

is the argument which we can convey to the country at large if we keep it in our hands until the time for decision arrives. Those who are interested in its favourable disposal at that time can send it on to the Commons. In that way we will be doing far more for the bill than if we deal with it rapidly now.

As chairman of the committee, I say that we are not looking for work; there is plenty of work still to be done. Nevertheless, I think the wise course is to send this bill to my committee, keep it over the recess and make it a live issue when we come back.

Hon. John M. Macdonald: Honourable senators, speaking personally, I do not think I can vote in favour of the motion as amended, although I would be in favour of the bill itself even though it does not go as far as I would like to see it go. The honourable Senator Langlois mentioned that perhaps the whole matter of election should be looked at, including giving 18-year olds the right to be candidates. I agree that this is a good idea, but this bill deals only with the right to vote. While I have said that it does not go as far as I would like it to go, at least in giving 18-year olds the right to vote we are making some progress.

Mention was made of all the bills dealing with this subject now before the House of Commons. I think this goes to show that public opinion is in favour of lowering the voting age to 18, and I do not think we need consider at this time any further complications as to whether 18-year olds should be allowed to be candidates or have the right to make contracts or other considerations. Let us deal with the principle of this bill which is simply to lower the voting age to 18.

Mention has been made of the Election Act itself. I say, if it needs a good going-over, let the House of Commons do it. If we try to do it the criticism will be levelled at us that we are interfering with their work. In all the arguments that have been advanced I have not heard any good reason why this bill should be defeated on its merits, but there have been several good reasons as to why it should be passed on its merits. I see absolutely no validity in the argument that we should hold the bill up now and send it to committee. This bill has been before us for five months, and perhaps when we come back in the fall it will be before us for another five months. For all we know it may never be sent to the House of Commons. Even then, we have no guarantee that it will be dealt with

in that house in the fall any more than we have now.

Honourable senators, let us pass the bill now and show how we feel about giving the vote to 18-year olds. Personally, I am in favour of doing so.

Hon. Keith Davey: Honourable senators, I find myself almost speechless, but more from sorrow than anger. Senator Prowse suggested that what we are witnessing is an unwarranted delay. I would suggest that perhaps the honourable senator is being too kind. I think it is a stalling technique, a delaying technique.

I spoke yesterday on second reading of this bill and said that much of the opposition to this legislation is based on fear. For the life of me, I cannot understand why the Government leadership in the Senate is afraid of this legislation. The point has been made by Senator Langlois, Senator Roebuck and others that there are a number of similar bills before various committees in the House of Commons at the present time. For that reason alone, I think this would be a particularly significant time for us to indicate exactly what is the thinking of the Senate.

Senator Roebuck—and he well knows I have no colleague in this place for whom I have greater respect—suggested we should perhaps pigeon-hole this legislation until the fall. Well, if it is going to be pigeon-holed, let us not do it here; let it be pigeon-holed in the other place. I must say I regard the suggestion, not perhaps as an attempt to derail this legislation but certainly as an attempt to shunt it aside. I think it would be most regrettable if we were to do that.

For that reason, honourable senators, I vote that we support this legislation and that we pass it now.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, it is moved by honourable Senator Argue, seconded by honourable Senator Sparrow, that this bill be now read the third time.

In amendment it is moved by honourable Senator Langlois, seconded by honourable Senator Gouin, that this bill be not now read the third time but that it be referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the honourable Senator Langlois' amendment?

Hon. Mr. Argue: Mr. Speaker, I would request that you call for the contents and non-contents.