



# Rights and Freedom

# Bulletin

*Freedom:  
It's not  
just a word...  
It's a way of life.*

<http://Bulletin.RightsAndFreedom.org>

## Will conservative-minded citizens financially support a true conservative media?

[Text like this](#) is a link to online content. These links are provided to give you easy access to the original news story or other relevant information.

That's essentially the question I posed in the last issue of The Bulletin. The Sun News Network failed due to massive financial losses and that can only mean one thing: we conservatives did not put our money where our mouths are. We were happy to have SunTV, but only if someone else footed the tab. As I wrote two weeks ago:

*We conservatives don't back conservative media with our dollars. This is to our eternal shame, as now we are left with such bastions of a "free press" like the CBC who report that of which the Left approves and very little else.*

*Should the above efforts (or any others) to create a new conservative voice get off the ground we ought to do what we failed to do with Sun News: Support it financially this time...*

At the moment there appears to be a single viable option for a new conservative media: [TheRebel.Media](#). This website is currently financed and operated out of Ezra Levant's livingroom but it cannot stay that way if it is to become a viable entity. Along with fellow Sun alumni Brian Lilley, Michael Coren, Marissa Semkiw and John Robson, Esza Levant dares us all to join these 5 proud reporters to create a true conservative media outlet.

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Later in this edition of The Bulletin is a copy of Ezra's email to potential supporters. Read it. Then send Ezra and the gang a check in support of their efforts or [donate online](#). A visit to their website shows huge financial support already, but they need more, especially for supporting and technical staff.

Their past accomplishments prove one thing above all else: They deserve it.

Please join me in supporting a true conservative media outlet for Canada. My check for \$1,000 is already in the mail.

Yours in Liberty,

*Christopher*

## Freedom of Speech

### FreeDominion.com beats John Baglow (aka “Dr Dawg”) in Defamation Trial

by *Marc Lemire*

If you ever want to see how bad defamation / libel law is in Ontario, read this decision by the Ontario courts:

[http://www.freedominion.ca/images/baglow\\_polowin\\_decision.pdf](http://www.freedominion.ca/images/baglow_polowin_decision.pdf) [FULL DECISION]

This case has been dragged through the courts for years, all over a few words a poster on the FreeDominion message board said.

The entire hearing is a travesty of justice, and really brings the entire legal system into disrepute.

Defamation law's are worse than the notorious “hate speech” laws of Section 13 (Canadian ‘Human Rights’ Act). The only difference is the huge costs involved.

The underlying legal framework is just as broken and needs to be repealed – just like Section 13 was.

Seven words have caused tens of thousands of dollars spent on both sides. And the result? FreeDominion (a conservative message board) was exonerated, and “Dr. Dawg” – aka John Baglow, who sued, had his case dismissed.

I have written about this ridiculous defamation case in the past:

- ⇒ March 27, 2014: [Day 4 of the Baglow v. Smith & Fourniers Defamation Hearing: Lawyer Outs Himself!](#)
- ⇒ March 26, 2014: [Day 3 of the Baglow v. Smith & Fourniers Defamation Hearing: More Baglow testimony and alleged spoliation of evidence](#)
- ⇒ March 25, 2014: [Day 2 of the Baglow v. Smith & Fourniers Defamation Hearing: Baglow testifies and hearing delayed due to medical problems](#)
- ⇒ March 24, 2014: [Day 1 of the Baglow v. Smith & Fourniers Defamation Hearing](#)
- ⇒ March 19, 2014: [FREEDOMINION: Defamation Law is strangling the Internet](#)

Bravo to lawyer Barbara Kulaszka, and Mark/Connie Fournier for sticking to it, and following this case to this decision.

It's not an easy struggle to fight a ridiculous lawsuit through various levels of the justice system for years; and case law was made today, which makes the internet a little bit freer for political message boards, bloggers and others.

