

Retirement Age for Senators

intermediate party, would be to have appointments made on the basis of one third, one third, one third. They should not be nominated for life, but for ten years, and the nominations should be based on the work these people have put in and what they have done for the Canadian people in the years preceding their ten-year nomination.

There is one thing the Senate could do that would gain the esteem of the Canadian people, if they are going to be the guide of this House, the leading light of this House and objective in Canadian political issues. There is one role they could play that would save the Canadian taxpayer millions and millions and millions of dollars. That would be if we had a qualified Canadian Senate which would replace the very many royal commissions set up by the government almost every week. Then the Senate would not have to wait for legislation to come from this House, and when it does not come, go to sleep. At the moment the age limit of 75 would certainly wake up a few Senators. But would abolishing the Senate be the entire solution? Then we would end up in this House with a majority government—that would do what? For the five years of its mandate it would be king and executioner at the same time.

We must have that extra safety brake in the other place. But to have this you must have people who are intelligent, entirely objective and who will look at a problem not only from one angle but from all the angles. You must have qualified men, not only in the financial field or the political field with regard to how to win an election. You must have men who know what they are talking about. You must have educators; men who, when something concerning education is dealt with, know what they are talking about. You must have men who are qualified in agriculture. How many Senators know what they are talking about with regard to agriculture? Some have interests in different fields of agriculture. I know of one now, for instance, who knows more about maple syrup than anybody else. At least he knows how to make a profit on it and how to sell the stuff. You have one who has an interest in steel, one who has an interest in the wheat business, who probably knows more about the Winnipeg Grain Exchange than he does about the troubles of the farmers in growing that wheat. That is what you have in the other place at the moment. If we had Senators qualified in these various fields, we would have a responsible Upper House. We

[Mr. Langlois.]

would have something worth listening to when these matters were being discussed.

I found it funny when we went across to Europe that our Senators are confused with United States Senators. The people in Europe think that our Senators have the same authority as those in the United States. I never said anything about this, but I laughed pretty often in my beer about this. If that pleases them, let us give them that pleasure, in addition to all the other advantages Senators have. It is their right, and I do not blame anybody in the Senate. They are appointed there, and let us leave them there. But let us change the manner of appointing them. I honestly believe that if we had people named, one third by the provinces, for ten years, this would be a considerable improvement on the present system, because when the provincial governments change they would have somebody representing their interests in the Senate within this ten-year period at least. I am sure the provinces would not send anybody to the Senate who would not represent their interests. For brightness, intelligence and alertness you do not have to be of a certain age.

Mr. Lloyd: Who is talking about brightness?

Mr. Langlois: I can look across the chamber and not find any sunshine there.

An hon. Member: Halifax is pretty cloudy today.

Mr. Langlois: There are some parts of Canada that are pretty dim all around. We want people in the Senate to know what they are doing and how they are going to do a job. If you ask university professors to come in there, they have not millions of dollars; they are as poor as church mice. But they are a darned sight more intelligent and alert than some of the people there at the moment who have millions. When are we going to quit judging people by the thickness of their wallet and start judging them by their real value? Until we do this, we will not have a responsible Senate. Until we do this the Senate will not have the support and the confidence of this House, or of the people. This will not be achieved until we have a Senate which merits this confidence.

These intermediate bodies should name people to the Senate. These other fields, which come less often in this House, still necessitate attention. At least we could have experts in these fields in the other place. If you start talking to Senators about sports, most of them have only played golf during their