

December 2015 - #9

SO WHERE'S THE RIGHT? All Ontario parties in legislature on the left

OPENERS - by Robert Metz

Ask the average voter what the words 'left' and 'right' mean relative to how they vote, and most people will openly admit that they literally do not understand, or care about, 'left' and 'right.' "They're all the same," goes the most popular refrain, which one must assume means that, in so saying, one perceives no differences between left and right. What too rarely occurs to those saying this is that perhaps the reason "they're all the same" is because they're all on the same side of the political spectrum, despite any pretense to the contrary.

If you cannot name the problem, you cannot identify it, speak to it, nor solve it. In politics, and by natural necessity, every political option (a political party or candidate) represents a 'package deal' in which the voter is limited to choosing between a given set of policies - policies that are far more numerous than the number of elected officials that could ever be physically placed in office.

In the recent Canadian federal election, for example, those wanting to see cannabis 'legalized' had but one viable option: Justin Trudeau's Liberal Party. But in voting for that single policy by voting Liberal, they also voted for the rest of the Liberal 'package,' including a vote for more centralized state control of the economy and finance, an adoption of the 'Green' philosophy on the environment, increased and extended deficits and debt, etc., to say nothing of the risky Liberal response to the Islamist ISIS crisis.

If these single issue voters liked all of those other Liberal policies, then they certainly got a bonus political 'package deal' for their vote; if they hated all of those other policies but voted Liberal on their single issue, then they swallowed a bitter pill indeed. But however viewed, it would be a huge mistake for Liberal voters on this issue to assume that the Liberal Party has promised 'freedom' on the cannabis issue - in contrast to its increased state control policies with regards to everything else - because it's simply not so. The Liberal policy on cannabis is ideologically consistent: state control and monopolization of production, of distribution, and of the market (consumers).

It is only in understanding that the Liberal Party of Canada is a party of the Left - and what that term means - that one can appreciate that it is indeed acting consistently and predictably. The term 'left,' like 'Liberal,' identifies the ideology to which all 'Liberal' party policies adhere. The 'package deal' is identified by its label: Left, or 'left wing'.

So, too, the same 'package deal' principle applies to all political parties, including Freedom Party, a party that sees itself on the Right - but not the right 'wing.' These are important and defining distinctions (though not the only ones) without which we simply cannot focus on the bigger picture - the picture in which each and every one of us find ourselves. So instead of using the 'left' and 'right' labels to cause confusion in the political arena, let us instead use them as an aid in clarity and understanding. When it comes to expressing a concept to the 'masses,' you can't get much more basic than left and right - a digital option if ever there was one.

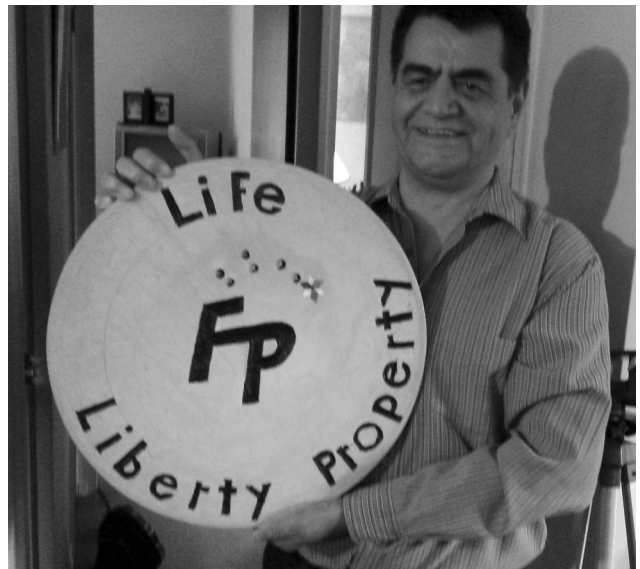
In simplest terms, the words 'left' and 'right' denote a change of direction relative to some current given position. But of literal directions available, and assuming one remains grounded (thus eliminating 'up' and 'down'), these are only two of the potential four: left, right, forward, back. In terms of *position*, there is one other: stationary (the status quo, the center, etc).

