

Nothing Faith Goldy has done warrants this assault on her campaign

In the same measure that a civilized society must not tolerate racial discrimination, nor can it tolerate the false and wilful imputation of repulsive attitudes to someone who does not hold them

by Conrad Black



The portrayal of mayoral candidate Faith Goldy as a white supremacist, and use of that unfounded characterization to blackball her from candidates' debates, and ban her advertisements from CTV is outrageous. I happened to encounter Mayor John Tory this week, and while he said he considers the

Goldy campaign distasteful he heard out my contemptuous views of the attempts to silence it and, fair-minded man as he is, did not object. I understand he now says he was emphatic that she was a white supremacist and does not agree with my position, but that is not my recollection. He is an old friend and I wish him well in Monday's election.

In August 2017, Goldy reported on the demonstrations at Charlottesville, Va., which were ostensibly over whether to retain or remove a statue of Confederate States military commander, Gen. Robert E. Lee. Lee is generally reckoned to be one of the greatest generals in American history. He opposed secession in 1861, but felt his first loyalty was to Virginia rather than the United States. It was his father who eulogized George Washington as "First in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen," and Abraham Lincoln offered Lee the command of the Union armies. Lee concluded his career as head of what was renamed in his honour, Washington and Lee University.



Faith Goldy reports for Rebel Media in Charlottesville, Va., moments before a car rams into a crowd of counter-protesters next to her. Rebel Media/YouTube

There was a legitimate argument to remove his statue, because of the odium of secession and slave holding (though Lee's status as a slave owner was no more offensive than that of Washington's or Jefferson's). But there was also a strong argument to retain it – he was a very distinguished man and general and history cannot be changed by moving statues around.

Goldy made the point on air, as President Trump did subsequently, that there were good people on both sides of that argument, which, unfortunately, was generally taken over by extremists on both sides; neo-Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan among the retentionists, and among the removers, Antifa (left-wing street bullies purporting to be anti-fascists –

hence their name) and Black Lives Matter, whose anti-police rhetoric apparently helped inspire the killing of eight policemen in Dallas and Baton Rouge the year before. But after one protester was killed and several people injured when a neo-Nazi rammed his car in to them, Goldy's coverage and her remarks were attacked by the left in Canada, much as Donald Trump was in the U.S. over his remarks.



Faith Goldy, who was supposed to speak at Wilfrid Laurier University but was interrupted by a fire alarm, speaks outside the university on March 20, 2018. Hannah Yoon/CP

The most grievous of the self-inflicted wounds to her reputation occurred when Goldy made, as she has admitted, a terrible mistake, and appeared on a podcast conducted by a white supremacist organization, The Daily Stormer, a deliberate reference to the Nazi newspaper Der Sturmer. It is a loathsome outlet, but though she said nothing hateful during her interview, Ezra Levant summarily fired her from Rebel Media, where she had been a commentator, for appearing on a podcast affiliated with the neo-Nazi movement. The incident gave the impression that there was more credibility than there actually was to the slanders on Goldy as a racist or anti-Semite.

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She should have realized that guilty by association in this era of hypersensitivity is sufficient to tank a career. She was apparently so affronted by her rejection by mainstream media outlets, that she made some bad choices in accepting invitations to appear on the fringe outlets that would have her. She has at times been coy about using the third-rail 14-word catchphrase of some egregious white supremacists: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children," provocatively making the point that by changing "white" to various other non-white adjectives neutralizes any

offence. She is technically correct that the words are unexceptionable, but she should have known better than to create any perception that she gives credence to white supremacist ideas.

Her Icarian revolt against political correctness and carelessness in rushing headlong into a minefield of socially unacceptable subjects has contributed to her present situation. Her practice of tempting those of unacceptable racist views and taunting those eager to impute base motives to her, has caused these very foreseeable public relations problems. As someone with a media career and political ambitions, and a civilized person of reasonable views, she has no excuse for being so reckless.



Toronto mayoralty candidate Faith Goldy storms the stage at a candidates' debate in September 2018. She was removed by police. Jack Boland/Postmedia News

But there is also no excuse for such a vicious pile-on, either. Suddenly, her unsuitability as a commentator on any subject was one thing Ontario's Jews and Muslims could agree upon. Defamatory nonsense abounded, such as that she referred to "the Jewish Question," which she did, but as one idea put forth by the right-wing extremists at Charlottesville, that good people should feel secure enough to engage and prove wrong in the public square. She was pilloried and barred from mayoral debates as a purveyor of race hate. My erratic friend Michael Coren, who has turned the former grace of religious conversion into a revolving door, accused me of an almost sociopathic act in acknowledging Goldy as a cordial acquaintance. Why not throw her into Lake Ontario and see if she floats?

This entire process of demonization has been a disgrace. Toronto as it has evolved – diverse, rightly proud of its openness to all races and cultures, and religions – is burning a native Torontonians at the stake who seeks safer streets,

less crime, and a recognition that the greatest problems lie in selected non-white areas, based not on stereotypes, but on incontestable statistics. The opposition of mud-slinging mythmakers, like those at the website Canadaland, is a badge of honour for Goldy. Despite her tactical errors, all polls show her running third, albeit distantly, behind Mayor Tory and former city planner Jennifer Keesmaat, and ahead of all 32 other candidates combined.

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That official Toronto has defamed and tried to gag her is shaming to all of us. As a friend of John Tory and his family for a very long time, I will be happy if he is re-elected. But anyone who is tempted to vote for Goldy because she is a smart, brave and appealing candidate, or in revulsion against the priggish dishonesty of the media, should do it. In the same measure that a civilized society must not tolerate racial discrimination, nor can it tolerate the false and wilful imputation of repulsive attitudes to someone who does not hold them.

Goldy is being over-punished for testing the sensitivities of political correctness. She should have been allowed to be heard, and if she had been, she would have used her enhanced access to debunk falsehoods levelled at her. She should not have been so insouciant about tempting fate; nor should she be chastised for speaking frankly against the howling gale of political correctness. Its malicious blowback threatens to deform the ambitious political cityscape of Canada's metropolis.

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