

## **Platform of the Libertarian Party of Canada**

As approved by the Board of Directors, May 15, 2007. Subject to Amendment.

Reference: Article 8 of Libertarian Party of Canada *Constitution*:  
<http://www.libertarian.ca/english/libertarian-party-constitution.html>

See also *Statement of Objectives*:  
<http://www.libertarian.ca/english/libertarian-party-positions.html>

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Authorized by the Registered Agent for the Libertarian Party of Canada.

**Statement of Principles of the Libertarian Party of Canada**

1. Each individual has the right to his or her own life, and this right is the source of all other rights.
2. Property rights are essential to the maintenance of those rights.
3. In order that these rights be respected, it is essential that no individual or group initiate the use of force or fraud against any other.
4. In order to bar the use of force or fraud from social relationships and to place the use of retaliatory force under objective control, human society requires an institution charged with the task of protecting individual rights under an objective code of rules. This is the basic task, and the only moral justification for, government.
5. The only proper functions of government, whose powers must be constitutionally limited are as follows: settling, according to objective laws, disputes among individuals, where private, voluntary arbitration has failed; providing protection from criminals; providing protection from foreign invaders.
6. As a consequence of all the above, every individual -- as long as he or she respects the rights of others -- has the right to live as he or she alone sees fit, as a free trader in a free market.

## **Libertarian Party of Canada Platform - May 15, 2007**

### **1. Government**

- Instead of government dominating the lives of Canadians through taxes and regulations, the Libertarian Party of Canada believes that Canadians should be free to run their own lives. Government should act only as our servant and never as our master.
- We believe in a just, voluntary society that does not use government power to confiscate property or interfere with peaceful activities.
- Government should exist only to provide a framework that defends individual rights.
- We believe that Canada needs a major reduction in the size and power of government.

### **2. Taxation**

- Ultimately, our goal is a society that moves away from coercive taxation completely to a system of fees for services. We want Canadians to pay only for the services they use and agree to.
- We would abolish the Goods and Services Tax, which is an intrusive burden on consumers and business owners who are forced to collect it.
- We would end payroll deductions for personal income tax.
- We would seek to eliminate or substantially reduce personal income tax and convert it to a fees for service system.
- We would seek to eliminate or substantially reduce corporate income tax.
- We would seek to eliminate excise taxes on gasoline and other goods.
- Provinces should raise their taxes independently.

### **3. Property Rights**

- We support an amendment to the Charter of Rights that would protect property rights against expropriation and interference by governments. We also support legislation or court decisions to the same effect.
- We would encourage challenges to property tax in the courts based on the principle of property rights.
- We would challenge coercive taxation based on the same principle of property rights.

### **4. The Environment**

- We blame pollution problems on decades of government central planning and legislation which has favoured the convenience of polluters above the traditional common law rights of property owners.
- No one has the right to violate the property rights of others by pollution, and the legal system should effectively protect persons and property from unwanted air and water pollution.
- At the same time, each person should be free to take their own risks, set the rules for their property and make agreements with others concerning their environment.
- Dealing with the issue of property rights and the environment is a critical issue for Canadians in the face of new sources of potential contamination from advanced technologies.
- We need a system that addresses the power imbalance between a centrally planned society and individuals. We need a system that empowers individuals to defend their lives, health, and property.
- Legislated planning by government prevents Canadians from managing their own lives.
- A property-rights oriented system would fairly allocate the costs of waste and pollution.

### *Public and Private Ownership of Resources*

- The other aspect of the pollution problem is government ownership of land, water and other resources. Private owners have an interest in preserving the value of their investment, but the evidence shows that governments by their nature are poor stewards of resources and have a lack of interest in preventing mismanagement of resources. For example, government management of the fisheries has proven to be a disaster. This is a clear example where the concept of property rights needs to be applied to a resource.
- In regard to unowned resources, we support the concept of justly acquired property rights through the homestead principle. The original owners of resources should be the ones who first "mix their labour" with these resources as explained by John Locke.
- We would support a just and fair transfer of federal government land to all Canadian taxpayers and First Nations residents based on use or by lot. This would be in exchange for a nominal fee that would allow the national debt to be paid. Once Canadians owned the title to an area of land or other resource, they would then be free to sell or rent access on the free market.

