

Boldly backwards



April 28, 2020 By Nate Smelle

New ideas are not always an improvement and old ways of thinking are not always wise. While I do believe we need to slow down our society on a more permanent basis to ensure our survival as a species and give the earth a breather, returning to the expired way of thinking Hastings-Lennox and Addington MP Derek Sloan encourages on a regular basis would be a disastrous step backwards. Since announcing his intentions to replace Andrew Scheer as the leader of the federal Conservative Party of Canada on Jan. 20, our "proudly" social conservative MP seems to have done everything he can to insult as many people as possible. For example, in January Sloan indicated that if elected he would re-ignite discussions regarding abortion and a woman's right to choose, and same sex marriage - to which he, like Scheer, is opposed. During a conversation with CTV Power Play's host Evan Solomon, Sloan attempted to use "science" to promote his outdated views on LGBTQ2S rights and support for conversion therapy, which has since been banned by the Trudeau government. In an open letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Premier Doug Ford sent out in early February, Sloan next managed to offend Indigenous people everywhere by labelling land defenders standing up for Indigenous sovereignty as "radical extremists." And now, in a time when politicians from all parties have been putting aside their personal beliefs and coming together to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, he instead decided to incite divisions by making racist remarks against Canada's chief public health officer Dr. Theresa Tam - who has been working tirelessly to protect the health and safety of all Canadians during the pandemic. In an email to his supporters Sloan sowed seeds of distrust, recklessly accusing Tam of being an agent of the Communist Party of the People's Republic of China. After Sloan officially joined the Conservative Party's leadership race, he told Bancroft This Week that he "got into politics to make Canada a better place," and that he had been formulating ideas for several years on how the Conservative Party could be a "bigger, bolder party, that could truly meet the needs of all Canadians." So, I ask our MP: do the views you have expressed and what you have stood for since getting into office "truly meet the needs of all Canadians?" In case you are wondering the answer is absolutely not. Not since covering the 2016 by-election in Niagara-West Glanbrook and the campaign of Sam Oosterhoff - another social conservative elected representative - have I heard so many card-carrying Conservative Party members express their disgust with a member of their own party. This I see as a sign of hope. However, the reality is that to earn a place on the ballot for the party's leadership, a potential candidate must raise \$300,000 and gather 2,000 signatures from their fellow Conservative Party members. Although some within the party may like to consider Sloan a "fringe candidate" or a "radical extremist" the fact is that he was able to raise the money and gather the signatures. To share a few cautionary words with our MP, and the entire Conservative Party of Canada for that matter, penned by one of my favourite millionaires Ice Cube, if you truly want to meet the needs of all Canadians "You better check yourself before you wreck yourself."