sion that they now intend to do exactly what they promised they would never do. It is a clear indication that they in fact fully intend to tamper with and dislocate and dismantle the universality of our social programs.

[*Translation*]

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) finally admitted that he and his party hid their real plans from Canadians during the election campaign. They have admitted they had a hidden agenda, whose first item consisted in breaching the universality of our social programs.

[*English*]

His rationale is that had he revealed his secret intentions, the hidden agenda of the Conservative Party, we in the Liberal Party would have told Canadians the truth. The Minister of Finance says that we played the politics of fear. I say that it is a pathetic excuse for not telling the truth. I say that it is, rather, from the Government of today, the politics of deception.

Of course we on this side of the House would have told Canadians the truth. I make no apologies, Mr. Speaker, for doing that during the campaign, and now again in the House for bringing the issue before you and the Canadian public.

● (1240)

It is no great surprise for me, Mr. Speaker, nor for the Members of my Party what the Tory Government is now doing. We said that the Government had a secret agenda. We were right. We said the Tories could not be trusted to fight for universal programs. We were right. But now it is coming as a big surprise to Canadians because this Government did not talk about the real agenda during the campaign.

We knew what the Tories thought of the social programs. They told us in their policy convention in 1982 and we know where the pressure is coming from to end universality now: it is coming from Members of the Conservative Party. At that last Tory policy convention, 92 per cent of the delegates were against increases in universal family allowances; 62 per cent of the Conservative delegates were against increasing universal old age pensions; 82 per cent were against increasing medicare benefits; 65 per cent were against increasing the guaranteed income supplement; 92 per cent were against increasing unemployment insurance benefits; 65 per cent were against increasing the child tax credit and 79 per cent were against increasing money for day care.

We knew that Canadians would be in for this shock when inevitably they saw the true face of this Government in action. Now, Sir, the Tories are showing their true colours. Now we know that a new era which they promised is not going to be the one they talked about in the election campaign; it is going to be the one they did not talk about in the election campaign.

I believe, and the Members of my Party share this conviction, that this is an essential issue before this House because it is a question of trust and credibility. Governments and political Parties must do what they say they will do and must not do what they say they will not do. Governments have an obligation to be honest with the public. This goes to the very heart of the democratic system. If the Prime Minister wonders why his and his Ministers' statements on this vital question for millions and millions of Canadians have elicited such an energetic response from this side of the House, he need look no further than the words I have just spoken. It is a matter of trust, a matter of credibility and a matter of confidence in government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Why are we so committed to universality? It is because Canadians believe in equality. Canadians believe that all individuals, no matter what their social status, deserve equitable treatment. If you segregate services, if you ghettoize services, if you direct services only to the needy or the poor, then those services exclusively meant for the poor become poor services.

Universal access means that all individuals in Canada are treated the same. It means that the rich man and the poor man sit in the same doctor's office, receive their skills in the same fashion, wait in the same line and will be covered by the same fee and the same treatment.

Mr. Keeper: What about women?

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Naturally enough; it covers a broad range of people. Universality has been a unifying force in our society. Everyone, no matter what his income, has a stake in these programs and we are all interested in protecting these programs.

We do not make improvements in our social security system by altering, tinkering and playing around with the principle of universal access. We accomplish that through improvements in the equity and fairness of the general tax system.

Preserving the social contract—because it is a matter of contract—is not an empty, rhetorical phrase. It means something. It means that those who may have contributed through a lifetime of work in this country, a lifetime of paying taxes, are entitled to the benefits of that contribution, to the benefits of the pension that they can statutorily expect, to the benefits also of those allowances that they can statutorily expect. In Canada that means universality of those allowances, namely old age pensions and medicare. By injecting uncertainty and confusion of where they stand and what they do with the payments under these programs, the Government is destabilizing and endangering that social contract which is based on trust and legitimate expectation.

[*Translation*]

The Conservatives are trying to backtrack and change the rules of the game. Can Canadian men and women count on these benefits, yes or no? Are single parents going to get their family allowance cheques, yes or no?

[*English*]

Will our elderly pensioners get their cheques or not? Will there be an income cut-off of $26,000, or less, or more, beyond which no benefits will be given? The answers to these ques-