

Can Canada afford to tax reading?

The GST is the first federal tax ever applied to reading material in Canada. Books, magazines and newspapers were free of all federal taxes from Confederation until 1991. The tax on reading has reduced reading in Canada and harmed students, libraries, writers and publishers.

The facts:

Education is the key to Canada's future

When the Prime Minister unveiled his education and prosperity policy last year, he stressed the importance of learning and literacy to Canada's future. Yet it was his government that introduced the first federal tax in Canadian history to apply to reading material.

Other countries don't tax reading

Our international competitors — the U.S., Britain, Japan, Ireland, Mexico, Australia, and many other countries — know the importance of literacy. That's why they refuse to tax reading. The European Parliament recently voted to remove all taxes from reading materials — as an investment in their countries' future.

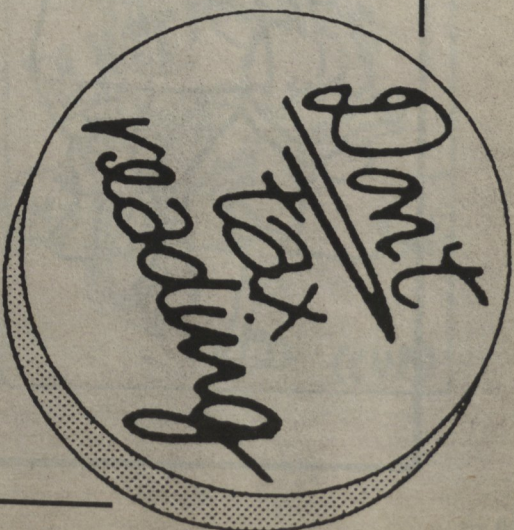
The GST is taking books, magazines and newspapers out of the hands of Canadians and out of Canadian libraries.

Book sales dropped 10% in the first year of GST. Magazine sales dropped 10-15% last year. The GST has caused the largest drop in Canadian newspaper circulation in fifty years. During the last recession, sales *increased*. Libraries and schools are supposed to receive GST rebates, but the rebate system doesn't work. The result: a 7% cut in library budgets.

The GST is a tax on literacy.

The federal government collected more from the tax on reading material last year than federal spending on adult literacy and publishing *combined*. Most Canadians think their government should support literacy and literacy; this government is doing the opposite.

Canada will pay tomorrow for the tax on reading today.



We can get this tax removed —

Here's what you can do.

Canada can't afford a tax that's reducing reading and harming the quality of education. The Prime Minister promised in October, 1990 to carefully review the reading tax after a year, and to remove it if it had reduced reading. It's time for that review. Please send a card, letter or fax to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance, and to your local MP. (No postage is required on mail to these individuals).

Pre-addressed postcards to the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance are available from the Canadian Federation of Students or from the Coalition.

Ask your student association what they're doing to fight the reading tax, and how you can help. Ask your Board of Governors, faculty association or union to write to the Prime Minister.

Rt. Hon. Brian Mulroney
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street, Ottawa
K1A 0A2 Fax: (613) 941-6900

Hon. Don Mazankowski
Minister of Finance
140 O'Connor Street, Ottawa
K1A 0A6 Fax: (613) 957-5652

The Don't Tax Reading Coalition has a variety of materials available — many are free. Please call or write the Coalition for information.

The Don't Tax Reading Coalition represents Canada's writers, publishers, booksellers, librarians, teachers, students and readers. Antiquarian Booksellers Association of Canada, Association of Canadian Publishers, Canadian Book Publishers' Council, Canadian Community Newspapers Association, Canadian Daily Newspaper Association, Canadian Federation of Students, Canadian Library Association, Canadian Magazine Publishers Association, Canadian Teachers' Federation, Canadian University Press, Periodical Writers of Canada, Canadian Association of School Administrators, Canadian Council of Teachers of English, Canadian School Boards Association, Freelance Editors' Association of Canada, League of Canadian Poets, Periodical Writers' Association of Canada, Playwrights' Union of Canada, The Writers' Union of Canada. This ad is sponsored by Canadian University Press and this newspaper.

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