

*Human Rights Day*

Day 1984. It could be argued that every day should be human rights day. At the same time, there is some value in singling out a particular day of the year to pay special attention to a subject as important as basic human rights. Unfortunately, even in a country like Canada we need to be reminded from time to time about the importance of the concepts and provisions enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

While every day should be human rights day and while those of us in this House of Commons have a special responsibility to support the existence of and in fact to strengthen basic human rights for all our people and the peoples of this world every day, it is useful to set aside a special day as we are setting aside Human Rights Day 1984.

I am very proud to have been part of a Government that enshrined in the Constitution of Canada the Charter of Basic Rights and Freedoms. This Charter of Basic Rights and Freedoms is consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It can be said that in many ways its provisions have been inspired by this Universal Declaration. In enshrining in the basic law of this country the kinds of rights and freedoms found in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Government of the Right Hon. Pierre Trudeau did something that was widely supported eventually on all sides of this House and by people all across this country. Speaking of its being enshrined in the basic law of this country, I can say again that it is a step which is consistent with the importance and the thrust of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

As I recall the Declaration, it contains provisions not only for the strengthening and maintenance of what we commonly refer to as human rights, the basic right to speak, worship, make decisions for ourselves in terms of expression and ideas, but also talks about the right to food, shelter and education, matters important to our ability to live on this earth in peace, in security and dignity.

In conclusion, in marking the thirty-sixth anniversary of the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we in this country, as well as reaffirming our commitment to what we commonly look upon as human rights, should also reaffirm our commitment to the kinds of basic rights such as food, shelter, education and good health, those rights to be able to live in peace, harmony and dignity in this country and this world, which are so important to the people of this country and to all humankind.

I am pleased on behalf of the Official Opposition, of my Party, to join in the marking of the important occasion of which the Deputy Prime Minister spoke. The declaration in question helps to confirm the essential value of human personality, the essential value of humankind. If we forget this value, certainly we in this House and the people of this country are forgetting what is important to ensure not only the future of humanity but of the very earth itself.

**Mr. Jim Manly (Cowichan-Malahat-The Islands):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on behalf of the New Democratic Party on this thirty-sixth anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Per-

haps at the beginning it is important to recognize that our world has broadened its understanding of what human rights are since 1948. I would like to give two brief examples.

If we were writing the Declaration today, I am sure that we would use more sexually inclusive language. The first article states: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood". If we were writing this declaration today, I think we would also want to include the word "sisterhood". The philosopher Wittgenstein once said: "The limits of my language are the limits of my world". Language that discriminates against women leads to action that discriminates against them. Therefore, it is important that we have inclusive language. That would go for something such as the Declaration of Human Rights.

If we were writing the Declaration today, we would also want to include an article to the effect that everyone has the right to live in a clean and healthy environment. This is especially underscored since last week's Union Carbide disaster in Bhopal, India, where thousands of people were killed or maimed. We do not need to go to India to see the importance of that issue. In the seventies, high mercury levels on the English-Wabigoon River system destroyed the health and economy of local Indian communities. We have seen and heard of the destruction of the environment and the livelihood of the Lubicon Indians and the concerns of the Fort McKay band in northern Alberta about the pollution from the oil sands developments in Fort McMurray.

● (1530)

As we look at human rights, we must do so both globally and nationally. Globally, it is important, especially today when we are having a debate on a nuclear freeze, to remember Article 3 which states: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person." It is important that we, as a world, come to terms with the whole question of nuclear warfare in order for Article 3 to have some meaning and substance.

Globally, we face a situation of widespread denial of rights which most people in Canada take for granted. Article 15 states:

Everyone has the right to a nationality. No one shall be deprived of his nationality.

It is something which Canadians take for granted. Why do they have to bother putting it into a declaration of rights?

There was an interesting report on the radio this morning regarding Bishop Desmond Tutu, the winner of this year's Nobel Peace Prize. When he met with President Reagan, the Bishop told the President that he did not travel on a South African passport but, rather on a travel document which describes his nationality as being "undeterminable at present". He told President Reagan that his people were being turned into aliens in the land of their birth. Even the right to a nationality is something which cannot be taken for granted in South Africa.