You can read more about this decision at:

- ⇒ <https://jaycurrie.wordpress.com/2015/02/23/law-marches-on/>
- ⇒ <http://www.freedominion.ca>
- ⇒ <http://drdawgsblawg.ca> (John Baglows Site – nothing on decision yet)

This is a big victory for freedom of speech on the internet. It appears that the costs have been split and the Fourniers are on the hook for a substantial amount to defend themselves.

If you can help, please do: <http://www.gofundme.com/bua1uc>

## Freedom of Speech

### Sun News Network is Gone... will we support anyone attempting to fill that void?

Two weeks ago I wrote about how we on the conservative side of things won't vote with our wallets and support conservative media and how the fall of Sun News Network is a testament to that conservative failure here in Canada.

Out of the ashes of that failure come a few of Sun's voices with a new vision and a new project: TheRebel.media  
Will we support our friends who support us?

I certainly hope so. Below is the email I received from Ezra Levant asking for my support. He will get it. If this is important to you, please join me in support of this initiative.

Yours in Liberty,

Christopher



Dear Christopher,

Thank you for signing up with TheRebel.media. I hope you've enjoyed the work we've done in our first week. I'm thrilled with how far we've come on a shoestring budget, literally starting out in my living room. And this week is going to be exciting with new on-air personalities joining our team.

It's one thing to make great videos and build a lively website. But how do we make it a successful business -- so that it doesn't meet the same fate as the Sun News Network, shut down because it was losing money?

People are asking: *what's my business plan?*

I'll tell you. Because I'd like you to consider being an "angel investor" to get us going!

My plan is to build an amazing website with news, opinion and activism to inspire a loyal following. Aim for 50,000 people a day coming by the site for a quick look. That sounds huge, but we're growing like crazy -- already getting about 20,000 hits a day.

Most of those 50,000 people will be casual users -- and we'll make a few pennies from each of them in display ads. But we hope people will love what we're doing and become engaged in our community -- and buy a membership. Members would get special, paywall protected content that casual viewers wouldn't. I'm talking about exclusive documentaries; feature interviews. Special things that you could only get from the Sun in the past -- and that you can only get from us now. If even 10,000 Canadians sign up for a membership, we'll be able to break even.

**Do you think we can find 10,000 enthusiasts in Canada?**

## What You Must Know Before You Carry...

Get your **Free Copy** of the Concealed Carry Report and protect your home and family before it's too late...



CONCEALED  CARRY REPORT

Instant Access 

I do. I started TheRebel.media in my own living room, and I'm not taking a salary. In fact, I've been using my own savings to pay for things so far -- to get us launched right away, to give you a glimpse of what we can do.

Do you think my plan will succeed? More importantly, do you think we need to succeed?

**Do you think Canada needs an alternative, independent, tell-it-like-it-is news source, especially now that Sun News is gone?**

If you do, please help me. I don't have enough personal savings to buy all the tools we need to execute my business plan. I've got the energy; we have an outstanding team that's growing each week. And I believe our customers are out there -- more than 15,000 people have signed up as casual users in just one week.

But I need help to buy the business tools to succeed.

**Would you please consider helping me "[crowdfund](#)" the execution of my business plan?**

We have one professional, high definition camera, that I put on my credit card. It cost over \$4,000. And we have a couple of laptop computers and some editing software. But we need to buy more cameras, and lights, and to build mini-studios in Toronto and other cities.

We need everything from wireless microphones to tripods. We need to pay a monthly royalty fee to companies like Associated Press, to have access to their TV footage of foreign news. We need to buy insurance. There are literally dozens of tools we need to do our job -- tools we have to buy now, so we can create the great TV that will convince people to become members.

Will you help us do that? If you give us the tools, we'll do the job!

We've set up a "crowdfunding" page on our website, [HERE](#). We list many of the tools we need -- including a few fun ones. Items range from \$2 to \$40,000 and everything in between. Would you consider helping us out? It's like a wedding gift registry, really. But instead of giving a gift to a young couple starting out in life, it's a gift to a young company starting out in life.

