

of the Government say that the committee will have ample time, under the chairmanship of our friend Senator Kinsella. I hope it is realized that this is not legislation that affects the powerful and the wealthy. Rather, it affects the very poor.

**Senator Lynch-Staunton:** Senator Murray is going to be cut off.

**Senator Thériault:** I thought you meant what you said, but perhaps you did not.

When the time comes—and I had hoped it would have been after the referendum, but if you are in that much of a hurry, fine—may I suggest that this committee not sit solely in Ottawa, if you want the people to believe that the committee is hearing from the poor and the oppressed, the people who are affected by this bill, because the poor people in my province will not come to Ottawa. I know that that does not bother you people over there.

I do not know who is listening to my suggestion, or who is for it or against it.

**Senator Frith:** We are for it.

**Senator Thériault:** I have made a suggestion which I hope the chairman of the committee will heed. Take it upon yourself, senator. Don't ask permission of the high-falutin' people over there, because they will not give it to you. If you just do it yourself, I know you will be doing a good job.

I believe the Leader of the Government suggested that the polls show that the Tories have the support of the majority of people. I am sure there were dozens of polls taken before you embarked on this legislation, but you do not always listen to the polls. If you did, you would resign and go to the people for an election.

I could not let a piece of legislation like Bill C-80 go by without making known my objection to it. I did not hear Senator Spivak, but I have respect for her social conscience. She has always expressed great concern for the poor, the environment and all those issues close to the people.

**Senator Gigantès:** When she votes, she votes for the blood-sucking capitalists on the other side.

**Senator Thériault:** I give credit to the government senators. They have learned to listen to their bosses. They vote as they are told. But that is another subject.

The fact is that Bill C-80 is not new. It is the continuation of a philosophy that this government espoused shortly after being elected. What is to be noted is that it is not the philosophy that Conservatives, under Brian Mulroney, preached before they were elected. If you read the speeches made during the campaign in 1983 and 1984 by the honourable Prime Minister, you will notice that very seldom did he make a speech without talking about the "sacred trust" of the universal programs.

When he was about to de-index the Old Age Pension, he met his match on the front lawn of Parliament Hill. He was

[Senator Thériault.]

told the truth and that time he at least had the wisdom to back away for a short time.

This kind of philosophy started with the clawback of the Old Age Pension. With every piece of social legislation they have passed since coming to power they have attacked and gradually destroyed the sacred trust of universal programs.

I believed the Prime Minister when he talked about the sacred trust, because in my opinion universality is a sacred trust. I thought the clawback of the Old Age Pension was bad. But this is worse, because this is virtually an abandonment of the truly poor people in this country. When the unemployment rate is 11.3 or 11.6 per cent, with almost 2 million people seeking work, the government is going to give \$500 to those who are trying to get off the welfare rolls and go to work, but will give nothing to those who are stuck on the welfare rolls. Five hundred dollars for those who are trying to get up?

I urge the Leader of the Government to come to New Brunswick. I also urge him to go to Cape Breton, which he knows well. I ask him to take a look and make a short study, then answer the question: How many people will be successful in getting off the welfare role this year and next year? I say to him, very few.

Why discriminate? Why discriminate against those single mothers? As someone said, the philosophy of Dan Quayle is that family values entail having a father and a mother who take care of their kids. Is that your definition of family values? Or is it trying to provide for those who cannot provide for themselves?

**Senator Murray:** So you agree with targeting, then, do you? You do not agree with universality?

**Senator Thériault:** What did you say?

**Senator Frith:** Targeting. You know. That is when you take a gun and shoot somebody with it.

**Senator Murray:** You do not disagree with doing away with universality, I take it?

**Senator Thériault:** I do disagree. I do disagree with killing universality. Where is universality in this Bill C-80, as I just said, when you will give \$500 extra to a certain class of poor but nothing to the others? Is that your kind of universality? It is not my kind of universality.

My kind of universality was making the Old Age Pension available to everyone who reached age 65. If that means we have to pay a little more in taxes, so what? Universality also involved the family allowance program that you have just destroyed here.

Tell me something: Why would a government embark on such a change in social policy when, at your best in the polls, you are at 20 per cent? Why, when you are, at the most, only 12 months away from an election? Why?

**Senator Gigantès:** Tory ideology, that is why.