

While I am on my feet, I would like to call attention to an anomaly concerning the qualification of senators from the different provinces. A senator from Quebec must be qualified in the district for which he sits in the Senate, but I understand that that does not apply elsewhere. In provinces outside of Quebec, as I understand, if a senator is qualified within the province, he is entitled to sit in the Senate. But in our province he must be qualified in the particular division for which he is appointed.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Section 22 of the British North America Act governs that.

Mr. BERGERON. Why is the difference made?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Bergeron) will have to ask the men who drew the Confederation Act.

Mr. BERGERON. Why might we not amend that?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. No, we cannot touch that.

Mr. BERGERON. I know it is a great hindrance in the province of Quebec. The Prime Minister will understand me at once, when I remind him that some gentlemen in Montreal were appointed to the Senate lately, and they had to buy property in the particular district for which they were appointed in order to qualify. This is a very great inconvenience. I do not see why all cannot be put on the same footing.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. If the hon. gentleman will go back to the newspapers of 1886-87, I think he will find that the party to which he belongs insisted on keeping up the old electoral divisions of the legislative council of Lower Canada. That is the reason those districts were continued under the Confederation Act, whereas in Ontario these old divisions were removed. In Ontario the senators are appointed for the province at large, whereas in Quebec the senators are appointed for the several divisions.

Mr. BERGERON. That could be left and an amendment made to the—

Mr. FITZPATRICK. We cannot make any amendment.

Mr. BERGERON. We could propose it to the imperial parliament.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Hardly worth while.

Mr. LAKE. The hon. member for Beauharnois (Mr. Bergeron) apparently does not like to have the Senate representation depend on population. But, if his principle is followed it is a still stronger reason for increasing the Senate representation in the west. If we consider the question by area, we find that the larger portion of Canada lies west of the Great Lakes.

Mr. BERGERON. But it does not go by that.

Mr. LAKE. What does it go by?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. By the British North America Act.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. Does the British North America Act say that these new provinces shall have six senators?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The constitution of the United States provides for two senators to each state, whether the state is large or small. The idea was that there should be uniformity of representation in respect to states, not in respect to population. In our case, Ontario to-day has twenty-four senators and a population of over 2,000,000; the maritime provinces have twenty-four senators and about 1,000,000 of a population. The province of Prince Edward Island, if I mistake not, has four senators, and is the smallest province in the Dominion.

Mr. LAKE. If, as I understand, this parliament has power at present to put the representation of these western provinces in the Senate at a higher figure than it has been in the past, I certainly feel that parliament should do so, because I think it would be only reasonable that that part of Canada which lies west of the great lakes should have more than twenty-four members in the Senate, which would be the case if this scheme is carried into effect. They will have under this arrangement twenty-four senators out of a total of ninety-six.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. They will have nineteen senators.

Mr. LAKE. I understand from the Prime Minister that the west will ultimately be represented by a group of twenty-four senators, like the three eastern groups at present. I think that the country lying west of the great lakes should ultimately have a representation of more than twenty-four senators, because the influence it will exercise upon the Dominion will be greater than that number of senators would imply in proportion to the whole number.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. The British North America Act, under section 22, provides for the representation of the provinces in the Senate, and provides for that representation by dividing the then provinces of the Dominion into three groups, Quebec, Ontario and the maritime provinces, each group entitled to twenty-four senators. Then section 147 of the Act provides for additions to the Senate in the event of the admission of Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and British Columbia, and makes provision that in the event of British Columbia coming in it will be entitled to a certain number of senators, and if Prince Edward Island is brought in its senators