I know it's unusual asking for help to start a company. But it's reality. We're not a massive media company like CTV or Global. We're as grassroots as it gets.

As you know, Megan O'Toole, a reporter from Al Jazeera, the state broadcaster in the OPEC dictatorship of Qatar, mocked us last week, saying it was "very lame" that we were starting out in my living room. You can see her comments [here](#).

Well, I'd rather start in my living room than take a gorgeous studio paid for by a foreign dictator like O'Toole did. And I'd rather build our company from the ground up, with your help, than to ask for a dime of money from the Canadian government, like the CBC does.

So please check out our [crowdfunding page](#). If you believe in our editorial philosophy -- and our business plan -- please help us out.

Using my own savings to start our company has been an honour and a pleasure -- but I don't have enough money to buy all of the tools we need, by myself. I need your help.

Can you [kick-start our company](#), and change Canadian media forever? I hope you will.

Yours gratefully,

Ezra Levant

*Rebel Commander*

P.S. Our crowdfunding website will be active for two weeks. If you contribute \$10 or more, we'll send you a cool Rebel screensaver and wallpaper picture for your computer! For \$250, we'll invite you to a Google video "hang-out", where you can chat from home with me and other Rebel enthusiasts. And for \$1,000 or more, Brian Lilley or me (your choice) will call you up to talk about TheRebel, politics, the world -- whatever you like! [Please visit the website today and help however you can.](#)

## Privacy Rights

### NSA Director says Government “NEEDS” Access to Your Encrypted Communications

By [Grant Gross](#), IDG News Service

It probably comes as no surprise that the director of the U.S. National Security Agency wants access to encrypted data on computers and other devices.

The U.S. should be able to craft a policy that allows the NSA and law enforcement agencies to read encrypted data when they need to, NSA director Michael Rogers said during an appearance at a cybersecurity policy event Monday.

Asked if the U.S. government should have backdoors to encrypted devices, Rogers said the U.S. government needs to develop a “framework.”

*“You don’t want the FBI and you don’t want the NSA unilaterally deciding, ‘So, what are we going to access and what are we not going to access?’”* Rogers said during his appearance at the New America Foundation.

*“That shouldn’t be for us. I just believe that this is achievable. We’ll have to work our way through it.”*

[Justsecurity.org](#) has a [transcript of an exchange](#) between Rogers and Yahoo CISO Alex Stamos at Monday’s event.

Rogers isn’t the first member of President Barack Obama’s administration to call for encryption workarounds in recent months. In September, after Apple and Google announced encryption features on their smartphone OSes, both FBI Director James Comey and Attorney General Eric Holder raised concerns that additional encryption tools would hinder law enforcement investigations.

Stamos questioned whether it is a good idea to build backdoors in encryption.

*“If we’re going to build defects/backdoors or golden master keys for the U.S. government, do you believe we should do so .... for the Chinese government, the Russian government, the Saudi Arabian government, the Israeli government, the French government?”* he said, according to the Justsecurity transcript.

Rogers objected to using the word “backdoor”.

*“When I hear the phrase ‘backdoor’, I think, ‘Well, this is kind of shady. Why would you want to go in the backdoor? It would be very public,’”* he said.

*“Again, my view is: We can create a legal framework for how we do this. It isn’t something we have to hide, per se.”*

An NSA spokeswoman wasn’t immediately available for further comment.

Shocking!

Here’s the link of the full transcript:

[Transcript: NSA Director Mike Rogers vs. Yahoo! on Encryption Back Doors](#)



## Firearm Politics

### More Protection For Sport Shooters And Hunters In Breitreuz's Private Members' Bill

[via CSSA eNews](#)

The CSSA is pleased to announce another step forward to reclaim the rights of our members. Veteran M.P. Garry Breitreuz has introduced a private members' bill which would amend the Criminal Code to make it an offence to interfere with lawful hunting, fishing, trapping or sport shooting in Canada.

