

Health Resources Fund

talking about something different in the previous bill which was ruled out of order by the Chairman. Accordingly I would suggest that this amendment is in order, that it is similar to the other parts of the clause. I would urge hon. members to support it on the grounds, not so much from the short-sighted view, I might say, that may have been taken by the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra, or the previous speaker from the other side of the house, interpreting this to be a matter only as it applies to this particular piece of legislation and in that sense interpreted politically, but I would suggest that we ought to take a broader look at the impact, if there is any, of this amendment. Really, in my view, it has to do with the concept of the federal government, and has not really do with any one particular party in the federal government, because this particular matter is not a political question. What credit a province gives the federal government for a specific project depends upon the political whims of the province. This is something that may change from time to time because governments are not always very permanent.

I would invite people not to look at this matter in the light of what may happen in this particular bill, because I do not think this amendment will do a great deal to bring about any changes or any greater public awareness in this regard. I do not think it will have any substantial effect. In my opinion it is a matter of principle and on that basis I would urge all hon. members to support the bill and would suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, that while the point of order may on its face appear to have some merit, when you examine clause 7 of the bill and the principle of that clause in relation to the amendment before the house, you will see it is different from the precedent cited by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

Mr. Olson: Mr. Chairman, when you are considering whether this amendment is in order and should be put before the committee I should like you to consider these comments. I express some sympathy to hon. members from British Columbia, from Comox-Alberni, Vancouver-Burrard and Kootenay East, in their cries of anguish that they are unable to keep their people accurately informed as to the participation of the two levels of government.

• (8:30 p.m.)

I am sure all hon. members will have some sympathy for this, because it is a rather

frustrating situation not to be able to keep up with the advertising campaigns which are carried on in the provinces so as to keep the public accurately and adequately informed. But to write this into the law and make this a condition before any federal funds are granted to a province is different from interpreting public opinion concerning participation in the health resources fund. For example, we know that the present government spent between \$2 million or \$2.5 million on advertising the Canada Pension Plan in September and October of last year. It seems to me this is the wrong way of using funds out of the public treasury.

I was really amazed at the statement made by the hon. member for Rosthern, because while you can have some sympathy for the hon. members from British Columbia I do not believe the Conservatives have a case. When they were in office they had no difficulty in getting their message across to the people on the prairies, because I know there were times when it was mandatory that signs be put up on certain projects in Alberta before they qualified for federal grants.

In fact the hon. member for Ontario who is in the house tonight will recall I am sure that when he was minister of labour in the Conservative government it was made a condition that a sign be put up on each of the winter work projects to which the federal government had made contributions, or else a grant was not forthcoming. The name of the minister of public works in the Conservative government has been around the post office building and other public buildings in Medicine Hat while they were being constructed.

I cannot say, Mr. Chairman, that I have many objections to this clause, except that I think it rings a false note to hear a member of the Conservative party complain sanctimoniously about something which they did in exactly the same way throughout the years they were in office. I think that both parties have taken some pretty desperate measures at different times to see that they got adequate credit for what they were trying to do. I think that all this complaining that members of the legislative assemblies and provincial ministers are taking away the credit for the granting of federal funds to certain projects is a lot of nonsense.

I appreciated the remarks of the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra when he suggested that we should feel obliged to undertake these projects whether or not the provinces