The symbolism of the words 'left' and 'right' has evolved since their earliest political usage, and the terms have now been tested long enough relative to our observations of theory vs practise that some objective conclusions (and useful definitions) can be determined.

My handy *Funk and Wagnalls* dictionary defines the political usage of the terms left and right thusly: "LEFT: (adj) designating a person, party, faction, etc., having liberal, democratic, socialistic, or laborite views and policies; a group, party, etc., whose views and policies are left. RIGHT: (adj) Designating a person, party, faction etc., having absolutely or relatively conservative or reactionary views and policies."

Adjectives describing adjectives - not much help there. However, when it comes to a more objective definition, the term 'left' is very two-dimensional and limited in its application, while the definition of 'right' has within it the inclusion of a moral and intellectual dimension utterly lacking in any offered definition of 'left'.

{LEFT AND RIGHT continued on page 2...}



ABOVE: PRESERVED IN STONE: Brampton-West Freedom Party C.A. president Ted Hartson proudly displays his original artistic creation: Freedom Party of Ontario's logo, hand-carved in stone as a symbol of the longevity of the principles on which FP is based.

{... LEFT AND RIGHT continued from page 1}

Again, from the same dictionary: "*LEFT: past tense and past participle of 'leave'; usually having the weaker and less dominant hand. RIGHT: Done in accordance with or conformable to moral law or to some standard of rightness; equitable; just; righteous; conformable to truth or fact; conformable to a standard of propriety or to the conditions of the case; proper; fit; suitable; most desirable or preferable; holding one direction, as a line; straight; direct; properly placed, disposed, or adjusted; well-regulated; orderly; sound in mind or body; healthy; well.*"

It is much more in this latter sense of the word 'right' that Freedom Party identifies itself on the right. It is also this sense of the word 'right' to which Robert Vaughan and I relate on our weekly radio show *Just Right*, and why we make the point of reminding our listeners that we are "just right - not right wing." Anything political with a 'wing' on it these days is flying in a leftward direction, and that's just not right.

Of course, even this definition of 'right' omits the critical element: the specific 'standard of rightness' to which one aspires.

On the deeper philosophical level, the 'rightness' standard of Freedom Party is expressed in the logo associated with this newsletter (published by *Freedom Party International*, which is not a political party): Metaphysics: Reality; Epistemology: Reason; Ethics/Morality: Self; Politics/Culture: Consent.

On the politically ideological level, the 'rightness' standard of the Freedom Party of Ontario (which *is* a political party) can be seen expressed in the photo on the front page of this newsletter: The party logo, hand-carved in stone by Ted Harlson, reads: "Life, Liberty, Property" - the trinity of values to be protected in a free society. Together, the protection and institution of these values create the social and political condition we call: freedom.

Between elections, political parties are unlikely to reveal specific platforms and planks that will become their focus during an election. These will be measured against public opinion of the time, but then always weighed against the ideology of the party considering a given plank or policy.

In the ever-changing flow of policies and platforms, we are thus forced to relate to political parties and ideas in broad, often symbolic terms that represent what are at root ideological positions or points of view: left, right, center, red, blue, orange, green, conservative, liberal, libertarian, democrat, socialist, capitalist, statist, collectivist, individualist, freedom, and so on. Properly understood, every term and symbol has an objective specific meaning, whether relative to other terms, or as absolutes. The ideologies behind the words and terms are those around which people politically organize.

'Ideology' is not a bad word - though it should rarely be used during an election when the focus is on planks and platforms. That said, there are regrettably many *bad* ideologies which grossly outnumber the few that 'work' (i.e., those consistent with reality/reason and which lead to improvements in the general welfare). Perhaps that's why so many, when discussing just about anything requiring a sound philosophy, will insist that they are not ideological.

The direction of political action is, in the end, a philosophical determination, yet Conservative politicians in particular keep insisting that they are not ideological. Why? In order to avoid being associated with their bad or unpopular ideology - one with known negative effects, and not unlike that of their political competition - on the left.