*These traditional heritage activities have played an integral role in shaping Canada's social and cultural heritage and make a significant contribution to the national economy. Hunters, anglers, trappers and sport shooters have made important contributions to the understanding, conservation, restoration and management of Canada's vital fish and wildlife resources.*

*"As co-chair of the Parliamentary Outdoors Caucus, I recognize the need to protect those Canadians who lawfully hunt, fish, trap or shoot from those who would harass or interfere with these traditional heritage activities," explained Breitreuz.*

*While there is a patchwork of legislation at the provincial and territorial levels, Bill C-655 will harmonize and clarify across Canada the protection of persons pursuing all of these time-honoured heritage activities by placing these offences within the Criminal Code of Canada.*

*"I've seen too many bills introduced in Parliament over the years that would threaten traditional animal use – some that would go so far as to make it a federal criminal offence to shoot a deer or duck, put a worm on a hook or kill any animal even if the animal died immediately – the accepted legal standard for humane killing," continued Breitreuz.*

*Bill C-655 seeks to amend the Criminal Code by adding the following after section 264.01:*

*Every one commits an offence who intentionally interferes with lawful hunting, trapping, fishing or sport shooting by*

*(a) tampering with or moving bait or a trap, net or firearm or any other thing or animal used for hunting, trapping, fishing or sport shooting;*

*(b) placing themselves in a position that hinders or prevents hunting, trapping, fishing or sport shooting; or*

*(c) engaging in an activity that disturbs or is likely to disturb wildlife, including fish.*

*A person who contravenes this section could face an indictable offence with fines of up to \$25,000 or a prison term of up to one year – or both.*

*A unique aspect of the legislation is the inclusion of recreational shooting along with fishing, hunting and trapping.*

*"I want to bring fairer representation for Canadian anglers, hunters, trappers and sport shooters to Parliament. Animal rights groups would rather have us end our passion for traditional heritage activities. While I am convinced that those activities are just as important now as they ever were, we need to ensure that those who enjoy them get the protection they deserve. I believe this legislation does just that," concluded Breitreuz.*

The CSSA is honoured to be able to express our gratitude to Mr. Breitreuz once more.

*"Garry has been a stalwart in our community. He has been a person that understands our commitment to these great activities and has been able to successfully communicate this passion to our House of Commons," said CSSA executive director Tony Bernardo.*

*"Our members owe a huge amount of thanks to Garry B. His willingness to listen to our concerns and work with us towards fairer laws is unprecedented in this country. On behalf of all of us at the CSSA, thank you Garry!"*

## Firearm Politics

### Why Didn't The Rcmp Tell Reporters The Whole Truth In 2013? By Dennis Young

A letter to Ian McPhail, Q.C., Chair of the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP (Commission) – the Commission that initiated a complaint and public interest investigation into the conduct of those RCMP members involved in entering private residences and seizing firearms following flooding in High River, Alberta in June and July 2013.

Dear Mr. McPhail:

Although there are many findings and recommendations regarding poor communications during the whole fiasco, your report fails to address the reasons why all RCMP spokespersons chose not to tell reporters the whole truth about the Force's firearms seizures back in 2013; thereby misleading the public for more than a year and a half.

I refer you to nine instances I documented in my letter to you dated September 26, 2013 (see link below).