### *Climate Change and Freedom*

- We reject the attempted power-grab by bureaucrats in the name of global-warming fear-mongering.
- We would not support Kyoto or any similar agreement.
- We question the assertion that increased levels of human-produced carbon dioxide - non-polluting in every respect and essential for plant life - is responsible for an increase in global temperatures - a gas that we produce when we heat our homes, fuel our vehicles and when we breathe.
- We question the actual effectiveness of proposed solutions in achieving the presumed goal of reducing global warming.
- Above all, we question the right of any authority to mandate carbon output and to impose "solutions" that will make Canadians poorer and limit their choices.
- We reject this ideology that hates economic freedom and the resulting technologies that protect us from the disease and suffering that we would otherwise have to endure in a state of nature. Let us all weigh the evidence for ourselves and make our own decisions!

## **5. Free Trade and Respect for Rights**

- We support the opening up of trade with the whole world - Europe, Africa, Asia, Americas - so that all Canadians can do business with whomever they like - to the mutual benefit of everyone involved.
- We reject meddling in the affairs of other nations through government lending and the resulting impositions that go with the conditions of debt forgiveness.
- We do not condone or defend any abuse of natural rights by corporations that collude with foreign governments, who violate the natural rights of first-users of land - rightful property owners as opposed to government-approved owners.
- We do not agree with imposing centrally planned labour and environmental regulations or market reforms on any nation, as desirable as these may be.
- We do not accept trade agreements as substitutes for actual free trade which builds mutual understanding and prosperity.

## **6. Canadian Sovereignty**

- Canada should be politically and militarily independent.
- We support Canada's sovereignty and reject the current Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) negotiations for integrating North American security and infrastructure, especially since these negotiations have proceeded without the scrutiny of the public and Parliament.
- Any point of negotiation in an international treaty that interferes with the lives and property of Canadians should be subject to challenge by citizens in Parliament or in court.
- Talk about democratic reform is empty as long as governments lock us into international treaties that interfere with the democratic decision-making processes of Canadians.

### *International Government*

- We also favour withdrawal from organizations such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

- We reject interference from the United Nations and other instruments of global government which undermine the efforts of Canadians who seek to reform their own society.

### *Extradition Treaties and Canadian Law*

- Extradition treaties should only apply to acts considered crimes under Canadian law. Victimless "crimes" should not be covered by extradition treaties.

## **7. Defence and Foreign Policy**

- Libertarian defence and foreign policy is unique. We support a policy of non-intervention in the affairs of other nations, a policy that would reduce the risk of terrorist attacks on Canadians.
- Canada should build peaceful relations with all nations and refrain from supporting policies of interference that provoke conflict.
- The only justification for the use of Canada's military is to defend the rights of Canadians from clear foreign aggression and invasion, and therefore to defend our borders, coastlines and airspace.
- Canada's defences can be strengthened through voluntary means in proportion to the needs of Canadians. Conscription is not acceptable, but increasing the voluntary participation of citizens in their own defence is one way of dealing with Canada's security requirements.
- Military power should never be used without regard for individual rights - for its impact on lives, homes and infrastructure. War should be avoided for these reasons.
- Armed Forces members should not have to face the risk of death and terrible injuries for the sake of unnecessary foreign wars.
- War also tends to lead to an increase in government powers domestically and attacks on economic and civil liberties.
- We oppose an escalation of current conflicts in the Middle East.

### *Response to Terrorism*

- In the case of terrorism against Canadians by foreign nationals, negotiation with foreign governments and police services should be the first choice in bringing individuals to justice rather than military force.

### *Justifications for War*

- We reject the use of war and bombing campaigns either for humanitarian reasons or for control of resources.
- We reject the use of the military for nation-building.
- To reduce the possibility of foreign wars, all Members of Parliament should be responsible for ensuring that war justifications are true. Any M.P. or government employee knowingly making fraudulent statements to justify war should be charged with an offence.

### *Nuclear Proliferation*

- The development of nuclear weapons in another nation for their defence is not a justification for war, although it should be discouraged through diplomacy.
- We believe it is important for the major powers to reduce their nuclear weaponry by mutual negotiation since nuclear weapons are a major threat to human life.
- We also do not agree to the placing of advanced weapons in orbit - especially by a power monopoly - because of the danger of those weapons being used against peoples who are seeking their independence and self-determination.

### *Military Alliances*

- Canada should become more independent militarily and remove itself from the NATO bureaucracy.
- Membership in NATO combined with the doctrine of "collective security" clearly endangers Canada's peace as the possibility of new conflicts emerge.

### *Foreign Despots and Conflicts*

- As for foreign dictatorships, the Canadian government should attempt to neither interfere with the internal affairs of nations, nor condone dictatorships.