My *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics* defines IDEOLOGY as: "*Any comprehensive and mutually consistent set of ideas by which a social group makes sense of the world may be referred to as an ideology. Catholicism, Islam, Liberalism, and Marxism are examples. And ideology needs to provide some explanation of how things have come to be as they are, some indication of where they are heading (to provide a guide to action), criteria for distinguishing truth from falsehood and valid arguments from invalid, and some overriding belief, whether in God, Providence, or History, to which adherents may make a final appeal when challenged. The term has had very variable connotations, and at least in its dominant sense it has been necessarily pejorative, a term always to be used of the ideas of others, never of one's own.*"

In rejecting any ideological 'labels' that might describe the motivation behind their party or their own views, politicians hope to avoid being held to a standard, idea, principle, or objective. They want to eat *your* cake and have it too - without being judged or held accountable.

In the legislature, politicians are not on a determined path although they like pretending otherwise. Once elected, they implement astonishingly bad policies, even as voters continue to be shocked and surprised by costly schemes contrived once the left is in power. In avoiding mentions of ideology, right-wing politicians in particular hope that voters will not see their true colour and ideology: red and on the left. They seem to know that if they did, then voters on the 'right' might be far less likely to vote for them.

Given their leftist ideologies, and in this one and only regard, they may well *be* right. [end]

SO WHAT'S RIGHT? Freedom.
WHAT'S NOT? Libertarianism and Conservatism...
...and of course whatever's left
see pgs 3 and 4 for our 'RED' AND 'DEAD' ALERTS!

from 'left-to-right' - the road to freedom:

philosophy



individual



ideology



party



action



voters

ABOVE, left to right: Democracy's road to freedom: from a philosophy of Reality, Reason, Self, Consent - to the politics of Life, Liberty, Property - to making the freedom option a reality at the polls.

PATRICK's ideological BROWN-out

Red Alert! - Why the PCs are on the left - by Robert Metz

Voter dissatisfaction with the Kathleen Wynne Liberals can certainly be expected to rise between now and the next provincial election. In the electoral effort to unseat her government, most will likely choose NDP, but many who see themselves on the 'right' will consider a party that unbeknownst to them is in no way on the right: Ontario's **Progressive Conservative Party**.

It was so in 1984, when Freedom Party was founded, and it is more so today, under the leadership of **Patrick Brown**:

"My approach to politics is to just be pragmatic; I dislike the way the party used to be run; I'd have to fit into some ideological compartment. What my basis is, is if an idea makes sense for Ontario, I don't care if it comes from an NDP, from a Liberal, from a social conservative, from a social libertarian --- if it makes sense for Ontario, I'll support it. There's no monopoly on good ideas.



"I want us to be a party that says it will consider everything. There are no ideological compartments.

"Regular voters don't care what political persuasion you come from; they only care about how you're going to enhance their lives, create jobs...."
- April 30, 2015 - TVO interview with Steve Paikin

By letting Ontarians know that he rejects 'ideology,' Ontario PC leader Patrick Brown has in effect proudly boasted that he doesn't stand for anything. In so doing, he hopes that perhaps no one will fear his party, as they did with the 'ideological' PC's under Tim Hudak who threatened the loss of thousands of public sector jobs.

Yet at the same time, he wants to be seen as a "Progressive Conservative."

"Absolutely I'm a proud Progressive Conservative," he assured Steve Paikin's TVO audience. But how can Brown be either "progressive" or "conservative" or any combination of the two while rejecting ideology? Answer: He can't, because both - being "progressive" and being "conservative" - are purely ideological matters.

Nor could past-PC leader Bill Davis avoid ideology. He made the same "non-partisan" commitment to Ontarians back in 1983, inspiring me to pen an editorial entitled 'Bill Peterson and David Davis - Leaders of the Same Party.' Of course, their real names were Bill Davis and David Peterson, but that was the point; both party leaders were indistinguishably moving left, and there has never been a single look right by any either party in the legislature since then (not even under Mike Harris):

"Being a conservative Liberal like David Peterson is the same as being a liberal Conservative like Bill Davis. Both are really socialists in disguise. Bob Rae, on the other hand, isn't in disguise.

"Whether they are consciously aware of it or not, there is a single common denominator to all of their philosophies that makes them politically the same: it is their mutual contempt towards the word capitalism and the principle of individual rights that the word represents.

