

ty as a parliament. They hold before us the threat of a bureaucratic nightmare and try to scare Canadians into adopting a pose of rigidity and of refusing to do anything at all. These are the two opposites, the two poles, if you will. In my view, the committee chose a course in between and chose to recommend to the House certain actions which the committee thought, or at least the majority of its members, thought, could meet some of the needs and, hopefully, most of the needs of the situation.

So far as I am concerned, in the 1972 election and since that time consumers have said to me, "Do something about prices." They said it in the 1972 election and I have since received letters saying the same thing. When I refer to consumers, I do not mean only housewives; I mean the wage earner who is buying a house, the farmer who is buying fertilizer and fuel for his tractor and other machines. People right across this broad spectrum of our society have been saying this, and I think that we should take notice of their complaints. When the consumer was saying this to us, the farmer was saying, "I want a guaranteed price, a fair price for the products which I produce."

I do not know if a great many people in the House understand the kind of experience the farmer has had in the last two and a half years in this country. When members to my right say that we should have a 90-day freeze, do they intend to freeze the price of hogs at 54 cents, or are they going to freeze the price at 46 cents? Are they going to freeze flax at \$5.89, or when it goes down to \$4.16? Are they going to freeze rapeseed when it hits \$4.50, or are they going to freeze it when it goes down to \$3.40?

**An hon. Member:** You know the answer to that.

**Mr. Gleave:** I do not, because those hon. members have never given me the answer. And when they had the opportunity to put those grains under the Canadian Wheat Board and provide the farmers with some stability, they refused to do so. Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to be kidded in the House, and I was not kidded in the committee by some of the statements made there.

I support without any reservation the proposal for the establishment of a prices review board. We are not in 1943, we are in 1973, and a lot of things have changed since 1943. I do not know about the rest of the members of that committee, but as we sat and listened it became very plain, to me at least, that so far as food distribution at the retail end is concerned, in 1973 we are faced with what is essentially a monopoly position. It became plain to me that the same is true of the processing industry which has a virtual monopoly. We cannot deal with this problem by saying that these situations do not exist.

I recall the time when Federated Co-operatives were before us. I checked through the proceedings of that meeting this afternoon. I asked them about a situation concerning the number of retail outlets in part of the city of Saskatoon. Now, in the same area, up goes another retail outlet—a large one—erected by a Calgary developer. I asked this group whether the additional space was needed in that part of the city, and they said no. I asked them, who was going to pay for it, and their answer is recorded in the minutes of proceedings of the committee. They said the consumer was going to pay for it. They also said there was another little city in Saskatchewan, down in the

### Food Prices

southwestern corner, where the same developer was constructing another outlet. The co-operative will be forced to move into that development and pay rent there because, if it does not, somebody else will move in and they will be faced with additional competition. Again, Mr. Speaker, the consumer is going to pay.

• (2100)

This evidence was put before us at the committee hearings. It was put before a commission in Saskatchewan several years ago. What are we going to do about it? I suggest that the committee is frank when it advocates a prices review board which can undertake a continuing job of investigating what is happening in the food industry as a total system. I do not think you can single out one particular sector at one particular time and say that this or that is the truth unless real investigation has been undertaken and you know what is happening.

The first job a prices review board can do is to find out what is happening. Our party has said plainly that after that happens, we expect such a board to have the power to make recommendations, and we expect the responsible minister to act on those recommendations within a limited period of time. We are not talking about a weak-kneed, ineffective board, such as is alleged we are talking about. That is not our concept.

In the committee we received evidence on excess advertising. It was plain that advertising was being undertaken that really did not relate to the real needs of the consumer. Just the other day when I was coming through Winnipeg I bought the *Winnipeg Tribune*. It carried an article explaining why TV ads aimed at children worked so well. It was by a Mr. Choate, and was taken from a Los Angeles paper. In part it read:

For the past year the Council on Children, Media and Merchandising . . . has had financial support from foundations in studying the impact of TV commercials on children. As a result of our study, I have concluded that the techniques of creating ads with a predictable effect on youngsters are the closely guarded secret of a cadre of motivational researchers, employed by American business . . .

Under controlled circumstances, and with the utmost security, the personnel of motivational research firms across the country monitor the reactions of children to given commercials and products. In this way, children are being used in laboratory situations to formulate, analyse, polish and compare ads designed to turn other children into salesmen in their own homes.

This is 1973, Mr. Speaker, and children are being programmed to buy products in a way that is acceptable to those who are merchandising and packaging the products. I repeat that this is 1973, not 1940. We should look at this question as a part of the total picture. We should also look at the needs of the farmer. One hon. member, I think it was one of the very attractive members of the committee—I am sorry that I do not recall the riding—said we could very well face the risk of a drop in the production of meat because of the pressures being put on the farmer by those who are promoting boycotts. Mr. Speaker, there is no group in our society that has asked less of society than the food producers. All they have asked of society is some security and a reasonable standard of living. They have not asked for excess profits or excess privileges. They have not taken time on radio or television to gull people into the kind of programs they think will be of advantage