- We should respect the independence of foreign peoples and their right to self-determination.
- The Canadian government should not interfere with internal rebellions when foreign peoples are trying to fight for their freedom against oppressors or invaders, nor make any effort to disarm them or cut off supplies, nor prevent Canadians from becoming involved as private citizens.

## **8. Terrorism and Civil Liberties**

### *Treatment of Alleged Terrorists and Foreign Combatants*

- Neither prisoners apprehended by Canada's criminal justice system nor prisoners captured in battle shall be subject to cruel abuse, but shall be treated humanely according to Canada's highest classical liberal traditions.
- In the case of Prisoners of War, they shall be treated according to the *Geneva Conventions* and released when hostilities have ceased or the danger has subsided.
- If a person under suspicion has been charged with an offense, he/she shall receive a fair trial. Otherwise, he/she shall be released or released conditionally.
- All M.P.'s are responsible for reviewing military alliances and security agreements with nations who use torture or policies of "rendition" by which they are turning over suspects to other nations for torture.

### *Due Process Rights*

- We question the need for an anti-terrorism law and security certificates.
- *Habeas Corpus* is one of Canada's oldest and most important safeguards to freedom. All accused individuals should always be brought before a judge and the reasons presented publicly to justify their detention.
- We reject the use of secret trials and imprisonment.
- Suspects should be quickly brought to trial, and nobody shall be detained indefinitely without being convicted in court. There is either evidence of threats to harm others or there is no basis for the detention of suspects.

### Emergency Measures and Medical Treatment

- We oppose mandatory vaccinations and forced medical treatment against the wishes of the individual.
- In times of epidemics, voluntary quarantine and voluntary cooperation should be the rule, although restraining an infectious person might be justifiable if they are directly threatening others' safety.
- In the case of emergencies in general, including natural or man-made disasters, government agencies may attempt to offer assistance, but evacuation should always be voluntary and individual rights must be respected at all times.

## **9. Justice**

- We support fundamental reforms to Canada's justice system. The focus should not be on society or the State but on defending individual rights, on justice for the victim, on making right what harm has been done to persons victimized by criminal acts.
- In this respect, the prosecutorial function in courts should not be reserved to Crown Attorneys but should be made available to any private citizen.

### Victimless "Crimes"

- A crime is not truly a crime if it does not involve harm against another person - murder, assault, theft, fraud or death threats.
- We would remove all victimless "crimes" from the Criminal Code.
- Just as alcohol prohibition was a destructive failure and led to violence, drug prohibition only succeeds in driving up the price of drugs and the resulting profits for violent criminal gangs.
- The illegality of drugs creates desperation and makes criminals out of non-criminals, burdening the Canadian justice system and making Canadians less safe and subject to a greater likelihood of intrusive policing.
- Personal lifestyle habits should be a matter of choice and personal responsibility.
- We would seek diplomatic understanding with foreign governments in order to de-escalate the War on Drugs.

- If the Criminal Code was reformed by removing victimless crimes, police resources would be focused on capturing those who are guilty of violating individual rights. For example, police resources should be used to combat sex-slavery.
- Police resources should be used to protect children against violently or sexually abusive adults, but they should do this only in the context of due process and with consideration of the child's wishes concerning their new home.

### Penalties

- Punishment should be strictly proportional to the severity of the offence, so we object to blanket "tough on crime" approaches that violate basic ideas of natural justice.
- We also object to light sentencing and early parole for real criminals.
- Those who are convicted of non-violent crimes may not benefit anyone by being in prison. With or without prison, they should be required to pay adequate restitution to their victims.
- Those convicted of violent crimes belong in prison, and should be required as much as possible to make restitution to their victims or their victims' families and to pay for their residence.
- There should be indefinite sentences for those convicted of grievous crimes of violence.

### Courts and Police

- Every prisoner - bearing in mind Canada's history of wrongful convictions - should be protected by the right of appeal, and officials responsible for wrongful convictions should be held accountable.
- To the same degree, families of victims should be able to bring their grievances to court in an efficient manner.
- Judges and police need to be fully accountable and responsive to the people they serve.
- If it is necessary to make courts competitive in order to orient them towards accountability, then ways should be considered of doing this. Possibilities include opening new federal courts to compete with provincial courts (which prosecute most Criminal Code offences), or allowing victims and defendants to select the provincial court system they feel is more just.

