

S. O. 31

Scrooge, withdraw the GST and give ordinary Canadians something to celebrate during this Christmas season?

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INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Mr. J. W. Bud Bird (Fredericton—York—Sunbury): Mr. Speaker, today we are privileged to be joining people from around the world in celebrating International Human Rights Day, as well as marking the 42nd anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

This year, our commemoration coincides with the National Conference on Human Rights and Canadian Solidarity being held in Ottawa at this very time. The conference is being hosted by the Minister for Multiculturalism and Citizenship and is focusing on the importance of human rights in the nation-building process. Representatives from every sector of Canadian society, in every field of human rights, are taking part.

Canada has long been considered a world leader in the area of human rights. In 1986 we became the first nation to be presented with the Nansen Medal by the United Nations in recognition of our efforts to provide refugee relief.

The present government is keenly aware that human rights continues to be a vitally important issue for Canadians. Here at home there are many issues to address; literacy, the environment, the rights of women. For example, it was in recognition of the rights of children that Canadian signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child last May.

Prime Minister Mulroney also co-sponsored the first World Summit for Children at the United Nations in September.

Canadians have indeed made significant strides in ensuring that human rights and freedoms are the foundation stone of our citizenship.

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NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River): Mr. Speaker, my constituents want me to debunk three myths being perpetrated by the NDP and their friends in the media.

The first is that there are only two sides to an issue, the right side and the wrong side, and that they are never wrong. The more we look, the less we see there.

The second is that they have all the answers on the environment. Premier Bob Rae stood at the Keele Valley landfill site and said: "No more expansion". Now, his minister says expansion could take place and without an environmental assessment.

The third is that the NDP has the only leader in the House with a smile on her face. Well, Mr. Speaker, that myth will be history tonight when the electors of Beauséjour have made their choice. When Jean Chrétien enters this House, the smiles on this side of the House are going to stretch all the way from here to 24 Sussex Drive.

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CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Mr. Dave Worthy (Cariboo—Chilcotin): Mr. Speaker, the recent lack of balance in television news coverage of the CBC reorganization is of concern to me and should be of concern to more Canadians. Biased reporting can harm Canadian unity by fanning the fires of regional anger. There are those in television who asked the questions: Why were the following issues not addressed and the following questions not asked.

Radio covers all communities, both urban and rural, and is an effective way of serving the regional interests. Yet I heard no mention of the conscious decision by CBC to retain these radio regional routes.

No one asked on behalf of the thousands of communities which do not have community TV service why they are less deserving. Why should the people who live in these communities be picking up the tab? Why was no one asking the representatives of the communities who do enjoy local service why they were not suggesting ways that they could pick up the tab? Too many predicted that the loss of service to these 11 communities could damage national unity. Why? How? It is not obvious to me. Why was it so easily accepted by the journalists?

Unfortunately we live in tough times, and tough times mean tough choices. I commend the CBC management for facing its responsibility and making those decisions.