supplemented it, for the endeavour of the Board in each case was to get the local authorities to undertake the enforcement of any order and the prevention of infringement.

PREVENTING OF WASTE.

"An Order in Council in December, 1917, authorized the Food Controller to deal with carloads of foodstuffs held at their destination for a longer period than four days. Previously foodstuffs were frequently permitted either to deteriorate or become a total loss while the grievances of the interested parties were being adjusted. Whenever it was found necessary to seize foodstuffs they

were sold at the order of the Board. On April 5 the Board was empowered to take any measure necessary to prevent as far as practicable loss or deterioration in foodstuffs. Approximately 1,500 cars of foodstuffs were dealt with, made up of the following: Potatoes, onions, beans, corn, wheat, molasses, fruits of all kinds, macaroni, canned goods, coffee, raisins, butter, cheese, breakfast foods, and malted milk.

THREE MEANS OF CONTROL.

"The means employed to secure the control of the foods of Canada may be stated thus:—

"1. Direct purchase and export by Allied Government representatives.

"2. Licensing of all dealers at home and their regulation by order direct from the Board with personal responsibility on the part of the licensee.

"3. Import and export permits regulating incoming or outgoing commodities not governed by the purchases of Allied Governments.

"Another class of control, intangible and hard to define, was the voluntary aid given by the people of the Dominion and especially by the Canadian women. "The service was so immeasurably great, that it cannot be more than alluded to with gratitude and pride in such a review as this," says the report. It was the pivot on which turned that successful voluntarism which has been so marked a feature of food control in Canada.

"Active workers in every locality were reached directly by the Board through a mailing list which at the close of the year numbered 45,000 names. These were distributed through the whole of the Dominion. The publications of food laws and suggestions were forwarded to these workers.

"In order to reach the public at large the Board had to rely upon widely extended publicity, which was possible only through the ready way in which the press gave prominence to food subjects. Not merely were items of news, such as the issuance of orders and rules given news space, but informative articles, prepared by the Information and Publicity Sections were published in hundreds of newspapers, magazines and periodicals, from coast to coast. Throughout the campaign for greater farm production the press stood loyally by.

PROVINCIAL COMMITTEES.

"Much benefit was found through the establishment of Provincial Committees, says the report. These were formed within the first three months of 1918. They studied the local food conditions and furnished the information on which the Board, after consideration, acted in framing its orders. A notable part of the provincial system was the lead it gave to public opinion. Most of the important as well as the routine work of replying to local inquiries about food had to be carried out by the Committees. The general supervision of work in the province fell within their scope. In New Brunswick voluntary rationing had been put into practice some weeks before the armistice was signed, and plans were so far advanced in Nova Scotia and Alberta as to be already printed.

PRODUCTION CAMPAIGN.

"The added acreage of farm land tilled, improved methods of farming, and the adoption of new ways of meeting labour problems through local arrangements and an enhanced appreciation generally of agricultural life will, as a result of the Greater Production Campaign, have an effect upon Canada's national agriculture in the coming years.

"This work was carried out by the Food Board in conjunction with the Dominion Department of Agriculture, working through the provincial departments. During the fall of 1917 attention was directed to the necessity for a still greater increase in farm production. Plans were completed for increased breeding of hogs. Not only were farmers encouraged to add to their pens, but the services of the country boys were enlisted in the formation of pig clubs. Everything was done to facilitate the winter food problem. In March a campaign was conducted to increase the number of trees tapped for maple syrup to supplement the sugar supply."

DISTRIBUTED TRACTORS TO SPEED UP PRODUCTION

An important contribution to food production was the arrangement made for the distribution of farm tractors at cost to farmers, declares the report of the Canada Food Board. The allocation of these by provinces was as follows:—

British Columbia	21
Alberta	334
Saskatchewan	382
Manitoba	149
Ontario	203
Quebec	9
New Brunswick	5
Nova Scotia	14
Prince Edward Island	6

1,123

In addition, fifteen demonstration tractors were distributed to Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

In February a satisfactory arrangement was made with Henry Ford & Son, Inc., Dearborn, Michigan, for the purchase of 1,000 farm tractors. The price agreed upon was \$750 each, f.o.b. Dearborn. One of the conditions of the contract reads:—

"The entire arrangement is contingent upon the Government of Canada distributing these tractors direct

to farmers in Canada at the price specified plus freight and with no profit allowed."

Orders were taken from farmers by the provincial departments of agriculture and forwarded by them to the Food Board, thus furnishing to Canadian farmers tractors at cost. This measure assisted greatly in the work of greater production during the spring of 1918. Canadian firms which manufacture tractors were engaged at high pressure on other classes of farm machinery, and their output at that time was not expected to exceed 300 tractors a year. The steps taken, therefore, were necessary to meet the immediate need. A representative of the Board was sent to Detroit to expedite shipments. Twenty-five tractors a day had been arranged for. As Dearborn is a way station, there was a danger of delay and consequent demurrage charges, but it is worth noting that the Board had only to pay \$9 car rental on the entire order. With shipments for the East much difficulty was experienced, and it was necessary in almost every instance to trace cars from Dearborn to Detroit through the yards at Windsor to ensure speedy delivery.