- Judges' decisions should always be open to challenge by members of the public through other courts, by juries or by Parliament.
- In the same way, procedures need to be set so that Members of Parliament can be compelled by members of the public and courts to review their legislation and decisions.
- We value openness and truth in justice. Therefore, courts and the government should not have the right to interfere with freedom of speech or the freedom of the media.
- The publication of relevant information and evidence should never be banned, including the identities of young offenders.
- If police obtain evidence by violating rights, then they should be dismissed and held accountable by the legal system.
- We consider the right to trial by jury to be an important check on the power of judges and on the law itself.

## **10. Independence from Government**

- We take the freedoms specified in the Charter very seriously (conscience, religion, thought, belief, opinion, expression, press, peaceful assembly, association).
- But we also recognize rights and freedoms as inherent to humanity and existing independently of government legislation and constitutions.
- Outside the issue of criminal abuse, we believe it is critical that institutions such as the family, churches, businesses, private schools and other private associations should be allowed to function independently and without government interference. Tax rules and government subsidies should not be used to influence these groups.
- Government is our servant and not our master. It should not be allowed to dominate our culture and determine every aspect of Canadian society.
- We reject government interference with the responsibilities of families through child care subsidies and policies. We reject all attempts to socially engineer how families function.
- We reject government interference in lifestyle choices concerning smoking, diet and health in general.

- With respect to same-sex marriage, we recommend that the government removes itself from the issue of marriage altogether. Individuals and groups in society decide their own spiritual and social beliefs and do not need the government to determine whether they are married or not.
- We believe that government welfare is destructive to individuals who become dependent on it.

## **11. Guns and Self-Defence Rights**

- The government's role should be to assist ordinary people in defending themselves, not to leave them defenceless to criminals and crazed gunmen.
- We support the rights of ordinary citizens to carry firearms for self-defence and recreational purposes.
- Police who carry guns should not have more rights than the public they serve. Neither should criminals be the only members of the public who carry guns.
- We would repeal gun registration laws, which are blatant attempts to supervise and control members of the public - to whom the government is only a servant.
- Those who use guns in violent crimes should be punished severely, but those who use guns to defend their lives and to deter aggressive criminals should never be punished for a proportional response.

## **12. Political Process and Political Speech**

- We uphold freedom of political speech and we reject the terrible violations of this principle that Canadian ruling parties impose on the people.
- We support allowing individuals to donate whatever they like to political parties.
- And we oppose the atrocity of spending restrictions on "third party" advocate organizations during elections.
- We oppose limits on political advertising and broadcasting.
- We support restrictions on elected officials and government employees, but oppose restrictions on political parties, especially onerous reporting requirements that violate the privacy of donors.

- We reject any move to electronic voting considering the abuses that have been reported.
- We support a NOTA option (none of the above) on ballots.
- With respect to ethics in government, we include raising taxes and placing burdensome restrictions on people as abuses of power and ethical violations.
- We support greater independence for Members of Parliament, but greater accountability through the right of citizens to recall their MPs for unethical behaviour.
- We support the right of citizens to defend individual rights and challenge Parliament through citizens' initiatives and referenda.

### **13. Freedom of Speech**

- We support total freedom of speech, conscience and opinion - with the exception of threats of violence.
- We oppose legislation and international agreements that interfere with speech and which criminalize opinions, however incorrect or misguided those opinions may be.
- We reject the culture of control that tramples Canada's heritage of free speech.
- We reject government regulation of broadcasting along with its power to license stations.
- As with other resources, use of the airwaves should be based on first-use and should be traded on the free market as private property.
- We reject cultural protectionism and other government efforts to regulate content.

#### **Internet Freedom**

- We will defend against all attacks on Internet freedom, for example legislation that requires Internet Service Providers to install "wire-tapping" technology, legislation that targets political advocacy, legislation that attempts to tax the Internet, or other requirements or mandates to use particular communications or encryption standards.
- We call on Canadians to exert pressure on government, Internet service providers, telecommunications companies, universities and other institutions to maintain Internet freedom.

#### **14. Intellectual Property**

- We support a moderate approach to patents and copyrights and urge a careful review of existing and proposed legislation and international agreements, and the ethical issues and the consequences involved.
- Intellectual property laws should never violate the principles of basic justice and become instruments of oppression.
- Penalties for Intellectual Property offences should never be out of proportion to the offence, and should be left for the courts to determine.
- Canadians should develop their own approach to Intellectual Property independently of foreign nations.
- Canada should not seek to impose its own Intellectual Property laws on other nations except by representation in foreign courts, just as Canadian courts should be open to foreign complaints.
- Courts and juries should decide penalties and their decisions should help develop Intellectual Property law.
- In the case of simultaneous inventions, it's not clear that monopoly protection should be granted to only one person or business.
- Extreme patent developments should be open to question and challenges, such as patenting existing processes, genetically modified life-forms or existing life forms.
- Unwanted genetically modified organisms or other high-tech contamination of private property, including crops or livestock, must be treated as a trespass, and the person or organization spreading the contaminating substance should be liable to penalties rather than the person receiving the contamination.

