

tion from those who are outside the designated area and operating in a manner that is designed to circumvent that scheme.

I think it must be appreciated that this subparagraph of clause 18 is written in such a manner as to provide authority to the Governor in Council to set out in a proclamation whether or not an agency shall have authority to deal with products from outside the designated region. Written in this fashion, it allows the Governor in Council to give or to withhold such power. Furthermore, it gives the Governor in Council the opportunity to indicate to what extent such authority may be given respecting products produced outside the designated area. So, Mr. Speaker, we must be vigilant.

In bringing forward a plan that will work for the orderly marketing of the particular product of a majority of farmers, we must be vigilant in case we leave loopholes by which other farmers may benefit as a result of circumventing the purposes of the act or its administration, thereby being put in a favourable position because they are able to do their marketing in isolation from conditions which the overwhelming majority of farmers have approved. Having made these comments may I say that so far as I am concerned I do not think we should accept the amendments in the group now under discussion.

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, the proposals in this bill received a great deal of amendment and consideration in the standing committee over a long period of time. They were first considered when introduced in the former bill and were subsequently considered when introduced in Bill C-176.

At the outset may I say that one of the unfortunate aspects of the situation is the time when the bill was presented to the House for consideration. By that I do not mean that the government deliberately picked the time; I do not know whether they did or not. The fact is that the bill came forward to Parliament and to the standing committee for consideration when agricultural marketing in this country was in a turmoil and when the marketing of agricultural products was being interfered with by provincial governments and agencies of provincial governments.

This had the effect of stirring up a great deal of fear and misgiving in the provinces concerned and among the producers of some products who found their free access to certain markets to which up to that time they had undisputed access, interfered with and curtailed. That drastically affected their incomes. The point I wish to make is that no matter whether this bill is passed or is rejected, this situation exists.

The government expects a great deal from this legislation if it thinks that the legislation alone will correct the situation which exists. The most serious charge that can be brought against the government has nothing to do with what is in this bill; it is that they did not move immediately to establish the right of free movement of farm products across Canada and to any market in Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Farm Products Marketing Agencies Bill

Mr. Gleave: I said this in committee when we first met to consider Bill C-176. The government's lack of action and its lack of concern for action has been the cause of much of the fear that has been engendered in the country. I have seen some advertisements similar to the one the minister spoke of. They reflect the fear to which I allude. Those remarks are by the way; I am merely alluding to the circumstances under which this bill has come forward for consideration.

I think that at least the federal government should associate itself actively with the undertaking which the government of Manitoba has under way to bring this matter before the Supreme Court. This government ought to offer assistance to the government of Manitoba and leave no doubt that they are concerned about establishing the right of farm products to move freely back and forth across this country. Unless that right is established I have grave doubts whether this legislation will be able to accomplish what is hoped of it.

This is enabling legislation. The amendments before us, if passed, would probably restrict the legislation to some extent or make it less effective than it otherwise might be. My thought is that if we are to have such legislation, let it be effective and workable. If it is not, it will hold out a hope of effectiveness to participating producers which does not and will not exist. If we do not want to pass effective legislation, it would be much better for us not to pass any legislation. If we do not want to give the producer a vehicle that will work, it would be much better if we were to give him no vehicle at all. At the same time we must establish a climate, if we want the legislation to work, in which it can and will work.

Mr. Speaker, when I have listened to arguments on this subject I have sometimes concluded that some people think that farm marketing legislation is a brand new idea. The farm organizations of this country, the Federation of Agriculture and the National Farmers Union, have asked for national marketing legislation for years. I can show you briefs which they submitted to the government, and you will find such requests in those briefs. The first legislation to establish marketing boards was passed in the 1930s. At that time there was a different government than now sits in this House. Further legislation was passed by a succeeding federal government. Perhaps enabling legislation is not the correct term, but it permitted a sharing of power with the provinces. It was passed by a forerunner of the present government.

• (4:40 p.m.)

The legislation now on the books of provincial governments was probably passed, amended or changed by governments of every stripe and political hue that we have had in Canada. I find it strange that it should come as a great shock that we are asked to consider this type of legislation, since the principles are not new. In the final analysis, this is the government's legislation. They are responsible to see that it is effective legislation and to establish a climate in which it can work. One reason why we had some difficulty with this bill is that it was not well-drawn in the first instance. It did not provide for sufficient participation by the producers on the regulato-