

or thirty years, was willing to make a sacrifice when it was deemed necessary in the interests of his party. I commend a man who would do that, but if a bargain be made by which, as Mr. Blair says, the price paid is enormously high and that too when he goes to try and invade the fortress of his enemies, another party, then it becomes venal in its character. I think my hon. friend who smiles at my remark, will agree with me that it is a much more important matter to sustain the dignity of the Senate, particularly after what has been said abroad in reference to the members of this House, than under any other circumstances. If my recollection serves me right, I read some little time ago an interview which had taken place between the hon. leader of the House and some newspaper reporter, or in a letter written by the Minister of Justice to his leader, that among other things it would be one of the duties—I do not know if it was to be the first duty—of this government to reform the Senate. I dare say using the word literally, away from the political meaning of the word, that most of us would not be harmed by a little reformation, but if the government is to begin a reformation, politically or otherwise, or in the constitution establishing the Senate, or in those who are to form the body hereafter, I advise him in all sincerity to begin within his own household, with the members with whom he has to associate every day and with whom he has to consult in the forming of a policy for the Government of Canada. He has plenty of room, plenty of missionary work about that round table at which the hon. gentleman at present has the honour of having a seat. I should like to know, having said this much and having called the attention of the House to these utterances of one of the most prominent ministers of the Crown, whether the policy which has been announced by Mr. Blair is the policy of the government, and whether they are aware and were a party to the negotiations which took place between the gentleman to whom he referred and Mr. Blair himself. When we have his answer we will be in a better position to deal more fully with this important subject.

Hon. Sir OLIVER MOWAT—I think the House will agree with me that my hon. friend is making a mountain out of a molehill. I know nothing of the transactions to

which he refers. I know nothing of any negotiations between my friend Mr. Blair and anybody else, either a member of this House or a member of the other House. At the same time, from what I know of Mr. Blair and what I have always understood about him, I am quite sure that he has done nothing whatever that is inconsistent with the duties, the honour of a member of the government, or of a private gentleman. The hon. gentleman has quoted some expressions from a speech as reported in a newspaper. He seems greatly displeased with the expression of “loaning, so to speak,” a seat in this House. With regard to that matter, and the other matter read from another newspaper, this is to be observed nothing took place. Whatever may have occurred as stated, according to the hon. member, in the newspaper extract, was merely a matter of talk, nothing more. If we have to consider anything at all, it is mere conversation, which may have been of the most casual description. Whether it would be wrong for a member of this House to resign in order that a minister of the Crown may get his seat, I do not think there can be much doubt. I fancy it would be a very proper thing, which nobody would dispute, that a member of this House, who thought it of importance a minister of the Crown without a seat should have a seat, should resign his own seat in this House or the other House in order to give the minister a seat. He might do that without any expectation of being re-elected at any future time, or being reappointed to this House at any future time, or he might do it expecting that he would be restored to his former seat on its becoming vacant, and I am not aware that there is any principle of law or any principle of ethics which would render anything of the kind improper. It may be of great interest to the country that a minister should get an immediate seat, and it might happen that there would be no other way of his getting it unless somebody resigned for him. Such arrangements are not uncommon in the other chamber; and if it is reasonable and proper and a well understood thing in the other House, I do not see that it is unreasonable or improper that a similar transaction should occur in this House. I am quite sure, if there was any talk about it, it would not in any sense be objectionable as a matter of ethics, or as a matter of constitutional usage. Then my hon. friend re-