#### **15. Surveillance Society**

- We reject the concept of the surveillance society as another symptom of the false belief that government owns the lives of Canadians, that their lives are not their own.

- The surveillance society is made more likely by recent developments in technology. As an example, we reject any legal requirements that mandate the installation of any kind of monitoring devices in cars or other products.
- We reject mandatory national ID's or imposed standards for biometrics that require a person to submit personal information such as fingerprints or retina scans in order to obtain a driver's license.
- We reject any other imposed government standard that limits or licenses the ability of people to travel freely within Canada and participate in the economy.
- We would abolish the Social Insurance Number and all requirements for its use.
- In a free society, nobody should be required to surrender data of any kind except what is necessary by mutual consent for trade between individuals.
- For government services, citizens and immigrants can be supplied with receipts for paid taxes or fees. A temporary pass-code or private account number can identify the individual. The identification process in every case should be left open to negotiation.
- No laws shall mandate the silencing of Internet service providers, telecommunications companies, libraries or other organizations or citizens, that prevent them from informing their customers of investigations into their records.
- We reject government agencies spying on peaceful citizens in any way. This includes the monitoring of private communications or restrictions on the use of digital encryption.
- We completely reject the monitoring of financial transactions, which the Canadian government currently subjects its citizens to. See [http://www.fintrac.gc.ca/intro\\_e.asp](http://www.fintrac.gc.ca/intro_e.asp)
- No internal checkpoints for travelers will be acceptable, and no requirements by businesses to report customer information to government agencies will be acceptable.

## **16. Borders and Immigration**

- We believe that airlines should hire their own security for the safety of their customers.

- Government security and customs agents at airports and borders should be very carefully trained to respect the rights of travelers.
- Borders and coastlines should be monitored for dangerous persons and cargo, stolen goods and undeclared weapons.
- Only a simple declaration of identity should be required for entry into Canada under normal circumstances. Border agents should be equipped to recognize criminals.
- Immigrants and refugees should be admitted freely to Canada but should not be granted government welfare or the use of government services without payment.
- Agents may assist immigrants and refugees in supplying contact information for private groups and individuals who are willing to sponsor and assist them.

## **17. Free Market**

- We oppose government intervention in the free market. We oppose restrictions on trade and contracts. We oppose government monopolies and marketing boards.
- We advocate repeal of all controls on wages, prices, rents, profits, production, and interest rates.

### *Immigration and Employment*

- In order that immigrants are not excluded from working in their professions, and so that no Canadian is excluded from the economy, we will advocate for the end of monopoly certification agencies and government licensing for jobs and professions.
- Competing standard-setting associations for medical and other professions should be allowed to form so that consumers are aware of professional qualifications.
- Consumers would still be protected from fraud, but deregulating our society in this way would allow for greater innovation and prosperity.

### *Fiat Currency and Central Banking*

- We oppose government involvement in the monetary and banking system.
- We propose elimination of the Bank of Canada and the termination of government power to issue or regulate currency or credit.

- We support the continued freedom of any individual or group to own gold or any other commodity of exchange, as well as the right to produce coinage and issue currency.

### Health Care

- Health Care is a provincial responsibility and we would repeal the *Canada Health Act*. There should be no laws preventing individuals or groups from obtaining health insurance from private organizations. This is the only effective way to stop the deterioration of health care services.
- Therefore we support an end to all compulsory or tax-supported health-insurance plans, and the right of individuals to contract freely with health care practitioners of their choice.

### Regulation of Consumer Products

- We support voluntary free market regulation by consumer information agencies rather than by imposed government regulations.
- We support the freedom of consumers to access new pharmaceutical products or alternative therapies.
- Companies should never be shielded from charges of fraud or misrepresentation or from legal liability for damages to customers and employees except by mutually agreed upon contracts.
- We believe that consumers need to empower themselves, rely less on centralized government and push for more information and direct accountability from food producers and product manufacturers using free market organizations and an effective court system.

### Subsidies and Privileges

- We reject government tax-funded subsidies of all kinds - whether to industry, education, science, the arts or to individuals.
- We reject government-granted privileges that allow organizations to produce unwanted pollution or otherwise violate individual rights.