



News for Feb 12, '08

By [Al Siebring](#) on February 11, 2008 10:00 PM



No Political Will on Free Speech

It appears the Harper government doesn't have the political stomach right now to engage in any kind of major defense of free speech rights in Canada. NoApologies.ca has obtained a copy of a document circulated to all Conservative MP's from Justice Minister Rob Nicholson's office late last week.

The document is entitled "*Talking points re: CHRA & CHRC*", and it basically instructs MP's to keep a very low profile on any discussion surrounding Section 13 of the Canadian Human Rights Act. You can see a copy of the confidential paper [here](#). Liberal MP Keith Martin served notice earlier this month of a motion he wants to bring before Parliament to scrap Section 13(1) of the Act. This is the section that has been widely criticised for suppressing free speech rights. Critics say the section is being used by Muslim and gay rights activists to silence anyone who disagrees with them. The document tells MP's repeatedly to stress the point that the Harper government "is committed to the protection and promotion of human rights", and that the Canadian Human Rights Commission is an "independent agency" that administers the Human Rights Act "without interference from the government." As for the specifics of Martin's motion, the MP's are instructed to say that the motion was "just recently tabled and will not be up for debate in the near future," and that they should assure their constituents that if and when the issue "comes before the house for debate, (they) will follow it closely and.. arrive at a position at that time."

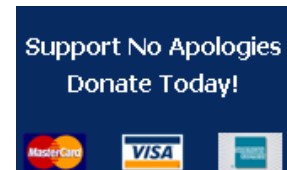
The document also instructs MP's to essentially shift the focus away from the Section 13 discussion by talking about the government's ongoing efforts to repeal Section 67 of the Act. That section essentially exempts First Nations from any and all provisions or enforcement of the Act in cases where discrimination happens on native land. Nicholson's document says that Section of the Act essentially prevents First Nations people "from receiving the same legal protection against discrimination that is afforded to all other Canadians," and that MP's should use the line "My Canada includes First Nations" when discussing the Section 67 issue.

Apr 12th Free Speech Rally

There's a rally coming up on Ottawa on the free speech issue. A group of prominent bloggers, including Mark and Connie Fournier of FreeDominion, John Pacheco at SoCon.ca, and the folks at the FreeMarkSteyn website have set Saturday, April 12th as the date for the rally. They've got a [website](#) set up, although they're still lining up speakers for the event.

Government Commits to "Museum for Human Rights"

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While the Harper government isn't being terribly assertive about a stance in favour of freedom of speech, it has now announced plans to spend \$100-million on a new "Canadian Museum for Human Rights." Heritage Minister Josée Verner introduced the enabling legislation to create the Museum yesterday. The Museum will be created as a Crown Corporation, on the same legal basis as other national museums. This one will be located in Winnipeg - the first "national museum" to be located outside the Ottawa/Hull area. The government says the museum will "explore the subject of human rights in order to further knowledge and understanding, promote respect for others, and encourage reflection and dialogue."

[No Legalized Prostitution for 2010 Games](#)

It doesn't look like the federal government is going to back down on the issue of prostitution at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. Justice Minister Rob Nicholson has rejected overtures from Vancouver mayor Sam Sullivan to decriminalize prostitution during the games. Nicholson told a Commons committee on the status of women last week that the government is "not in the business of legalizing brothels, and we have no intention of changing any of the laws relating to prostitution in this country." Some Vancouver groups that work to stamp out the sex trade have come out against the idea as well. Daisy Kler from the Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter told the Vancouver Sun last week that "The city thinks foreign tourists should be entitled to women's bodies as part of their tourist package. And obviously we're going to object to that and we're not going to stand for it in our name." Kler says countries that have legalized prostitution have seen an increase in human trafficking and child exploitation.

[Morgentaler Poll Continues](#)

The Globe and Mail is still running that [poll](#) about whether Doctor Henry Morgentaler should be awarded the Order of Canada. By late Monday, the pro-life side was vastly outnumbering those who want to see the abortionist honoured with the country's highest civilian award. Just over 3-thousand people had voted in favour of Morgentaler's selection by last night - close to 20-thousand were on record against it. We also [link](#) to a piece from the Globe on this story today; public health reporter André Picard writing that this is the third time there's been an organized lobby to have Morgentaler named to the Order.