Your report also contradicts former Commanding Officer of "K" Division Dale McGowan when he wrote to the Alberta Property Rights Advocate on August 16, 2013 stating:

*"...we did not take operational direction from any elected officials or public service employees to enter in private homes and remove personal property."*

Your report clearly states the opposite on page 24:

*"At approximately 6:30 a.m., as the directing authority of the EOC [Emergency Operation Centre] at the time, Mr. Zebedee authorized the preparation of a search plan involving door-to-door searches. The EOC ordered a search of all town residences to ensure that people had been evacuated."*

And again on page 25,

*"Pursuant to EOC directions, the RCMP prepared the search plan. During their briefing, RCMP members received the following directions: Search every house; Record house number and whether empty or occupied; Entry required to ensure life; For occupied homes document who is in the home, who is missing and the names of the next of kin; Searched homes to be marked with tape; Don't go through deep water; Secure homes upon leaving; and, On loud hailer identify police."*

That looks like "operational direction" to me and without it, your justification for all the unwarranted entries into 4,666 High River homes would fail to hold water (no pun intended) as per your FINDING NO. 3: Pursuant to the Emergency Management Act, the Emergency Operations Centre authorized and instructed the RCMP's entry without warrant and search of every High River building as part of the Emergency Operations Centre's emergency plans.

Your report fails to comment on the above contradiction nor explain how Deputy Commissioner McGowan got his facts so wrong in his letter to the Alberta Property Rights Advocate in 2013.

Part of the communication problems you identified in your report stem from the fact that the RCMP were not being completely honest with the media and the public about their forced entries into at least 754 homes, damage to more than 1,900 homes, seizure of hundreds of guns, seizure and destruction of 450,000 rounds of ammunition and the full extent of their activities while inside the 4,666 homes they entered without warrant between June 20, 2013 and July 13, 2013.

You acknowledge this problem on page 93 of your report where you stated:

*“This information had been known to RCMP incident command from the outset of the seizures. The failure to convey this information from the start resulted in the RCMP losing control of the issue as other voices filled the void.”*

And once again on page 107 where you state:

*“A lack of leadership was also noted by the Commission in the failure by lead RCMP members to integrate a strong communications strategy into its emergency response. This resulted in a failure to provide timely and transparent communications with respect to contentious actions such as the forced entries into homes and the seizure of firearms there from.”*

What benefit did these senior officers hope to gain by hiding these facts from the public for so long?

Did you ask all those RCMP members in charge of the High River searches and seizures listed in Appendix 3, and if so, what was their justification? Admitting these mistakes at the start, accepting responsibility, holding the persons accountable and making a heartfelt apology for these glaring mistakes and rights violations would have gone a long way to start rebuilding the trust with High River home owners in 2013 rather than 2015.

As it is now, everyone is waiting for RCMP Commissioner Paulson to hold his own officers accountable for their actions.

It seems that even after your report was released, the Commanding Officer for “K” Division, Deputy Commissioner Marianne Ryan, couldn’t bring herself to admit the troops under her command had done anything other than seize “unsecured firearms”.

VIDEO – RCMP DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MARIANNE RYAN RESPONDS TO COMMISSION’S HIGH RIVER GUN GRAB REPORT – FEBRUARY 12, 2015

<http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/proposed-class-action-filed-against-rcmp-over-high-river-flood-gun-seizures-1.2233323#ixzz3RbFXPQo5>

As you know, I have filed 42 Access to Information Act requests with federal departments and seven Freedom of Information Program requests with Alberta Government Ministries and the Town of High River.

More than a dozen of these files are being investigated by the respective Information Commissioners for missing information.

Many of the facts and conclusions presented in your report aren’t supported by the evidence I have amassed and the reports I have received from High River residents. I will be reporting on these inconsistencies, contradictions and outstanding questions over the next few weeks.

Dennis R. Young  
Honourary Life Member of the CSSA and the NFA  
Member of the Calgary RCMP Veterans Association  
E-Mail: [dennisryoung@telus.net](mailto:dennisryoung@telus.net)

THE FOURTH LETTER TO THE RCMP PUBLIC COMPLAINTS COMMISSIONER - SEPTEMBER 26, 2013 - HIGH RIVER – WHY DIDN’T THE RCMP TELL REPORTERS THE WHOLE TRUTH?

