

That is important for members opposite to understand because you cannot fool everyone. People out there do the calculations and expose the flummery of your arguments.

First, there is little evidence that savings are too low in Canada.

Yesterday I pointed out that somewhere in my book—which you can borrow from the library if you are too much of a tightwad to buy a copy. It will be no skin off my nose, because I have donated the royalties to a scholarship fund, but my publisher would be happy if you bought a copy of my book.

Hon. Eymard G. Corbin: Senator Gigantès, may I ask you to explain the expression you have just used, “no skin off my nose”? What does it mean? I have never heard that before.

Senator Gigantès: Tightwad?

Senator Corbin: You used the expression “no skin off my nose”. Did I hear you correctly?

Senator Gigantès: Yes.

Senator Corbin: What does it mean?

Senator Gigantès: The expression “no skin off my nose” means that it does not affect me at all. It is a British expression, which first appeared in Shakespeare in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*.

There is a table in my book which gives OECD figures that show that Canada's rate of savings as a proportion of GDP are higher than average in the 21 countries of the OECD and certainly higher than the United States. We are second only to Japan. Mr. Brooks has obviously looked at the same figures because he says:

Certainly by international standards Canada's savings rate is quite high. Moreover, whether collectively a society should save more and consume less is at the end of the day a value judgement.

When he says “at the end of the day”, Mr. Brooks was obviously listening to various people on the other side, notably, the honourable leader. I am mellowing this morning. I even used the word “honourable” when referring to Senator Murray. He has a habit of saying “at the end of the day”. Mr. Brooks is talking about the end of the day too.

... whether collectively a society should save more and consume less is at the end of the day a value judgement. The trade-off implicit in increasing savings means a transfer of consumption from the current generation to subsequent generations.

Starve now for the sake of your grandchildren.

The ethical judgement underlying this trade-off might seem uncontentious, particularly if it is being made by the current generation and if it involves reduced current consumption for those who are otherwise well-off.

Like Senator Poitras.

However, just as likely, the present consumption that is foregone will be that of poor people to whom government transfer payments might be made or that of those who benefit from public health services and education.

[Senator Gigantès.]

As I was pointing out yesterday, there is a serious movement among respectable, “bien pensants” Conservatives to shift more funds toward private education and to allow a private, parallel health care system for the rich with the best doctors, nurses and technicians. As a result, there will be two classes of health care. We do that by the disentanglement method that has led Billy Vander Zalm and other Tory premiers to put their sticky fingers, and those of their friends, into the huge medicare pie.

● (0910)

I am sorry that Senator Castonguay is not here, but I have not missed his change of view from when he was Minister of Health Care to now that he is president of an insurance company. Who makes huge profits out of private health care insurance? The insurance companies. Senator Castonguay did not allow insurance companies to participate in the health care system that he was setting up so admirably in Quebec when he was Minister, but now that he is president of a huge financial group that is big in insurance, he is in favour—come on, come on, I am provoking—of allowing private health insurance, through which the rich can buy a policy, possibly from his group thus further enriching it, so that there will be private hospitals taking care of the likes of Senator Poitras—to whom I wish the best of health forever.

I hope you never need a doctor or a hospital, senator. You are a wonderful man, even though you are bigoted about those of us whose mothers did not have the privilege of being here to give us birth, and therefore we did not have that special sanctity that geographic location confers. Ah well! I will have to live under that burden.

Mr. Brooks continues:

If it is these latter members of the current generation—that is, the poor.

You do not meet them where you live, honourable members opposite, and if you did you would probably say, “Soyez respectable”, as Madame Lavoie-Roux said yesterday. By the way, that is the last refuge of the Conservatives. They say, “It is bad manners to eat” or, “You are not being respectable. Don't put a piece of tangerine in your mouth. Oh, how very shocking!”

Senator Poitras: You would not understand that.

Senator Gigantès: I understand compassion. I understand the need of the poor to be helped and I think that is a little more important than worrying whether the great stone-faced Senator Castonguay, who is already a monument while he is still alive, or even yourself or somebody on the other side will say to me that I should not put a piece of tangerine in my mouth. By the way, I have a considerable supply of pieces of tangerine and I will put them in my mouth whenever I feel like it, whether you like it or not. If any of you want any, send over a page and I will be generous and give you some.

Senator Corbin: Senator Gigantès, did I understand you correctly to say that you were admonished by Senator Thérèse Lavoie-Roux for drinking water or something?