



Statement of Policy

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A. GOVERNMENT

Preamble:

We, the members of the Libertarian Party of Canada, call for a marked reduction in the size and powers of the Government of Canada. We hold that where governments exist, they should be stringently limited both in their structure and in their operations. The recognition and protection of the rights of the individual to life, liberty, and property are the only proper purposes of government.

I. Constitution

We support the amendment of the Canadian Constitution in order to make the federal government fully responsible to its citizens for its operations and to limit the role of government to that of protecting individual rights. We propose that all legislation ruled unconstitutional by the courts be thereby inoperative.

II. Charter of Rights

We support amendment of the Constitution's Charter of Rights in order to guarantee protection against the use of force or fraud by any individual or group, or by the government. This Charter of Rights should contain a clause indicating that the government shall pass no laws that restrict the Charter of Rights.

III. Freedom of Information

We favour the repeal of any legislation which keeps government information from its citizens. Current laws against trespass, breaking and entering, invasion of privacy, and theft, and secrecy clauses in government contracts, should be sufficient to preserve any legitimate government secrets. We support adoption of a Freedom of Information Act, whereby any individual may sue for the release of any government information that affects him/her personally. The government should be compelled either to release this information or to prove that its release would violate the rights of others.

IV. Freedom of Political Action

In order to maintain our system of free elections, it is essential that elections be kept free from interference by the party in power. We are opposed to the expenditure of tax revenue to subsidize any political party, and we will not accept such money. We oppose any laws which restrict the freedom of individuals to organize new political parties.

V. Initiatives

We advocate that the electorate be empowered to require a vote on any measure at the time of an election, by prior presentation of a petition bearing the signatures of a specified number of persons qualified to vote in that election. If approved, such measures would have the same force of law as any legislation. Initiative measures, like any legislation, must be consistent with the Constitution and the Charter of Rights.

VI. Recall

We advocate that the electorate be empowered to require a vote on the removal of any piece of legislation, by presentation of a petition bearing the signatures of a specified number of qualified electors.

VII. Orders in Council

We believe that no measure should have the force of law unless adopted by a duly elected Parliament, or by initiative; therefore, we are opposed to government by Order-in-Council.

VIII. Disallowance

We would restrict the federal government's power to disallow provincial legislation to that legislation which violates the Constitution or the Charter of Rights.

B. INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

Preamble:

There are no other rights but individual rights, and these rights are inviolable. We hold that each individual has the right to exercise sole dominion over her/his life, and to live in whatever manner she/he may choose, so long as she/he does not violate the equal rights of others. Each individual must have the right to self-determination, the necessary extension of the right to life, which should render illegal any attempt to aggress against any individual or to seize the product of his/her labour.

I. Discrimination

We believe that no individual rights should be denied or abridged by the laws or actions of the Government of Canada or the government of any political subdivision

thereof, because of race religion, sex, age, or any other characteristic or because of personal non-criminal activity.

II. Freedom of Speech and Assembly

We are opposed to all forms of government censorship. We oppose all laws which restrict individual freedom to conduct public demonstrations, speeches, or exhibits, or to canvass for any reason. Abuses in any of the above-mentioned areas can be dealt with through laws such as the laws of contract and laws prescribing trespass, destruction of private property, fraud, and assault.

III. Freedom of the Media

We oppose government control or ownership of any medium of communication.

Therefore, we support:

- a. the repeal of all laws prohibiting, licensing, regulating, taxing, or subsidizing the production, sale, or advertisement of any books, magazines, newspapers, and films;
- b. the abolition of media regulatory agencies, such as the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission;
- c. the sale of such agencies as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the National Film Board of Canada to private enterprise;
- d. constitutional guarantees of free speech which would apply to all communications media; and
- e. the development of an objective system of law defining individual property rights to "air waves".

IV. Freedom of Association

We support the right of individuals to join voluntarily, or to refrain from joining, any association, club, society, or other organization.

V. Freedom of Religion

We defend the right of individuals to engage in any religious activities which do not violate the rights of others. In order to defend religious freedom, we advocate a strict separation of church and state. We oppose taxation of church property for the same reasons we oppose all other taxation.

VI. Freedom of Contract

We believe that governments should not impose any contractual stipulations on any personal arrangements such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, or adoption. Any type of voluntary, personal contract must be eligible for protection by law.

VII. Property Rights

We hold that property rights are entitled to the same respect and protection as other individual rights, because the owner of property has the full moral right to control, use, dispose of, or in any manner enjoy her/his property without interference, until and unless the exercise of her/his control infringes upon the rights of others.