[http://www.cdnshootingsports.org/2015/02/4th\\_Letter\\_To\\_The\\_Commission\\_for\\_Public\\_Complaints\\_20130926.pdf](http://www.cdnshootingsports.org/2015/02/4th_Letter_To_The_Commission_for_Public_Complaints_20130926.pdf)

THE CIVILIAN REVIEW AND COMPLAINTS COMMISSION FOR THE RCMP REPORT INTO THE HIGH RIVER GUN GRAB – FEBRUARY 12, 2015

<https://www.crcc-ccetp.gc.ca/en/chair-initiated-complaint-and-public-interest-investigation-rcmps-response-2013-flood-high-river>



## The Firearms Act

### Peter Sedge sues Toronto Police Service for Seizing his Legally-Owned Firearms

You may remember the case of Peter Sedge, the Toronto-area gun collector who suffered a SWAT team raid and confiscation of all his firearms by Toronto Police in May of 2008.

Police, acting on a tip about a “cache of firearms”, could not be bothered to check the firearm registry and gun owner databases to see if the occupant of the address in question, Peter Sedge, was a law-abiding firearm owner. Or so it would appear.

Despite the midnight SWAT raid and the fact that all charges were dropped against Mr. Sedge, police offered no apology for their abuse of process. Sadly, that is typical after police screw up and abuse a law-abiding firearm owner.

I wish Mr. Sedge every success in this lawsuit. If he wins, it will set a precedent here in Canada, and one that is long overdue.

From the *Globe and Mail* [article](#):

The raid, and charges that were later dropped, were part of a negligent investigation that caused him humiliation and mental anguish, Mr. Sedge alleges in his statement of claim. His construction business, PS Fabricating Ltd., also suffered, he says.

Mr. Sedge’s lawyer, Arkadi Bouchelev, called the arrest “completely unnecessary” because his client was licensed and had no criminal record. Ontario’s chief firearms officer, who is in charge of licensing, could have been called in to inspect the site or confirm Mr. Sedge’s licence and registration, Mr. Bouchelev said.

***“I think there’s a lot of public interest in making sure that things like this do not happen,”*** he said.

The legal action is in the discovery process, which Mr. Bouchelev said he couldn’t comment on, and it’s unknown when it could go to trial or be settled.

The 14 firearms charges were dropped about 10 months after the raid.

Mr. Sedge is seeking \$3-million from the police for negligence, negligent investigation, false arrest, false imprisonment, unlawful search and seizure, breach of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and aggravated and punitive damages.

Police denied the allegations and said in a statement of defence filed after the lawsuit last year that they arrested Mr. Sedge for officer and public safety.

“Our position is that the officers acted in a reasonable fashion, in good faith and in compliance with their duties,” Toronto police spokesman Mark Pugash said.

The lawsuit names the Toronto Police Services Board and 19 police officers from 55 Division and the Guns and Gangs task force. The statement of defence says only 16 of those named are officers.

Acting chair of the board, Michael Thompson, declined to comment.

The officers had reasonable and probable grounds to lay charges against Mr. Sedge, and a Crown attorney later decided to proceed with them, Mr. Pugash said. He added that police also deny claims that Mr. Sedge’s basement apartment was searched before a proper warrant was obtained.

The police defendants that the force confirmed as officers in its statement of defence are Terrence Wray, Dennis Doyle, Stephen Gibbons, Stephen McGran, Jeffrey MacDuff, Michael Ramsay, Jason McIntyre, Lesley Zimmer, Bryan Smith, Neil Thornton, Paul Scudds, Roderick MacLean, Ron Clifford, Darryl Linquist, Michael Press and Oliver Febbo.

## Liberty

### Magna Carta: Our Shared Legacy of Liberty

by John Robson & Brigitte Pellerin - <http://magnacartadocumentary.com/>

[**Editor's Note:** Please support John Robson and Brigitte Pellerin's efforts to create this documentary film. You can find out more on their [Kickstarter.com](http://Kickstarter.com) page and pledge your support to liberty.]

