

ing that result because, as is well known, the election of the president of the United States is fought out to-day on party lines of the most well-defined and clean-cut edge.

I am quite ready to admit, speaking from this side of the House, that I do not believe that the constitution of the Senate, as it is now established, is altogether satisfactory. But, in saying that, perhaps, I only in a general way criticise the Senate as democracy has been criticised as being "of all forms of government the least objectionable." Perhaps our selective Senate is of all forms of choosing the least objectionable. But, as the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Maclean) said, that is best which is best administered. If it were possible to impress upon the governments of the day—I speak having regard to the appointments that the Liberals have made and I speak also taking into consideration the appointments that the Conservatives have made—that if less attention were paid to purely party lines, if we were not so keen to give recognition to men of our own political faith, but if we took a wider point of view and endeavoured to secure for the Senate men of outstanding capacity in the various walks of Canadian life, educational, industrial, agricultural, financial and political, the Senate of Canada would be a stronger body.

Now, the hon. member for Halifax has said that in the main he believed the Senate had expressed what the people were from time to time thinking, and he has directed attention to the Yukon Bill of some years ago, to the Naval Bill and the Highways Bill of a few years ago. As to the Yukon Bill, I cannot speak, because I am not acquainted with its peculiar terms, but I think the attitude of the Senate on the Naval Bill came as a tremendous shock to the people of Canada, because we know that there were Liberals who believed that the Conservative party were right and voted against the Bill and the Conservative party, and I do not think it would be amiss to say that there were Conservative senators who thought that the Liberals were right and still voted for the policy of the Conservative party. I believe that the senators should act more or less as political judges, that they should be publicists of the widest point of view, and that in the discharge of their duties their decision should be reached with regard only to the interest of Canada at large and without regard to the particular view of this measure or that measure as it appears to affect the fortunes of one party or the other for the time being.

[Mr. Nickle.]

But would my hon. friend from Welland (Mr. German) attain this ideal condition if this measure should be adopted by this House and if it should have legal effect? It does not seem to me that he would. He says: Let us have an elective Senate, elected for a definite term, and if we have that we will get an independent Senate. If one is to judge of what is going to be the effect of the resolution, or of the legal enactment of the proposition, there is no better school than the school of experience to enable us to determine the result. Let us see what has been the effect of an elective Senate. The great outstanding example is the Senate of the United States. I do not think the hon. member for Welland would contend that there party politics are not the predominant force that determines the election, and although party politics in the main do determine the election, there is one other characteristic that is a very important factor and that is the wealth of the men who stand for election to the American Senate. Wealth and party prestige are essential in the main to election to the American Senate. If you want to take a more recent example you have the example of the Senate of the Australian Commonwealth. There was a body of men speaking the same language as our own, taking the British Constitution and the ideals and examples well known to them and to us, and endeavouring to elaborate an ideal constitution. They decided that they would have an elective Senate, and how has it worked out? Party lines are drawn just as tightly in Australia as in other countries and in the case of an election to the Senate the same organization prevails for the election of senators as for election of members to the House of Representatives and party lines are to a great extent the determining factors. If we should adopt this method of election in Canada, I am afraid we would find ourselves in this predicament, that men standing for election to the Senate would necessarily have to declare their party affiliation and attitude to public questions of the day. Under our system of elections, many questions come before the people at the same time and a man might vote for his representative for this reason or that but I greatly fear that the election to the Senate being for a wider area, and an appeal being made to very many more men than would be made in an election of a representative to this House, we would find that wealth and party prestige would be the controlling factors.