

questioned understanding of the Canadian people, and particularly of this whole area of social justice, pointed a way out of the difficulty. They took a quick look at his signpost, misread it, and took off in another direction.

The Leader of the Government sketched the background. The rate of pension was increased over the years from \$20 originally to \$40 when the universal act came in. It was raised to \$46 in that now notorious misjudgment of public sentiment which is associated with the phrase "Six buck Harris"—a misjudgment which, in my opinion, since I was fairly close to public sentiment at that time, was the major single cause of the defeat of the Liberal government of that time.

I am convinced that here today we have another example of the same kind of misjudgment, and in the same area. It is a misjudgment which affects today some 1,100,000 Canadians directly, and their relatives and friends indirectly. The "MacEachen means test" of 1967 may well take its place in current political history as a matching chapter heading to "Six buck Harris" of 1957.

Honourable senators, I am not going into the many defects of this bill in detail at this time. Some of my colleagues will be following me and will have something to say on that score. However, there are many other defects. One is the application form. My understanding of the Senate recommendation was that we asked for a simple form. My understanding was that this would be automatic. This bill is quite different from what the Senate recommended. May I read from page 18 of the Final Report of the Special Committee on Aging, under the title "Income Guarantee Program." The committee recommended:

The establishment of an Income Guarantee Program to provide allowances throughout life to all persons beginning at age 65 on the following lines:

(a) that the only conditions for eligibility under the Income Guarantee Program be age, as indicated above, ten years' residence in Canada, and net cash income from all sources, including Old Age Security and the Canada Pension Plan, below the above amounts.

The above amounts were the same as under this for the basic eligibility for single persons, a little higher for married persons.

The report continues:

(b) that the program be administered and financed by the Federal Government.

To do that will be some job. The Prime Minister of Quebec announced in the Speech from the Throne that Quebec will enter the old age pension field. I shall not be surprised if he accuses the federal Government of a breach of faith. The Leader of the Government read to us section 94A of the British North America Act. The amendment to this act takes the federal Government beyond the terms of that original agreement, and I imagine it will find itself in trouble on this score.

Honourable senators, I should like to have commented about a number of matters in the bill, but the time is advancing. An alternative to this bill has been proposed by the Opposition. This is generally called a flat rate \$25 increase in the universal pension without the means test.

In conclusion, I can only say that I think the Senate committee might have recommended that alternative had we had the figures that are available to the Government. We would have realized that the difference between the cost of this legislation and the universal pension would be \$100 million rather than amounts ranging up to \$800 million in the figures we have before us. I suggest that even with Senator Croll as chairman, the Senate committee might have supported the Opposition rather than the Government on this matter. It can happen here. It has happened before. And, if we had time to debate the bill as fully as we should, I can think of no better time than now for it to happen again.

Hon. David A. Croll: Honourable senators, I cannot resist the opportunity to say something on this bill. First, let me repeat what I have said on other occasions, that the report of the Committee on Aging was a collective report. I am glad to have my name associated with it. Senator Grosart was an active member of the committee, as were many other senators. It belongs to the Senate, and to the Senate completely.

On the other hand, what I have to say now is said with great enthusiasm. I appreciate what Senator Grosart has said, and I am disappointed, as he is and as others are, with that particular shortcoming with respect to those people who are now aged 65. Over and over again we emphasized that time was running out for them, and how well we know it. We said: "Do something for them while they are still here." But the Government, in the light of the Canada Assistance Act, decided to do something else. I am practical enough to know that when you are able to get your foot