[British Bishop Fined \\$80K Over Gay Job Slight](#)

More politically correct craziness from Britain. An Anglican bishop has been ordered to undergo "equal opportunities training" and to pay a gay youth worker nearly \$80,000 for refusing him a job because of his homosexuality. 42-year old John Reaney filed a complaint with a government employment tribunal after being turned down for a job by the Bishop of Hereford, the Right Reverend Anthony Priddis. He'd been told by others on the interview panel that he was the best candidate for the job. Reaney claimed he had an embarrassing one-on-one interview with Bishop Priddis, in which a number of personal questions about his sexuality were asked. Three days after that interview, the bishop telephoned him to say his application had been unsuccessful. No word on whether the church will appeal the ruling.

[Clinton Campaign Shakeup](#)

A big shakeup in the Hillary Clinton campaign for president. The woman who's run the campaign for Hillary's presidential bid pretty much since its inception is gone. Patti Solis Doyle handed in her resignation yesterday. She goes back to the Clinton days in the Arkansas governor's mansion. Her resignation came the day after Clinton lost four primaries to Barack Obama - votes in Nebraska, Washington state, Louisiana and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Obama also took the vote in Maine yesterday. Some analysts say Obama has

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now taken the lead over Clinton in terms of committed delegates. The new manager for the Clinton campaign is 53-year old Maggie Williams, an African-American woman from Kansas City who was with the Clintons in the White House the first time around - in fact, she had a dual role in that White House as both an assistant to Bill, and as Chief of Staff for the First Lady's office. How close was she to the first Clinton White House? In 1995, a uniformed Secret Service officer testified under oath that he saw her leave Vince Foster's office carrying a sheaf of documents shortly after Foster committed suicide. Williams denied it, and that was the end of the story.

Canadian Election in Spring?

More talk about a spring election in Canada. Stephen Harper is prepared to ask the Governor General to pull the plug on the minority Parliament and trigger a vote if the Senate does not pass the government's crime bill by the end of this month. Parliament started debate yesterday on a government motion calling on the Senate to pass the Act. If the motion passes the Commons, and the Senate doesn't comply, a spokesman for Harper says there's a good chance he'll go see Gov. Gen. Michaëlle Jean to dissolve Parliament. Also from Ottawa, word that finance minister Jim Flaherty will bring down his budget on February 26th.

Recommended Web Links Today:

Wagner: Charter is "American"

Michael Wagner has a [new column](#) up on our site today. He talks about the American connection to Canada's so-called "Charter Rights" - in particular the whole question of the way the Canadian courts have viewed the question of homosexuality. "The adoption of the Charter," he writes, "was a successful attempt to Americanize Canada's Constitution." Michael's a trained historian and scholar, and he makes a great case on this. Check out his column today.

Is Morgentaler some kind of god?

Apparently, there's a new definition in Canada now for the word "blasphemy." At least if you work for the man who singlehandedly changed Canada's abortion law. According to the dictionary, the word used to mean "impious utterance or action concerning God or sacred things", or "an act of cursing or reviling God." But now, it's somehow "blasphemous" that Henry Morgentaler has been repeatedly denied the *Order of Canada*. The word was used in a quote of long-time Morgentaler assistant Cathie Columbo, in a [piece in the Globe and Mail](#) over the weekend. The piece was about a renewed effort to get Morgentaler inducted into the Order. "It's blasphemy", she said, "that this hasn't happened. And a national embarrassment." The Globe's Health reporter, André Picard, revealed there's been a long-standing campaign - with repeated efforts in recent years - to get Morgentaler inducted. He writes glowingly of that effort, and repeatedly refers to those who would oppose it as "anti-choice". In fact, the term "prolife" isn't used at all in the article, except in one instance where Picard refers to Andrea Mrozek of the group "ProWomanProLife". But the piece is an interesting look at the mindset of the pro-abortion movement, and the "blasphemy" comment gives more credence to Ann Coulter's oft-used analogy that "abortion is the sacrament of the religion of Liberalism."

Barack Obama - Messianic Overtones?

And a link to a post at American Thinker today, about the near-Messianic undertones of the Barack Obama campaign. Kyle-Anne Shiver writes "Whenever I watch Obama, listen to his eloquent but nonspecific oratory, and see the near-swooning young people who invariably follow him wherever he goes I cannot help but think of the pied piper and wonder toward



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what destination he is marching our youth." A good [warning](#) about the perils of a celebrity-style candidacy.

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» [Friends In Low Places](#) from small dead animals

The Alberta Liberal Party just rose a few notches in my estimation. No, the other Alberta Liberal Party - the one that isn't in office. Ezra exerpts the relevant passages; The Alberta Liberal Party supports Mr. Levant's freedom to express... [Read More](#)

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[darrell](#) said:

Odd. what's harper thinking? Also, please read 'moderate muslims, wherefore art thou?' It's at the top of www.darrellep.com

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