



## Julian Porter, Q.C.

I was called to the Bar in April of 1964 and have practised litigation ever since.

My practice has touched on almost every aspect of litigation except, thankfully, construction liens. I have defended murder cases (not good results), obscenity cases (bad results) and run-of-the-mill criminal cases. For years I acted for many health professions and appeared before countless administrative tribunals. I now mostly do libel, slander, copyright and esoteric torts and I'm always fencing with the law of contempt. I have appeared before a parade of juries and enjoy bringing the tingle of theatre to the Court.

I've been in big law firms, a small criminal law firm, then building a solo practice to a 12 person firm; then moving to a mega firm and for the past seven years, a sole practitioner. My past partners have included a leader of a national political party and a long term visitor to jail.

Convocation is composed of a large number of Benchers with a vast variety of experience. At times Convocation has the crackle of Westminster, people standing, the roll call of votes, the narrowness of margins of defeat. Always the debate widens your scope, often you become allies on an issue with former opponents. This is the splendour of the job, and civility is the cement of the institution.

I have been a Bencher since 1999. I have headed the Litigation Committee, Ontario Lawyers Gazette Advisory Board and the Government Relations and Public Affairs Committee.

Sitting on discipline cases is a necessary agony.

In the last four years my single most interesting job was representing the Law Society as a voting member of the House of Commons Justice Committee reviewing nominees for appointment to the Supreme Court of Canada.

The next four years reveal two large issues.

We must support the struggle of the sole practitioner and small law firms. Our task force has valiantly sought solutions to the perils of small practice. Creative use of computers and start-up workshops are supported by LSUC staff. Work will continue over the next four years.

By Bill 14 which was passed in October 2006, the Law Society is authorized to regulate and govern paralegal practitioners. By May 2007, when the Bill comes into effect we will need to have a regulatory framework in place.

This will be a large project. It will require a flexible, dignified approach and a vast amount of time, talent and resources. We are lucky that our Bill Simpson did such a careful job travelling the province meeting lawyers and paralegal organizations. Paul Dray, a respected paralegal and a Bencher, has given us valuable guidance. He is now Chair of the Law Society's Paralegal Standing Committee.

Over the next year we will develop a licensing process for paralegals. The first licences will be issued in January 2008. We must develop professional codes of conduct and a scope of practice definition. Our regulatory process must adapt for this new class of licence. One of the issues we must consider is how much of the cost the paralegal applicants must pay to support this program.

Those regulated will be practitioners who at present have a statutory right to appear before some tribunals or courts.

Good character investigations of paralegal applicants will lead to an increase of hearing panels. We must make decisions as to how these panels will be conducted.

Also we will, of necessity, have to pursue people who continue to deliver legal services without being licensed.

I wish to highlight three extraordinary women benchers who should be re-elected:

- Bonnie Warkentin, a litigator from a two person firm in Kingston, who brings to our sessions a practical sense and a cool appraisal of the issues.
- Mary Louise Dickson, a Toronto solicitor who for years has wrestled with physical adversity, offers a distinct approach to our problems.
- Laurie Pawlitzka, a topnotch family lawyer, is a natural leader and a conciliator who keeps us on track and gets things done.

As well Linda Rothstein, a dynamo, is running for the first time - lucky us.

Vote for them and, if you will, vote for me.

### Sole practitioner since 2000.

Julian Porter, Q.C. has been a barrister since he was called to the Bar in 1964. His first 8 years were with John Sopinka at Fasken's. Julian has been involved in a variety of civil and criminal cases throughout the Province. He has given numerous lectures on cross-examination and libel. He is co-author of *Canadian Libel Practice*. He has been Chairman of the Toronto Transit Commission, President of the CNE and on the Boards of the Cancer Research Foundation and the Stratford Festival.

He is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers and the recipient of an honorary LL.D. from Queen's University.

Julian is married to Anna Porter.