

## Ontario Party poised to bring Trump style politics to Ontario

To the Editor, After being overwhelmingly rejected out west, disgraced former M.P. for Hastings Lennox and Addington, Derek Sloan, has returned to his home riding to once again try his hand at politics as the leader of the Ontario Party. Derek, the self-proclaimed 'freedom fighter' against masks, mandates and lockdowns, has formed his new party to challenge those he calls the 'counterfeit Conservatives' who make up the Ontario Conservative party headed by Doug Ford, but this time he's bringing some Republican and Trumpian tactics with him. I decided to take a look into the Ontario Party to see what lies beneath the alluring slogan of 'Freedom, Family and Faith.' What do these words mean according to Derek Sloan and the Ontario Party? Well, if we look at who was present at the Ontario Party kick-off over the weekend of April 2-3 it's quite telling. The keynote speaker was Derek Sloan's friend, the American conservative consultant and lobbyist Roger Stone. Stone, if you remember, worked on many of the Republican campaigns from Nixon to Donald Trump. Seeing the chaos and divisiveness that was caused by Trump's administration and his abhorrent behaviour on the campaign trail should have been enough to convince Sloan to reject that style of politics, but no, instead, he now appears to be embracing it and bringing it here. Also on the docket at the Ontario Party kickoff was writer Barbara Kay, who spoke about the 'dangers' of gender inclusivity as well as Samuel Sey who spoke about the 'toxicity' of 'critical race theory' in classrooms. It should not be surprising, given Sloan's stance on conversion therapy that he would now be against gender inclusivity and 'critical race theory.' Sloan says that, 'Freedom is what matters, it's the base our society is built on,' but freedom, like many other words in the English language means different things to different people. In the Ontario Party Charter it claims that members of the Ontario Party 'believe that all human beings have an inalienable right to 'life, liberty, and private property,' along with the 'freedom of conscience, freedom of worship and religion, freedom of speech, freedom of association and assembly.' So how exactly does that freedom of speech and conscience apply to those teachers or students who want to talk about critical race theory? Or those who want to discuss gender inclusivity? Or maybe those who want to explore whether or not God exists? What about discussion of homosexuality, privilege, communism, or socialism? It appears that those rights do not extend to educators or students and now Sloan, the so-called 'freedom' fighter himself, promises to 'discipline school personnel who breach this new education legislation protecting students from ideological indoctrination,' adding that the Ontario Party would, 'make it illegal for public school teachers to promote partisan political positions or to engage in personal political activism in the classroom.' In other words, they will only be able to discuss whatever Sloan believes should be discussed. This is quite the interesting way to celebrate freedom of speech and conscience, by quashing anything he does not agree with. In section 2.7 of the Ontario Party charter it states that, 'We reject the divisive politics of envy, resentment, group identity and ethnic exceptionalism,' yet Sloan is constantly dividing the world up between us and them: the freedom loving patriots of the freedom convoy vs those who will take that freedom away, the real conservatives like himself and the counterfeit conservatives, the Liberal elites and the freedom loving Canadians, LGBTQ2 people and right-wing Christians like himself. It's kind of hard to believe that Sloan would say that he rejects the divisive politics of group identity and yet support the so-called 'Freedom' loving patriots of the 'Freedom Convoy' who publicly disseminate racist, white supremacist, and Islamophobic ideals, like: BJ Lichter, Pat King, and convoy organizer Jason Laface. Sloan uses the terms 'freedom, family and faith' but it appears that they only apply to a narrow group of people that fit Sloan's definition of acceptable people such as real conservatives. Anyone or any topic that falls outside what Sloan finds acceptable, critical race theory, homosexuality, gender inclusivity, will be banned to ensure that all of our freedoms are upheld. In fact, under the subsection 'Conscience Rights' in the Ontario Party's platform it lays out very clearly who his party is actually looking out for, stating that an Ontario Party Government will, 'Guarantee that all Ontarians, but particularly those of conservative worldview (as they are currently subjected to the greatest censorship and discrimination), can exercise their freedom of expression to its fullest extent allowed by law.' The law of contradiction states that the members of the Ontario Party cannot both reject the divisive politics of envy, resentment, group identity and ethnic exceptionalism and then at the same time hold one group above the rest and give them special treatment because you resent the way you think they are being treated. Only using Trumpian logic can something be both true and false at the same time. We watched how Trump's presidency played out down south, do we really want that divisive style of garbage politics here? Judging by their contradictory platform and their keynote speaker that is the Ontario Party's intent.

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