



Dear Paul Bryan supporter:

August, 2001

“The jackasses at Elections Canada are out of control.”

Please excuse my language, but when I learned ***Elections Canada’s bureaucrats have pressed charges against a Canadian citizen***, I just blew my cool. That is the exact language I used.

The *persecuted citizen* I am talking about is one of us. Paul Bryan, Burnaby, B.C., a private software developer. Like you and I, he believes in free enterprise and individual freedom – including freedom of speech at election time.

And unfortunately, because of his principles, Paul is facing prosecution at the hands of Elections Canada, which is seeking fines of up to \$25,000.

This is not the first attack on freedom by Elections Canada. Its heavy-handed chief, Jean-Pierre Kingsley, has been an advocate of the most minute of controls and regulations – and stiff punishments – on every aspect of “free” elections. In one particularly bizarre example, its police are investigating a group called the “Edible Ballot Society.”

But in prosecuting Paul, **Elections Canada is taking the threat to freedom to a new and dangerous level.**

What was Paul’s crime? He simply posted news on his personal website. And no, it wasn’t part of a criminal conspiracy, or luring children toward violent pornography.

It was actually something government officials seem to believe is a lot more dangerous – *information*.

In fact, this is the first attempt by our government to control the Internet and press charges – *just for the sake of controlling information*. **The implications are very ominous, very scary.**

What Paul actually did was post real-time voting results on his website. This violated Section 329 of the Canada Elections Act, which makes it illegal to transmit election results from one part of the country in another part where the polls haven’t yet closed.

Supposedly, the premise behind the law is to prevent voting results in the East from influencing voting patterns in Western Canada. In other words, to

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make sure Westerners don't know what Easterners already do.

Of course, Paul was not the only one distributing voting results from the East to West on election day. Those with telephones could get the information from their aunt Mabel living in Toronto. With Internet access, you could get the results internationally from "Yahoo." And those with satellite TV could get the voting results from American networks like CNN or ABC, and even from the government's own CBC satellite news service!

Paul's website struck a popular cord with Canadians. It received more than half a million "hits" on election night.

So why go after Paul Bryan? Why dispatch RCMP officers to raid his home, seize his computer hard drive equipment, and attempt to interrogate him at the local police station?

Simple. He is a **lone individual**, easy to prosecute, and a prime place to establish the precedent of government information control on the Internet.

Paul saw Section 329 as *nothing more than a gag law* and an archaic gag law at that. As he put it, "People can beam around information worldwide in micro-seconds, and government wants to ban our use of it when it becomes inconvenient. It's time for the Canadian government to join the rest of us in the 21st century."

So he purposely defied the law on the principle that the government has no business controlling the free flow of public information on the Internet. He believes, as do I, that *all Canadians should have the right to disseminate public information*. **It's called free speech.**

I believe the Jean-Pierre Kingsleys of the world fear Paul Bryan. Or more to the point, they fear what Paul represents – a free, independent-minded citizen using technology to give power back to individuals. After all, information is power. The less control the government has over the flow of information, the less control it can exert over its citizens. **So Elections Canada has charged him with breaking a law that's as dangerous as it is ludicrous.**

Of course, the attitude of Kingsley shouldn't surprise us. After all, he's the chief backer of Bill C-2 – that other election gag law – which makes it a crime for citizens to spend their own money to promote their own views during federal elections.

That too is another example of *Kingsley trying to control information*. Simply put, Kingsley is a dangerous man. It is appropriate that journalists have dubbed him Canada's "Chief Electoral Ideologue," and "Chief Electoral Nanny."

Kingsley and Elections Canada know all about the National Citizens Coalition. We are taking on *his precious election gag law* in the courts. In fact, we just won a decision from the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench – the same court which issued an injunction against that law during the Federal Election. Kingsley

knows he can't bully us.

But unfortunately for them, Paul Bryan doesn't scare easily either. He recently said, "I am concerned I may be left to fight this myself. I do have my family's moral support. Friends have given me words of encouragement. Other Canadians have voiced their support."

"I hope other people will stand up and help fight this if and when the time comes, but I can't let that be a factor in deciding whether or not to do this," said Paul. "I have to at least accept the responsibility that I may have to fight this alone."

I don't think Bryan should have to make this fight alone. I think someone who is willing to take on Kingsley – and his power-loving bureaucrats at Elections Canada – in order to protect our basic freedoms deserves the support of the National Citizens Coalition.

That's why I am contacting you. I want to call Paul and let him know that *Kingsley isn't just taking on one guy, he's taking on all of us.*

Because this is our fight. We can't allow the government to dictate what information we can or cannot publish. We can't allow them to seize control of the Internet – new technology that promises to revolutionize politics. And we can't allow them to ruin a principled citizen *who has the guts to stand up for what he believes in.*

That's why I want to support Paul's bold plan to challenge the constitutionality of Elections Canada's Information Control in the courts. *We will prove beyond any doubt that this law violates Canadians' guaranteed and historic right to freedom of speech and information.*

You can make it happen. Your contribution of \$20, \$35, \$65, \$120, \$350 (or whatever you can manage) will help pay for the court case and ensure Canadians understand how important this case is for the future of freedom in this country.

To this end the NCC is establishing the Paul Bryan Defence Fund.

Not only will a successful court challenge restore a precious right to Canadians, it will also drive home to Kingsley that such **iron-fisted bully tactics have no place in a free and democratic society.**

Never again will Elections Canada be allowed to seize computers or ransack homes on the suspicion that Canadians were disseminating political information in ways these bureaucrats don't like.

And, of course, we will want to publicize this case with a multi-media ad campaign to *let Canadians know exactly how Kingsley, and his boss Prime Minister Jean Chretien, are stomping on our individual rights.*

But I need to hear from you quickly. Paul Bryan's court challenge is underway and I need to know if I can count on your support to carry on this important fight for freedom. His next court date is in early October.

As Canada's foremost citizens advocacy group, the NCC for 34 years has always promoted basic political and economic freedoms under the motto: "More freedom through less government." Independent of all political parties, the NCC is supported by freedom-loving individuals like yourself - people who believe in Canada's traditional freedoms and individual responsibilities.

Please strongly consider supporting us as we push forward with Paul's defense. Our basic freedom of speech and our right to information is at stake here.

Yours truly:



Stephen Harper, President

P. S. *Elections Canada now wants to do the unprecedented - control freedom of information on the Internet. **We can't let the government go down this path!*** Help us defend Paul Bryan. We need your support for the Paul Bryan Defence Fund. Thank you.

- PLEASE PRINT OUT ATTACHED COUPON AND MAIL WITH YOUR SUPPORT -

Dear Stephen: I'll support the defence of Paul Bryan. These Elections Canada bureaucrats are out-of-control bullies. I believe in freedom of information.

Here's my contribution:

\$350 \$200 \$120 \$65
 \$35 \$25 Other \$

Cheque or money order enclosed;

or Visa, Mastercard, AmEx

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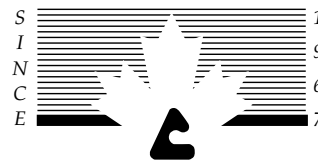
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