

International Development Research Centre

I hope, too, that in the course of carrying out international development research we shall also avoid attracting the word "paternalism"; there has been too much evidence of a latent paternalism, at any event, toward the developing countries.

As to clause 10, perhaps it would have been better had the government shown the courage of its convictions and voted my amendment down. Despite the fact that the committee supported by a substantial majority the view I held, the minister has declared that he does not intend to make the appointment. So be it. The arguments have been put forward in the committee, as they were at another stage of the proceedings here. If the government does not like this proposal there is open to it a perfectly valid and legitimate way of getting rid of it, that is, by using its majority in a perfectly democratic way to toss it out. It seems to me it is somewhat hypocritical to accept it and then to point out that the wording is permissive and say that the government will not make the appointment.

I have one other thing to say. It was never in my mind to suggest that the parliamentary representatives on such a board should exercise surveillance. I had the odd feeling that among the 264 members of this House and the 102 members of the Senate there just might be people whose competence in the field of international affairs is such that they could make a useful contribution, like the other 19 or 20 members of this board, to the on-going work of international development research. If the minister feels this is beyond the realm of possibility, that is up to him. I remain convinced that Members of Parliament and Senators can make a useful contribution to this work. If the minister does not like the proposal and will not make the appointments, why does he not have the bells rung and get rid of the proposal now so that it will not clutter up the record?

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, two considerations prevent my hon. friend and myself from insisting that we follow the suggestion of the hon. member for Fundy-Royal (Mr. Fairweather), namely, that a vote should be called on the question whether this Senate amendment should be defeated. One of these considerations is the importance of getting this bill passed so that the centre can begin to function. Though he did not say so, I suspect the minister feels as we do on this point. I suspect the government has already been in touch with a number of people who

[Mr. Fairweather.]

are now waiting for the bill to become law before taking up their duties. If we were to defeat this proposal the bill would, I suppose, go back to the Senate and there would be further delays. In these circumstances I am satisfied merely to state our position briefly for the record, rather than to insist on a vote.

The other consideration I have in mind is the minister's firm undertaking not to make any appointments under this clause, thus ensuring that nothing will happen of a sort which I believe would be undesirable. When the proposal of the hon. member for Fundy-Royal first came before the committee he expressed it in mandatory terms. The words were: "One member of parliament shall be a governor..." After some discussion which, if my memory serves me correctly, I initiated, it was agreed that the word used should, at least, be "may" rather than "shall". I had grave doubts about the suggestion, then, even though I gave it reluctant support in the committee. I have graver doubts now, since the Senate wants a piece of the action. This is partly because of the opposition of myself and my party to the Senate as part of Canada's Parliament and partly because, though there may be some reason for the presence of an elected Member of Parliament on a board of this sort, I see no reason whatever why Senators, most of whom are members of God knows how many boards directing God knows how many large corporations, should be represented on a board of governors concerned with aid to developing countries. One has to be very polite when speaking of the other place but I think it was an excess of gall rather than an excess of zeal which made them suggest an amendment such as they have produced. We are thoroughly opposed to it. It is about time members in the other place knew they were appointed by the government and that there are things they ought not to be pushing themselves into. This is one of them.

● (2:20 p.m.)

I agree entirely with the uneasiness that the minister feels, and which my colleagues and I feel, about introducing this proposal in connection with an International Research Development Centre when a similar proposal has not been made with regard to any other Crown corporation. My information is that it is already the fact that some of the representatives of developing countries are wondering precisely whether this parliament is so anxious to have direct connection with the board of governors of the centre because it wants some direct political and Parliamentary