From the time Magna Carta was sealed in 1215, it has been the foundation of liberty, the touchstone of those who believe citizens control their government not the other way around.

Down through the centuries, its guarantees have been included in the laws and constitutional order of the English-speaking world. Defended when challenged, refined as needed, appealed to again and again, they have protected freedom for nearly a thousand years.

It's a remarkable story, from its origins in the beleaguered Wessex of the Dark Ages through the rise of Parliament, the English and American revolutions, the granting of self-government to Canada, Australia, New Zealand and later India and the rest of the British Empire. These freedoms have been defended in Parliament, in war and in public debate. But we cannot take them for granted.

If we do not know the story, if we do not cherish these rights, understand them and defend them, if we do not make the story our own, Magna Carta could fade into the pages of history.

Please join us in telling that story. Please take your own place as an advocate and defender of Magna Carta, so these rights will continue to last and flourish.

We like to say we bring history to life but we dust it off, first.

We have made a career bringing all kinds of topics to life in ways that are often irreverent, sometimes controversial, funny or even infuriating. But we pride ourselves on never being boring.

We are going to bring this trademark treatment to the story of Magna Carta, the 800-year-old document that confirmed the foundations of our rights and liberties.

In this country you have rights. You can't be thrown in jail without due process. You are presumed innocent until proven otherwise. You elect the people who tax you and make the rules you must follow. Your home is your castle. You have the right to speak your mind and associate with whoever you want.

All these rights are enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. But they are much, much older than Pierre Trudeau. June 15, 2015 marks the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta, the most important document in the history of liberty. At Runnymede King John was forced to grant such rights, and to admit they had existed from time immemorial, belonged to citizens and always would be the birthright of free people. John was also forced to acknowledge that government derived its power and authority from the consent of the governed, and that a government that violated citizens' rights was no government at all.

The reason we still enjoy those rights today is that generation after generation of free people took Magna Carta seriously and fought those who would break King John's reluctant promise.

Magna Carta was the foundation of the British form of government Canadians inherited in 1867. It was the touchstone of statesmen and defenders of freedom through the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and the founding of British North America to the creation of Canada and our cause in both World Wars. Its clauses were familiar to, and were cited by, Edward Coke, John Adams, William Pitt and Winston Churchill.

The rights we are used to enjoying were not given to us by today's politicians. They derive from the charter sealed 800 years ago. It is incumbent upon us to tell the story of Magna Carta to the next generation, to ensure that it, too, is able and willing to fight anyone who would take those liberties away.

Hosted by John Robson, “Magna Carta: Canada’s Legacy of Liberty” will visit key British, American and Canadian sites from Runnymede to Westminster, Jamestown, Valley Forge and Nova Scotia in a feature-length documentary to bring Canada’s history to life. Our nation is not a recent, intellectual concept that arose out of a sociology department. It is an adventure in liberty under law that is still being written.

The documentary will explain the origins of our government: How control of the purse by the commons, freedom of speech in Parliament, the specific, accessible legal remedies that protect ordinary people from arbitrary arrest and the seizure of their property were all affirmed in Magna Carta, and preserved over succeeding centuries by men and women clear on their rights and brave in their defence.

### **Narrative Outline**

#### ***Act I: The Foundations of Liberty***

Magna Carta is the key statement of the ancient liberties of Englishmen, intended to conserve, not innovate, protecting rights understood to have existed from time immemorial and celebrated in the stories of Alfred the Great, Canute and Edward the Confessor.

#### ***Act II: The Triumph of Liberty***

The wax was hardly cold on Magna Carta before John sought to violate its terms. And though the Great Charter was reaffirmed dozens of times by John’s successors, the executive has repeatedly sought to undermine those liberties by force, flattery or bribery. Free people in the English-speaking world have staunchly resisted these attempts, from the frontal assault of Charles I to the indirect subversion of George III, and stood against foreign attacks on their liberty from Philip II to Napoleon, from the Kaiser to Hitler and beyond.

