

Bad to shift priorities [CA] ^[1]

Editorial

Author: Toronto Star

Source: Toronto Star

Format: Article

Publication Date: 22 Oct 2004

AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

What kind of game is Finance Minister Ralph Goodale playing?

To hear him talk this week about matching every dollar of additional spending with a dollar of new tax cuts and/or debt reduction, voters could conclude Goodale had already forgotten what the Liberals said during the recent election campaign.

After all, it was barely two weeks ago in the Speech from the Throne that Prime Minister Paul Martin reaffirmed a very different vision of Canada - one on which the Liberals had run their election race.

That speech repeated all of Martin's election promises: to give new money to cities; to boost investments in health care, child care, innovation and job training; to spend more on aboriginals, seniors, caregivers as well as defence; and to continue to pay down Ottawa's debt.

There was no mention of new tax cuts in the speech - or the Liberal platform on which it was based.

As set out in that platform, the Liberals offered Canadians a two-for-one deal, committing to spend about two dollars on new initiatives to strengthen the country for each dollar that went to reduce the debt.

But now, according to Goodale, the Liberals' two-for-one package of election promises has been replaced by a one-for-one scheme. In it, tax cuts will play prominently.

That about-face might be justified if the Liberals had already addressed the country's needs.

How can he make tax cuts a priority, even for low-income earners, when so many Canadians are living in such dire poverty that they already do not pay any income tax?

The new spending initiatives on which the Liberals campaigned were already quite modest, based as they were on the view that Ottawa would only have limited fiscal room to manoeuvre over the next five years.

While that view has changed with the "unexpected" fourfold increase in the surplus for last year, it would make far more sense for Martin to accelerate and beef up his own election commitments than to steal a pale version of the key element of the Conservatives' agenda.

That's because a government that tries to be all things to all people runs a big risk of leaving all voters feeling as if they have been shortchanged.

- reprinted from the Toronto Star

Region: Canada ^[2]

Tags: election ^[3]

funding ^[4]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/04/10/bad-shift-priorities-ca>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/04/10/bad-shift-priorities-ca> [2] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [3]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/election> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/funding>