VIII. Land Use

The activity of land use planning is properly the responsibility and right of the owner(s) of the land. We therefore urge an end to all government interference in the planning process through such methods as expropriation, zoning laws or building codes, regional planning, or the acquisition of land or other real property with tax money. We call for the repeal of all laws regulating the use of private property.

IX. Right to Privacy

We oppose covert government surveillance of individuals, where such surveillance violates the personal or property rights of any individual. Any national census or other government compilation of data on individuals, groups, or corporations must properly be conducted on a strictly voluntary basis.

X. Right to Self-Protection

We hold that the individual has the right to own and bear arms. Consequently, we oppose restrictions on the ownership or use of guns or any other arms. General arms restrictions deprive the individual of his/her right to self-defense in an emergency situation while leaving the criminal fully armed. We propose, as an alternative to general arms restriction, the imposition of severe penalties for the criminal abuse of this right, thus placing the blame for armed crime where it properly belongs - on the criminal.

C. CIVIL ORDER

Preamble:

No conflict exists between the individual's rights to life, liberty, and property, and the government's obligation to maintain civil order. Both concepts are based on the same

principle: that no individual, group, or government may initiate force or fraud against any other individual, group, or government.

I. Crime

Crime, the initiation of force or fraud, threatens the lives, happiness, and property of all Canadians.

To prevent and suppress crime, we support:

- a. clear, consistent, and impartial laws protecting individual rights;
- b. strong, well-financed police force and judicial system;
- c. the right of any private security agency to offer protection services, consistent with the Constitution and the Charter of Rights; and
- d. the right of any individual to defend himself/herself and his/her property and to contract with any security agency for this purpose.

II. Victimless Crimes

Since only actions which violate the rights of others may properly be termed crimes, we favour the repeal of all federal laws creating "crimes" without victims.

In particular, we advocate for example:

- a. the repeal of all legislation prohibiting the production, sale, possession, or use of any drug, and of all legislation requiring medical prescriptions for the purchase of any drug, vitamin, or other substance;
- b. the repeal of all legislation prohibiting the voluntary exchange of money for sexual services between consenting adults, as well as, all laws which would restrict this exchange;
- c. the repeal of all laws regulating or prohibiting gambling;
- d. unconditional amnesty for all those currently incarcerated for the commission of these "crimes"; and e.
grant a pardon for anyone previously convicted of these "crimes".

III. Due Process

Until a person is proven guilty of any crime of which she/he may be accused, that person's individual rights must be respected. No person shall be held or questioned against his/her will unless charges are laid, or prevented for any reason from consulting with an attorney. We advocate the repeal of the War Measures Act and all other preventive detention legislation, uphold the right of the accused to a speedy trial, and support full restitution by the government for all losses suffered by persons arrested but not convicted.

IV. Police Powers

We favour the repeal of all laws permitting the government to declare martial laws, or to give the police extraordinary powers. We believe that a law enforcement officer has the same rights, and the same obligation under the law to respect the rights of others, as does any other individual.

V. Justice for the Victim

The purpose of any system of courts is to provide justice. The present system of criminal law is based on punishment with little concern for the victim. We support restitution for the victim to the greatest degree possible, at the expense of the criminal. Accordingly, we oppose all no-fault laws, which deprive the victim of the exercise of his right to recover damages from the responsible party. We also support the right of the victim to pardon the criminal. We advocate an end to defense based on "insanity" or "diminished capacity," which absolve the guilty of their responsibility.

VI. Government and Psychiatry

We urge that no person who has not been charged or convicted of a crime shall be incarcerated or detained against her/his will, for psychiatric or any other reasons, in a mental hospital or other institution.

We further advocate:

- a. the repeal of all laws permitting the involuntary psychiatric treatment of any persons, including children;
- b. an end to all involuntary treatment of prisoners, as, for example, by such means as psycho-surgery, drug therapy, and aversion therapy;
- c. an immediate end to the spending of tax money for any program of psychiatric or psychological research or treatment; and
- d. an end to tax-supported "mental health" centres and programs.

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VIII. Immigration

We believe that all individuals have the right to choose where to live, provided they do not do so in violation of the rights of others. Therefore, we advocate open immigration policies, along with the elimination of all government programs which subsidize immigration.

