

Health Resources Fund

in a single evening to allow any one part of the house the right to move an amendment attaching conditions when already a member on the other side of the house has had an amendment ruled out of order because it sought to impose conditions. Whatever your ruling may be, Mr. Chairman, we thought the inconsistency which in our opinion existed ought to be drawn to your attention. If Your Honour is not ready to make a ruling, I should like to say a word about the proposed amendment.

The Deputy Chairman: Order, the Chair is ready to make a ruling on the validity of the amendment put forward by the hon. member for Vancouver-Burrard. I thank hon. members for the enlightenment which was offered the Chair. Hon. members sought to establish a parallel between the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Comox-Alberni and that put forward by the hon. member for Vancouver-Burrard. The Chair ruled, in the earlier case, that the amendment went beyond the principle of the resolution and the scope of the bill, because there was an attempt in that amendment to regulate expenditures of money by the provinces. In the case of the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Vancouver-Burrard, as the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam mentioned, there are certain conditions attached but they are attached to the federal government in the making of grants of certain sums of money to provinces. This amendment would restrict the federal government, but places no control whatever over expenditures to be made by provinces out of federal payments to the provinces. I therefore declare this amendment is not out of order.

Mr. Douglas: In that case, Mr. Chairman, may I make a few remarks on the amendment. In my opinion, it would be unfortunate if this amendment were to be passed by the committee. For the past 20 years there have been a great many joint federal-provincial projects and, as a matter of fact, many projects which involved federal, provincial and municipal governments. This type of program has been extended to include highways, the development roads, natural resources, water conservation, drainage programs, the construction of old people's homes, housing and a great number of items which are of importance to the people of Canada. I think these joint efforts at all three levels of government justify the expenditures.

[Mr. Douglas.]

● (8:50 p.m.)

If the committee accepts this amendment, we are laying down what I think could be a very dangerous precedent. Is this now to be applied to ARDA, to highway programs, to resource development, to housing for aged citizens, and to half a dozen other items that I could easily mention? I understand the thinking of the hon. member who moved this amendment. It is true that there have been provincial governments which appeared to take deliberate pride in concealing the fact that the federal government had made substantial contributions to a given project. I understand that some members of the federal parliament might be irritated and annoyed when this happens. But also I can think of times when the shoe has been on the other foot, when provincial and municipal governments have been equally exercised when it appeared that one government making a contribution to a joint program sought to take all the credit.

I hesitate to mention a procedure the federal government used to follow, for fear that the minister of health might adopt it again. I can remember when the present Secretary of State for External Affairs was minister of health. When a provincial government received an application from a local hospital board to build a hospital of, let us say, 50 beds, which hospital was going to cost \$750,000, the federal government would be entitled to pay at one time \$1,000 a head, which would have been \$50,000, and later on \$2,000 a head, which would have worked out to \$100,000—

Mr. Starr: But he was not minister when the \$2,000 figure was in effect.

Mr. Douglas: At that time it was only \$1,000. It was raised to \$2,000 later. When the hospital board made an application to the provincial department of health, if the provincial department of health approved of the application it would agree to pay its share of the cost, after which the application came to Ottawa. Long before any of us were ever informed of what was afoot there would be a press release saying that: "Mr. Martin the minister of health had approved a \$750,000 hospital at point X." The contribution of the federal government would have been \$50,000, with \$350,000 coming from the provincial government. This would still leave some \$350,000 to be put up by the municipality.

I never objected to this procedure because I did not need to be annoyed. The hospital boards and local municipalities which were