

*Time Allocation*

opposition parties it says: "We don't want to hear this any more. We are going to curtail debate".

That is what the government has done this morning. I do not know if members on the government side realize what is going on today. The Minister of Justice—of justice of all people—stood up and said: "Listen, I know that we introduced this legislation, that it is dastardly legislation, mean-spirited and cruel." What it means to be a Conservative government is to introduce that kind of legislation. He went on to say: "We are going to drive this through". The government closed off debate at second reading and sent it to committee.

Committee is where experts are asked to come from across Canada and examine legislation. We know what happened. It went to committee and members of the New Democratic Party stood up and said: "Listen, if we are going to change the social policy of this country so drastically as a result of this Conservative government and this legislation, let us bring in experts, let us bring in those who understand the implications to explain to the members of the government what this is actually going to do to people and how mean and cruel this whole legislation is".

Did the government do that? Absolutely not. Once again it did not want to hear what people had to say. It did not want to hear the experts. It did not want to hear what it was actually going to do to families living in Atlantic Canada, western Canada and northern Ontario and Quebec. It did not want to hear what this actually means to those people who struggled and built this country. Now the government says: "Well, we changed our mind. You no longer will get an old age pension cheque. Because you have saved and worked hard to provide for yourself we feel you do not need a cheque any more and so we are going to take away this critical right of what being a Canadian is all about". That is the essence of this legislation.

What did the government members do in committee? They said: "We do not want to hear all of this information because if people understand what we are doing they are going to get very, very concerned." They cut off the witnesses.

We thought that here we are back in the of the House of Commons, we will have a chance now to explain to the people of Canada what this all means. Then the government introduced today time allocation, the muzzling of Parliament, closure of Parliament. "Do not let them talk on the terms of the legislation". That is what has happened. Two days from now we will not be able to speak on this legislation. This legislation will be passed, all gone, done. This government will have changed the direction of the country forever and ever until the new government, the New Democratic government decides to put it right back where it should be and introduce the principle of universality once again.

Not only is it bad that the Conservatives want to take away people's pensions—which is what they are going to do essentially—not only is it bad that they are going to muzzle Parliament, curtail debate and use their jack-booted tactics to close this debate down, which is bad enough in itself, but the bill itself is a disaster. The government came into committee—something which has never happened in the history of Canada before—and said: "Listen, we have made such a disastrous mistake in drafting this legislation, we are going to require 125 amendments just to make it workable". It is incredible that the government is so sloppy, so loose in its thinking, so uncaring, so callous, so stupid when it comes to drafting legislation that it has to have 125 amendments to it just to make it tolerable to its own members.

As you know, the Speaker said: "This is all nonsense" and threw them all out. He said: "These are not even procedurally acceptable". If the government was just to do the honourable parliamentary thing it would say: "Let's go back and at least draft a bill that you can pass through the House of Commons and do what we want even though it is mean and cruel and against senior citizens and families. If that is what we want to do, then at least let us make it properly acceptable in the House of Commons".

Members of the government did not even do that. The government has shown nothing less than utter contempt for this place. It just said: "Well, if we just draft up anything that is sloppy, you know, we will get it through the House of Commons, the Speaker will let it through". Thank goodness, Madam Speaker, you did not let it through. You said: "Listen, there are some standards in