D. DEFENSE AND FOREIGN POLICY

Preamble:

The principle of non-initiation of force should guide relationships among governments. A Libertarian government would adopt a policy of non-intervention, abstaining totally from foreign quarrels and imperialist adventures.

I. Military Capability

We support the maintenance of a military establishment sufficient to defend Canada against foreign aggression.

II. Conscription

We oppose any effort to introduce conscription for military service or for any other purpose. Requiring individuals to serve against their will, no matter what the service or how lofty the motive, is a denial of their individual rights.

III. Military Alliances

We approve of military cooperation with other governments solely to protect the rights of Canadian citizens and residents.

IV. International Agreements

We maintain that the sole proper purpose of any agreement between the Government of Canada and any foreign governments is the protection of Canadian citizens or residents. We support the repeal of any treaty, agreement, or act which violates the rights of Canadian citizens or residents. We advocate immediate withdrawal from the United Nations. We further advocate constitutionally barring the Government of Canada from entering into any treaty or agreement under which individual rights are diminished.

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VII. Foreign Aid

We oppose all government aid to foreign countries, except in fulfillment of commitments under military alliance. We deny that the Government of Canada is responsible for the economic welfare of any other nation.

VIII. International Trade

We propose the abolition of all barriers to international trade caused by the laws of Canada [see Tariffs and Quotas section].

IX. International Finance

We favour withdrawal of the Government of Canada from all international paper money and other inflationary credit schemes. We favour withdrawal from the World bank and the International Monetary Fund. We oppose all government attempts to regulate currency exchange rates. International trade can truly be free only when currency exchange rates reflect the free-market value of respective currencies.

X. Unclaimed Territory

We oppose the recognition of fiat claims, advanced by nations or international boundaries, to currently unclaimed territory such as the ocean floor or extraterrestrial bodies. We support the development of objective standards for recognizing a claim of sovereignty over such territory.

E. TRADE AND THE ECONOMY

Preamble:

Economic rights are an extension of individual rights, specifically of the right to association and the right to own property. All government action which interferes with the free market violates these rights. The only proper role of government, in this context, is to protect property rights, enforce contracts, and adjudicate disputes, providing a legal framework for the protection of voluntary trade.

I. The Economy

Government intervention in the economy threatens both the personal freedom and the material prosperity of every Canadian.

We therefore support the following specific and immediate reforms:

- a. reduction of both taxes and government spending;
- b. an end to deficit spending;
- c. the removal of all government impediments to free trade, including legislation dealing with industrial labour relations, government marketing boards, and government licensing and

enforcement of monopolies (for example, the present communications, utilities and transportation agreements); and

d. the repeal of all controls on wages, prices, rents, profits, production, and interest rates.

IV. Trade

We believe that each person has the right to exchange goods and services with any person or group, free from coercion. All efforts by government to control or manage trade are improper.

V. Money We oppose any 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.

VI. Taxation

We are for a zero individual income tax. The other taxes should be as low as possible, just to provide enough revenue for a limited government to perform its functions well.

VII. Subsidies

In order to achieve a free economy, in which government victimizes no one for the benefit of anyone else, we oppose all federal government subsidies to business, labour, education, agriculture, science, the arts, sports, political parties, or any other special interest. We propose the elimination of all government "job creation" schemes.

VIII. Tariffs and Quotas

Like subsidies, tariffs and quotas serve only to give special treatment to favoured interests, and to diminish the welfare of all citizens. We therefore support the abolition of all tariffs and quotas as well as the abolition of the Canadian Tariff Board and such boards, commissions, or departments as act under the terms and authority of either the Customs Act and the Customs Tariff.

IX. Foreign Investment

We call for the immediate repeal of all special restrictions and taxes imposed on foreign investment in Canadian property and business. All persons living and working in Canada, regardless of citizenship, have an equal right to freely exchange goods and services.

X. Government Agencies

We oppose the involvement of government agencies or Crown Corporations in business and industry (e.g., the Canadian National system, Canada Post, and all seaports and airports). We propose the immediate repeal of all legislation restricting free competition with any of these agencies, and the disposal of their assets to individuals or private groups.

XI. Unions and Collective Bargaining

We support the right of individuals voluntarily to join or to establish labour unions. We believe that an employer should have the right to recognize, or to refuse to recognize, a union as the collective bargaining agent for some or all employees. We recognize the employer's moral right to employ substitute workers in case of strikes, and the union's moral right to organize secondary boycotts, unless there are contractual agreements to the contrary. We oppose all government interference in the bargaining process, such as certification of unions, compulsory arbitration, or imposition of an obligation to bargain. We recognize voluntary contracts between employers and labour unions as being legally and morally binding on both parties.

