

Christ; for it is He that gives the holiday its meaning, even in the most non-threatening of terms. But the commercialization of Christmas, thereby creating much confusion — and malice among some — regarding the day as the birth of Jesus Christ, seems to get more obfuscated every year.

## Unchanging Christmas

Christmas is losing its real meaning, agreed 59 per cent of Canadians - back in 1953. (The Canadian Institute of Public Opinion reported that this was a 6-per-cent jump from its survey of 1948.) Some not-so-different Christmas news in Globe files of a generation ago:

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- 1953. Canadian author Farley Mowat said in an interview, "As for that song 'Dreaming of a White Christmas' - I loathe it! If I hear it once more, I'm going to toss my radio into the ashcan."
- 1954. New York City police arrested one of Santa's helpers near Times Square because he was snarling "You cheap son of a bitch" at anyone who ignored his collection box.
- December 24, 1955. Mary Marcos of Nazareth, on a trip to Bethlehem to celebrate Christmas Eve, gave birth to a son. Jordanians informed the Israeli authorities and found room for Ms. Marcos to remain on the Arab side of the armistice line for another week.
- December 24, 1956. Two black men were finally served at a restaurant in Dresden, Ontario. The owner had given up his battle for the right to refuse service to negroes. Dresden is notable as the place where the original Uncle Tom is buried.
- December 23, 1957. Maria Golinksa of Warsaw spent seven hours - and half her family's

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All across the land, happy package-laden people revel in the joys of another Christmas season. Retailers gear up for these six weeks that follow Thanksgiving, giving meaning to the term, "Black Friday."

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monthly income - buying food, drink, and a Christmas tree. "After all," she told a Western journalist, "life is hard enough the rest of the year."

- 1958. Three Christian ministers in Ontario said that Christ should be taken out of Christmas, because the holiday has its roots in pagan festivals that did not involve Him. "It seems sort of religious imperialism," said Rev. J. Franklin Chidsey, a Unitarian. "If we celebrated Christmas as a happy holiday instead of a Christian feast, people of every religion would be able to enjoy it together."

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## Christmas Cards

Modern versions of Christmas cards can be very specialized. A recent U.S. Christmas card for ailing former spouses said, "Sorry to hear you're not feeling well. I wouldn't want anything to stop the alimony payments."

Sometimes it can be better to receive than giving it!