

a party, or as men who owe allegiance to a party.

I have suggested that the present senators should hold their positions during their lives. I submit that for two reasons: One is that I think senators really have a fair preemptive right to the positions to which they have been appointed, and that it is only fair to them that they should continue to hold their positions during the period for which they have been appointed, that is during life and good behaviour. Another reason is—and this is a very potent one—that I doubt very much if such a Bill would pass the Senate, as it would have to do, unless it did provide for the retention of their positions by the present senators. That is not an original suggestion of my own, because that same thing was said in 1856, when it was proposed to change the legislative council, at that time appointed, to an elective legislative council. The legislative council had rejected a Bill in 1854 for reforming their constitution, simply because it provided to wipe them out. Consequently in 1855, when the measure came up again, it provided that they should retain their places under their appointments and that new councillors should be elected twelve at a time, that is, twelve the first year, twelve two years later, another twelve two years after that, and a fourth twelve two years after that. The constituencies for which legislative councillors were to be elected were chosen by lot, the names of the different constituencies were put in a box and the first twelve that came out of the box were the first in which elections were to be held, and so on until the whole forty-eight were elected. They were to be elected in that way and to hold their positions for eight years, twelve legislative councillors being elected each two years. That, you might say, was a very good solution of the problem. There would necessarily

4 p.m. be a party organization because with a legislative council of forty-eight twelve men might be sufficient to change the complexion of the council, and you would have politics entering into the matter. What I have taken the liberty to suggest is that the Dominion of Canada should be divided into as many senatorial districts as there are senators to be appointed; that each province should have the same number of senators as it now has under the provisions of the British North America Act; that the present senators should hold their positions during their

[Mr. German.]

lives according to the conditions under which they were appointed, but as vacancies occur from time to time elections should be held in the senatorial district concerned. What would be the result and the effect of that? There would perhaps be a vacancy in New Brunswick or Nova Scotia or British Columbia. Under the provisions of the Act an election would be held within the required time for the election of a successor. There would be no party organization throughout the country; there would be probably some political local feeling in regard to the matter, but generally there would be no party organization, and that senator when elected would not be under the control or in any way under obligation to any party organization. He would be elected by reason of his ability as a man capable of representing the people of the country. He would be a man known in the locality. He would be free and independent in politics and, whether he had previously been a Liberal or a Conservative, he would go to the Senate of Canada as a representative of the people, free and independent of political affiliation. That is the principle upon which the members of the Senate should be elected, and I should be glad to see that principle more prevalent in the House of Commons than it is at present. I have suggested that they should be elected for a term of seven years. In the old legislative council of Canada the members were elected for eight years, there being an election of twelve men every two years. The suggestion that the term be seven years is only an arbitrary one, but I think that seven years would be a term of reasonable length. Members of the House of Commons are elected for a term of five years; I think that senators should be elected for a longer term. In that event a senator would hold his position for seven years, and no dissolution of Parliament could affect his senatorship during that period. At the end of the term he would go back to his constituents, give an account of his stewardship, and ask them whether they would again trust him with their interests in revising or supervising the legislation of the House of Commons. By the adoption of this suggestion you would have an independent body of capable men, free from political influences, filling the highest position in the land as a revising body of the legislation of the lower House. Sir John Macdonald, in moving the adoption of the resolution for an elective legislative council in 1856, expressed himself as being strongly in favour of a