#### ***Act III: The Need for Vigilance***

Since 1945, ever-expanding governments have, with the best intentions, eaten away at our liberties by creating a regulatory welfare state that casts aside ancient procedural protections of property, parliamentary independence and free speech in the name of economic and social security. Meanwhile our understanding of the living historical basis of our ancient rights has eroded to the point that Britain’s Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron was famously unable to translate “Magna Carta” during a television interview. We need to be vigilant, when demanding the state give us economic security, not to let it accidentally trample our ancient liberties.



**[Support John Robson and Brigitte Pellerin’s efforts to create this documentary film.](http://Bulletin.RightsAndFreedoms.org)**

## Charter Rights

### Not even the Supreme Court is above the law

by Peter Stockland, via [Troy Media](#)

One of the most meaningful, hopeful, and typically unreported speeches on Parliament Hill in recent years came from Calgary's own Pierre Poilievre.

Poilievre, of course, has represented a suburban Ottawa riding for a decade, but he is Calgary born and bred. He is an intellectual apprentice of the Calgary School made famous – infamous? – by western thinkers such as Barry Cooper, Ted Morton, Rainer Knopff and Tom Flanagan. At 35, he embodies the West that, as Preston Manning told us in the 1990s, wanted in.

Well, it's been in – that is, in power – for a good long time now. The upshot is that even a transplanted Calgarian such as Poilievre – dubbed the Canadian Sniper by Toronto Star columnist Tim Harper – brings a western sensibility to the cabinet of Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

In a mini-shuffle a few weeks ago, Poilievre was given full cabinet status as employment minister, following in the footsteps of another noteworthy Calgarian, Jason Kenney. He continues, too, as minister of state for democratic reform.

It was in the latter capacity that he gave a speech recently heralding the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta, a copy of which will come to Canada this spring to celebrate the signing at Runnymede in June 1215.

Poilievre acknowledged that much of what we believe about the Magna Carta as a foundational document for individual rights is more mythology than history. The Great Charter, forcibly signed by King John in a muddy English field, served the immediate needs of, as Poilievre put it, “rebellious barons,” not the greater good of all mankind.

Yet it remains true, he said, that, over time, what was done at Runnymede became, through a combination of historic events and the mythology that unleashes the good in men, a catalyst for expansion of freedom leading to our contemporary understanding of human rights.

Poilievre then identified two key elements of the Magna Carta that reward constant referral by those who care about Canadian democracy. One was the length of time it took for the rudiments of right to be crafted into what we know today as unshakable liberties. The greatness of the Great Charter, he said, is that it was more than some fever dream brought on by royal indigestion and just as quickly forgotten. Once started, it moved an entire political system, an entire model of political life, forward, in fits and starts, to what Winston Churchill called the best of all possible alternatives. It took us 800 years to get here, Poilievre said, but its very slow, prudent, movement over time is what makes it invaluable.

That test of time applies particularly to the second element identified by Canada's minister of state for democratic reform. It is a principle that emerges from the very conditions under which the Magna Carta came to be: a king was forced to kneel and submit to a code of law not of his own making.

“After that no one,” Poilievre said, “not even the king, was above the law.”

Those are terribly pertinent words for Canadians at this moment in our history. In the wake of a series of unspeakably impertinent decisions by Canada's Supreme Court, I've begun to hear the meme: “They're the Supreme Court; they can do whatever they want.”

The full meaning of the Magna Carta in our political tradition is that, well, no, they can't. No institution, in our way of life, can do whatever it wants. Not the sovereign. Not the church. Not corporations. Not trade unions. Not Parliament. Not the Supreme Court of the Trudeau charter.

Where there is a muddy field, those who vaunt themselves above us can be made to kneel. It has been so for 800 years. We must hope that spirit of the Magna Carta will prevail.

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