XII. Employment

Standards Legislation specifying wages to be paid, hours to be worked, and other conditions of employment restricts the ability of individuals to find work, and limits individual freedom. We believe that the government's ability to set employment standards should be restricted in applicability to its own employees.

F. SOCIAL CONCERNS

Preamble:

Government interference in current social concerns such as pollution, consumer protection, health care delivery, and poverty exceeds the level required for the protection of individual rights. In additions, problems in these areas have not been solved, but primarily caused, by government. The role of government in these areas must be reduced to one of protection of individual rights.

I. Pollution

We maintain that no one has the right to violate the property rights of others by pollution. We believe that the laws of nuisance and negligence should be modified to cover damages done by air, water, and noise pollution. We support the development of an objective system of law defining individual property rights to air and water. We believe that ambiguities

regarding these rights (e.g., the concept of "public property") are a primary cause of our deteriorating environment.

II. Consumer Protection

We support strong and effective laws against fraud and misrepresentation. We oppose all regulations which dictate to consumers, impose prices, define standards for products, or otherwise restrict free choice. We oppose so-called "consumer protection" legislation which restricts voluntary trade, and limits the ability of injured parties to sue.

III. Procreation

We call for an end to all government subsidies for child bearing, and an end to any provision of tax supported services for children. We oppose any government intervention in the private or commercial dissemination of contraception information or of supplies used for voluntary contraception. We oppose all coercive measures to control population growth.

IV. Education

We support the repeal of compulsory education laws, and the elimination of government operation, regulation, and subsidy of educational institutions. We support the repeal of all taxes on both profit seeking and non-profit voluntary schools.

V. Unemployment

We support the repeal of all laws which impede the ability of any person to find employment, including but not limited to: minimum wage laws, so-called "protective" labour legislation, government restrictions on the establishment of voluntary day-care centres, mandatory management labour relations, and licensing requirements.

VI. Poverty and Welfare

The welfare state, supposedly designed to aid the poor, is a growing and parasitic burden on all productive working people, and injures rather than benefits the poor themselves. We propose the elimination of all government involvement in welfare and relief programs. Any aid to the poor should be conducted on a voluntary basis.

VII. Health Care

The only effective way to stop the deterioration of health care services we are experiencing is to have all medical and health plans open to competition on the free market.

Therefore, we support:

- a. an end to all compulsory or tax-supported health-insurance plans;

- b. the right of all individuals to contract freely with health care practitioners of their choice;
- c. the right of doctors and other professionals to join in any voluntary associations, the rights of associations to set standards for their members, and an end to government interference in this area (doctors and other health care professionals should be free to work without licensing from the government);
- d. the repeal of all laws limiting the liability of doctors in cases of malpractice; and e. the repeal of all laws forcing any individual to submit to testing, treatment, or the administration of drugs against his or her will.

VIII. Canada Pension Plan

We call for the repeal of the fraudulent, virtually bankrupt, and increasingly inadequate and oppressive Canada Pension Plan. Pending such repeal, participation in the Plan should be made voluntary. We advocate that existing obligations of the Plan be honoured to whatever degree is possible without violating individual rights.

IX. Native Autonomy

We call for the honouring of all just claims of native people to land, property, and autonomy. Specifically, we seek:

- a. an end to transfer payments to native individuals, and their replacement with a lump-sum transfer of federal land;
- b. an end to all intervention by the Government of Canada into the use of native land, and an end to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development;
- c. the repeal of the Indian Act; and
- d. the granting of full Canadian citizenship to all willing native individuals.

X. National Parks

There is no reason for the government to subsidize the leisure activities of some of its citizens at the expense of others. We call for the operation of all National Parks on a self-sufficient basis, pending their sale to private interests.

XI. Divorce Act

To reform the Divorce Act in such a way that it strengthens Canadian family life, preserving the lawful authority of all family members.

G. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

We, the members of the Libertarian Party of Canada, support the following principles:

- I. Each individual has the right to his or her own life, and this right is the source of all other rights.
- II. Property rights are essential to the maintenance of those rights.
- III. 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.
- IV. 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.
- V. The only proper functions of government whose powers must be constitutionally limited, are:
 - a. settling, according to objective laws, disputes among individuals, where private, voluntary arbitration has failed;
 - b. providing protection from criminals;
 - c. providing protection from foreign invaders.
- VI. 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.