"This is not an age of unbridled capitalism where wealth can be earned at the expense of one class or group in society. What we must achieve, we can only achieve together," said David Peterson."

In 2015, as in 1983, David Peterson (seen as being on the left) continued to demonstrate a contempt for "unbridled capitalism" while in charge of the unbridled state control and taxation that funded

the *Pan Am Games*. But the real evidence that Conservative = Liberal is the conscious abandonment of ideology that has been a consistent Conservative trait from Bill Davis to Patrick Brown. Again, from my 1983 commentary: *"When critics condemned the action of Bill Davis for investing \$650 million tax dollars in a private company called Suncor as being socialist, Davis boasted 'We're not a doctrinaire party like the socialists (NDP)' And anyone who would even apply the principles of any other brand of conservatism to Ontario's Tories, said Davis, 'is hung up on a matter of theology.'"*

Almost verbatim, Patrick Brown is saying today the very thing that Davis said back in 1983; the great irony and lie is that Brown is selling his brand of 'ideology-free' socialism as something new and different, when it's old and stale. Been there. Done that. Still doing it.

As I concluded in my 1983 editorial: *"While accusing the Liberals of 'following whatever policy meets popular approval on a given day,' Bill Davis defended the actions of his party by claiming that they discuss 'each issue as it comes.' (Ontarians) have grown to believe that the ultimate struggle between capitalism (individual rights) and socialism (collectivism) is somehow being fought along political party lines. But such is not the case. The eternal folly in being forced to vote for the 'lesser of three evils' (voting against, instead of for) lies in the admission that one is still voting for 'evil'.*

"Unfortunately, our political alternatives will remain in short supply as long as politicians and the public continue to share and perpetuate their mutual ignorance of the concepts necessary to implement any real change in the direction of modern-day governments.

"Until then, we'll have socialism, socialism, and even more socialism."

Unbridled socialism is exactly what has been exploding in Ontario since I wrote those prophetic words. Why? Because there has been no one to stop the unbridled socialists. Because the Progressive Conservative Party has been misrepresenting itself as a party of the right, as a party in *opposition* to the left, when it was in fact no such thing. It never can be, given the ideology of that party: "Some in our party say the only way to beat the Liberals is to mimic them; be Liberal Lite. But the voters always pick the real thing," says Brown.

If Liberal 'Heavy' is Patrick Brown's 'real thing', then where does that leave the "Conservative" ideology promoted in his party's name? Simple: Left. Out. ('Left' is the past tense of 'leave'...)

Yet still there will be the true blue believers, oblivious to the philosophy and ideologies that have demonstrably predictable consequences, believers filled with hopes of better times ahead but who never connect the dots between ideas, action, and consequences. Their faith in the Progressive Conservatives remains unshaken. Though many are 'right-minded,' their desired consequences can never arise from ideas that are incompatible with them.

The only way to move the freedom conversation forward is to insist on clear concepts and understandings in that conversation. Only then will the freedom discussion gain the traction and the momentum necessary to move towards freedom, not away from it. Should our ultimate objective be Freedom or Tyranny? Should the political steps we take with each election move us in the direction of "more" freedom (the right), or "less" freedom (the left)? Those are always our two real choices, no matter how they're labelled. But labelled they are, and it is in everyone's best interest to know what's right and what's left, what's right and what's wrong.

Otherwise, we'll always be left. Like Patrick Brown. [end]



A ZOMBIE STORY: Running from tyranny vs Running to freedom

by Paul McKeever

Dead Alert! - libertarianism from the un-right!

<< *At Left: Paul's clouded vision in the zombie world of libertarian escapism*

At Right: Paul with a clear view of the zombie-free path to freedom >>



In the constant confusion surrounding freedom, libertarianism, and Ayn Rand's philosophy of Objectivism (each often associated with each other and with Freedom Party), we continue to receive questions such as the one from John: "I'm sure you've had this discussion often but if you have the time and energy, could you explain the current problems with the Libertarian party? Everything I've seen with American Libertarian parties hasn't been counter to my philosophy. The only current position I think most Objectivists would take issue with is the Libertarian stance on Iran and terrorism, a stance which is very noninterventionist. Other than that, I haven't seen any libertarians espousing anarchy or amorality. Thanks in advance, you have a skill at explaining things clearly."

