

People have done that nationwide, in all constituencies; the Family Allowance file did not specifically concern Quebec or Ontario, it was a matter about which people everywhere, in every constituency in Canada, signed petitions urging the Government and the Prime Minister to withdraw that Bill.

Mr. Speaker, we agree that the elderly people of Canada succeeded in curbing the Prime Minister's will in the matter of Old Age Security pensions despite the fact that a number of Hon. Members who are present in this House were insisting at the time that the Government was doing the right thing in cutting Old Age Security pensions.

With the help of the Opposition, associations like the Canadian Diabetes Association or the one for heart diseases managed to reverse the Prime Minister's position on the 10 per cent tax affecting those people.

Mr. Speaker, once again it was in spite of the Conservative members' attitude that the Prime Minister had to admit that we were right.

Mr. Speaker, I shall now conclude for my time has expired; may I suggest that for once Conservative Members have an opportunity to defend the interests of their constituents and to adopt this amendment that would enable us to restore the full indexing by next year.

● (1610)

[English]

**Mr. John Parry (Kenora-Rainy River):** Mr. Speaker, it is customary on rising to speak in this chamber to express the pleasure that one takes in doing so. I must say that it is with some regret that I rise to address this amendment. The logical thing to happen in a reasonable society would be for one of the Government Members to rise and tell us why this amendment would be unacceptable. That has not been done, Mr. Speaker, and it stands to reproach the Government and its back-benchers that none of them are willing to address this amendment.

The single glaring omission in this whole debate about family allowances is that the Government has at no time given any indication to this House, the country or the recipients of family allowances as to when it will consider taking off the deindexing provision which it now proposes to impose.

That means that we could calculate to any year the cumulative effect of that deindexation because the Government has not said the extent to which families would be losing in 1990, 1995 or the year 2000. This is the sort of uncertainty that the Government would protest if the positions were changed around. It is the sort of open ended horizon that in another incarnation in the Province of Ontario they said they would not go for. They said they would have sunset clauses. That is why our Party is offering a sunset clause. I would certainly echo the sentiments of the previous two speakers that it is a chance that the Government should not pass up.

Unfortunately, I cannot state with any degree of confidence in the rationality of the Government processes that it might

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pick up this amendment and accept it. Nevertheless, it has the opportunity to do so and I commend it to its attention.

The Government has only given us vague platitudes and generalities about foreseen future improvements in the economic situation and how that might affect deindexing. The fact is, as it stands today, this deindexing would go on for as long as family allowances were paid. It would mean that the role of parenthood, the significance of children, the value to which parenting was ascribed in our society would gradually depreciate.

If any Government Members did have the courage to stand up and address the amendment they would undoubtedly instance the increases in the child tax credit. I feel that the Opposition has also addressed this responsibility. We have not said that the Government is sticking up the parents or the children of this country from day one. What we are pointing out is that there comes a point in time at which child benefits will deteriorate, and a point in time at which the Government will be downgrading the role of parenthood in our society. It appears this is part of the whole ideological scheme of this Government. On the one hand we have the deindexing of tax brackets, the deindexing of family allowances and the attempted deindexing of the old age security pension, from which it did, incredibly, have the common sense to retreat. On the other hand, as has been mentioned by many others in this chamber, we have the Government's attitude toward its corporate friends. Twenty organizations can send a telex to this Government and get no reply or response, yet one corporation can come in and ask for a billion dollars by way of a tax break and walk away with everything it ever asked for or wanted.

I would like to just put on the record of the House the names of some of the organizations that have stated publicly their opposition to this Government's plan to deindex family allowances. It is a range of organizations that represents many interests in this country, many groups that have the good of this country, and particularly the good of the poor people at heart. I refer, for example, to the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, the National Farmers Union, the Native Women's Association of Canada, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association, the Canadian Labour Congress, the Yukon Status of Women Council, the National Anti-Poverty Organization, the Quebec Native Women's Association, the Metro Family Services Association, la Fédération nationale des femmes du Québec, the Metro Social Planning Council, the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, the United Church of Canada, COPO, the Coalition of Provincial Organizations of the Handicapped Citizens Against Child Poverty and the Federation of Women Teachers' Association of Ontario.

That is a group which represents a very wide range of interests in our society. It is a group that is offering its collective wisdom to this Government, a group that this Government is gratuitously and wilfully ignoring in deindexing family allowances in this country.

We know what comes behind this apparently minor measure, this apparently minor reduction. We know that the pas-