

Responsible Government. I entirely concur with the Hon. Mr. Wood in believing that more liberal representation will do much more for the good of the Colony than Responsible Government. I believe in a good franchise being given, as foreshadowed by the Governor's Speech; and I think twelve elected and eight nominated members would give satisfaction and work well, although report makes the change more liberal than this. We are now on the eve of prosperity. Our quartz mining is still to be commenced, and we only want good roads to Kootenay, by way of Eagle Pass, to open our resources in this respect. I do not intend to enter upon the question of Responsible Government. I believe it would be bad for us and is not required by the people. I shall support the Government in the clause now under discussion.

Hon. Mr. DeCOSMOS—Mr. Chairman, I had not expected to say anything more on this subject; but, on more mature reflection, I am satisfied that it is my duty to do so. The more the matter is argued, and the more the remarks of Government members are heard, the more I believe we are being asked to take a leap in the dark; for all I can learn is that the new House is to be partly nominative and partly elective—and not responsible. The proportions are not stated. It has also cropped out that there will be a qualification for members, and also for electors. If the Government refer this matter to the people to know whether such a Constitution will suit them, I believe the people, to almost a unit, will reject it. The mass are opposed to Confederation altogether unless they can get a more liberal representation than that proposed by the Government. At the outset I proposed a Committee of all parties to consider and report upon the whole matter; but the hasty judgment of the House, as I think, deferred the question. Now, Sir, I think if the Committee had met and suggested, for the protection of the property element, that one-third of the Members of the Council should be elected for a longer period and hold property qualifications, the country would have been satisfied. I can conceive on some such proposition as that being laid before the House, it would have been eminently successful; as it now stands it is matter of opinion. I think the Governor has been led into error if the utterances that occasionally drop from members of this House mean anything. I cannot conceive that the people will accept such a Constitution. I should prefer that we should go into Confederation as a unit. I have made these few remarks to set my mind at rest, and to save myself trouble with my constituents if I should offer myself as a candidate again. I state that I believe the Government will jeopardise Confederation on this point.

Hon. Mr. DEWDNEY—Sir, the question now under consideration has been so fully gone into by Hon. Members of the Council, that I feel it will be useless for me to take up the time of this House to any great length. At the commencement of this debate I had several arguments which I proposed to bring before your notice against Responsible Government, but I find that these have been ably handled by other Hon. gentlemen far more ably than I could have hoped to do; and should I not have been convinced at the earlier stages of this debate, other arguments have been adduced which now completely set my mind at rest on the subject. I am opposed to the recommendations of both the Hon. Members for New Westminster and Lillooet, particularly the latter, and in opposing them I do not feel I am injuring the cause of Confederation. But while I feel, Mr. Chairman, that it is unnecessary for me to enter into the question of Responsible Government, I think I should not be doing my duty were I to remain silent upon one matter connected with this debate—one upon which I consider I am as capable of giving an opinion as any Hon. Member of this Council—namely, the feelings of the inhabitants of the Mainland generally with regard to Responsible Government. I have travelled through this country as much as any Hon. Member of this Council, and I have been brought in contact with all classes, and have mixed with all classes, and I have yet to meet the first individual who has expressed to me his desire for Responsible Government. Now, Mr. Chairman, do you believe, does this Council believe, that the cry throughout this Colony is—down with the present form of Government, let us have Responsible Government? Hon. Members of this House are aware, I presume, that my avocations for some years past, in fact as long as I have been in the Colony, have necessarily brought me in contact with all classes, and should this have been the cry, do you think I should not have heard it? I say distinctly again, I have yet to meet the first individual who has expressed to me his desire for Responsible Government. The feeling of my constituents is not in favour of Responsible Government; on the contrary, it was distinctly expressed to me that they do not desire any change in the present form of Government. All they want is money to keep their trails in order and a