To letter writer John and others who may be asking the same question, I offer the following: At the end of the day, what all libertarians agree upon is this: that there should be "less government." "Less government" is the essence of libertarianism. Different libertarians have different complaints about the government - different things that they wish the government would *not* do. Some, but not all libertarians, have certain philosophical reasons for why they believe the government should not be doing the thing(s) it shouldn't be doing. Most are just sick and tired of being taxed to the hilt, and being forced to comply with various elements of the centrally planned economy.

The immediately obvious problem with libertarianism is that the goal of "less government" is not the same as the goal of achieving freedom. "More freedom through less government," is a non-sequitur. Government is precisely what is needed to achieve freedom, and good governance is not about quantity, but about a commitment to reality and reason.

Imagine that you are running away from a zombie. Imagine that you have a map to freedom. Now imagine that, without even opening the map, you just throw it to the side.

"Who needs maps and directions?! The real problem is that zombie. If I get away from it, I'll be free," you tell yourself. So you throw on a blindfold, and run like hell away from the zombie. It turns out that the fact of the matter is that there are more zombies to be found in every single direction except one: the direction to the zombie-less island of Freedom. Not having bothered to look at the map, you soon find yourself in the clutches of another zombie.

If only you had looked at the map, you would have discovered that if you head due west, you'll not encounter any more zombies, and will find a boat that will take you to a zombie-less island where you can live and achieve your happiness.

That map is the philosophy of *Objectivism*. It doesn't tell you what to run *from*. It tells you what to run *to*. It doesn't tell you what you *don't* need: it tells you what you *do* need ... to achieve freedom. It doesn't say: "The government's your only problem." It says: "This is the only life you get; your purpose is to achieve your own happiness; to actually achieve happiness, you need to take rational, honest, productive steps to produce material values (e.g., money) and spiritual values (e.g., love and admiration) upon which your survival and happiness depends.

To take those steps, and realize the benefit of what you produce, you need to defend against those who would prevent you from taking those steps or who would steal what you produce; and, because we're living in a society, we need a neutral arbiter that will draft and enforce a single set of Objective laws for the defence of your life, liberty, and property." In other words, it doesn't leave you saying "I want my own personal conception of freedom because... I want it." Instead, it offers a clear concept of freedom, and an undeniable justification for freedom.

You'll find many libertarians with many differing concepts that they each call "freedom", and you'll find many justifications given by (some of) them. Some will say all humans have natural rights. Others will say they don't. Some will say that intellectual property is an abuse of force, or that an age of majority is an offence to little kids who want to have sex with an adult. There are all sorts of irrationalities that - collectively - qualify as libertarianism. And the reason is always the same: libertarianism is nothing more, and nothing less, than a wish for less government. It is, as a result, hostile toward anyone saying that any one philosophy is needed for the achievement of freedom. Among the biggest haters of Ayn Rand, as a result, you will find... libertarians!

As a movement, libertarianism is radically skeptical and morally subjectivist, because it is simply anti-authority: "Who is to say who is right or wrong? Who is to say what is good or evil (or even that there is such a thing)? Any libertarian's opinion is just as good as the next... We're all in this big anti-government tent together."

That's libertarianism, and it is utterly toxic if one's aim is to achieve a free society. To find freedom, you must have a map, and it must be clear and correct. The goal is not to reduce or eliminate government, but to discover that we don't even have one - and that it's about time we did.

[end]

"If we libertarians are attempting to bring about a new world order, one person at a time, then we must include everyone within our fold, anarchists, statists, and collectivists of all stripes and everything in between." - Ontario Libertarian Party leader Allen Small, 2011

Fp NEWS & Commentary #9 - December, 2015 is published by Freedom Party International.

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Freedom Party is founded on the principle that: "Every individual, in the peaceful pursuit of personal fulfillment, has an absolute right to his or her own life, liberty, and property." Freedom Party advocates capitalism solely because it is the only system compatible with reality, reason, and the pursuit of one's own happiness.

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