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LB 312

SENATOR CHAMBERS: (Laugh)

SENATOR LANDIS: It doesn't make a difference, Senator Chambers, I've never been in that situation, I'm not in that situation now, and when I leave, leaving you here, I will have never been in that situation.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Senator Landis is so gracious. Thank you, Senator Landis. Members of the Legislature, I had mentioned from time to time a comment from Oscar Wilde, and he was talking about laws that impact negatively on poor people, so I'm just going to read a brief passage, and it's from The Soul of Man Under Socialism, one of his essays. "As for begging, it is safer to beg than to take, but it is finer to take than to beg. No: a poor man who is ungrateful, unthrifty, discontented, and rebellious, is probably a real personality, and has much in him. He is at any rate a healthy protest." Now we come to it. "As for the virtuous poor, one can pity them, of course, but one cannot possibly admire them. They have made private terms with the enemy, and sold their birthright for very bad pottage. They must also be extraordinarily stupid." This applies to the Legislature. "I can quite understand a man accepting laws that protect private property, and admit of its accumulation, as long as he himself is able under those conditions to realise some form of beautiful and intellectual life. But it is almost incredible to me how a man whose life is marred and made hideous by such laws can possibly acquiesce in their continuance." When I paraphrase it, to criticize my colleagues in the Legislature, I draw the comparison between that set of circumstances and people who will kowtow to business, as though they're going to partake in the largess. Is it enough to have these big shots smile at you, the lobbyists, the lobbyists--what is the feminine for lobbyists?--"lobbyess," I guess; to have the lobbyists for the chamber of commerce smile at you and say, "good boy, good girl." That's the way, sometimes, I hear people talk to Nicole, Cindy's little toy poodle. But I talk to Nicole like she's a lady. I talk to her like she's intelligent. I talk to her like I'd want her to talk to me, if she could speak English instead of dog. Now she can understand English, but she can't speak it. I can't understand dog, although I can speak it, but I don't understand it. They patronize the Legislature. They laugh at