

concerned; it often happens that senators are unknown to the people they are supposed to represent and are themselves unacquainted with the residents of their senatorial division. How then can they properly look after the interests of their constituency?

Even should the present system of appointment be continued, it seems to me that the government of the day should always pay heed to such requirements; but with an elective senate such as advocated by the hon. member for Welland and with senators elected for a period of ten years or more, as suggested by the hon. member for Prescott (Mr. Proulx), there would be no opportunity for such unfair treatment; the voters would always see that they elect to the Senate the man that is most agreeable to them.

I also think that age should be taken into account; old age affects a senator's efficiency and power just as it affects efficiency and power of a man in any station of life. An elective Upper House would also obviate that drawback.

Another point; I believe that the senatorial representation ought to be proportionate to the population of every province as is that of the House of Commons. Accepting 24 as the number of Quebec senators, I think it might be taken as a basis to determine the number of senators to which the other provinces are entitled; the system would then be the same as that whereby the number of representatives in this House is computed. It seems to me that in this way the whole of Canada would be more fairly represented. Of course, certain provinces would lose some of their senators, but it is only fair that their representation in the Upper House be in proportion to their population. At present the province of Quebec counts only one senator for every 83,000 people, while Prince Edward Island with a population of 90,000 or 92,000 is represented by four. In this way the province of Quebec is not accorded fair treatment.

I do think that the appointment of a committee, from both sides of the House, as suggested by the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Maclean) and the hon. member for Kingston (Mr. Nickle) to seriously investigate the question would be the most expedient method of arriving at a solution and satisfy all parties concerned. I hope the suggestion will be favourably considered by the members of the two political parties of the country.

[Mr. Boulay.]

Rt. Hon. Sir GEORGE FOSTER (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I have been interested in the discussion which has taken place on this subject, and, of course, I would have been all the more interested had a greater number of hon. members spoken. I do not think it at all follows that because nearly fifty years ago a certain method was adopted, under then existing conditions, to frame a political constitution, the time may not come when that constitution ought to be revised so as to conform with the social and political changes which have occurred in the interim. Of course, discussion and thoughtful consideration are necessary preliminaries to any such change. On such a subject as this, I always hail with pleasure a really earnest conversation in this House, and one bereft of any party animus. My hon. friend, the proposer of this resolution (Mr. German) has, in his remarks, offered a delightful opportunity for a little criticism, were I disposed to indulge in it, in that he accused himself of seeming inconsistency. We have all, however, been in that position, more or less, and it is hardly fair to animadvert in that respect. My hon. friend (Mr. German) seemed to be striving after an upper chamber, the members of which should have neither party bias nor political principles, but I think most people will agree that it is not necessary to delete political principles from a legislative body which has to deal with governmental and administrative measures. I am partly in sympathy with my hon. friend in that I would prefer a Senate that was less strongly partisan than a House of Commons. But to my mind the hon. gentleman is steering straight towards methods which would inevitably result in the election of senators who could not help but have party bias. How are you going to bring about such a change in the habits and opinions of men that, when they are elected to the Senate, they will at once forget the party principles and party affiliations in which they believe and with which they have been surrounded from their earliest years? How are you going to conduct a campaign in a large constituency unless you have a political organization? Will you have a "German" organization or a "Lemieux" organization or a "Copp" organization? Will your organization be personal or will it be political? To my mind it is bound to be a political organization, and being such, it will be a party organization. If you have only two great dominant parties, you will, of