

He said while it is completely appropriate and acceptable to have a “full and frank discussion” about these opposing views — as well as any other — while behind closed doors in caucus, an MPP cannot do it publicly.

“I think Premier Ford had no option but to let him go, in part because it was such a serious frontal assault on his leadership and the premier’s control over caucus, but also because it flies in the face of the government’s arguably only legislative priority,” Rose said. “And if you’re not on board with that, there’s no reason you should be in caucus.”

On Friday, Ford also made a secondary argument that Baber was “spreading misinformation” through the contents of his letter. Since then, Baber has been taking to social media to counter the argument.

But whether each statement made by Baber in the letter was accurate or not is besides the point when discussing why he was removed from caucus, Rose said. The issue is not so much about what was said, as the fact that it was aired publicly.

Brett Caraway, associate professor in University of Toronto’s Faculty of Information, agreed.

“It could be argued that that's not what Baber did (spread misinformation) and that he was basically just making a value judgment that the lockdown is as, if not more, pernicious as the virus itself,” Caraway said.

“In the end, there's not a straightforward answer to whether or not the statement was inappropriate, but I do think it's completely appropriate for the PC caucus to decide, ‘yeah you can't be a member or run for re-election as a Progressive Conservative.’”

Richard Stacey, an associate professor of law at University of Toronto, said in an email statement that the PC Party is essentially a private organization and that “the Charter applies only to government actors, not private associations.”

“In managing its internal affairs — disciplining a MPP, for example — it seems to me that a political party is acting in its capacity as a private association, and not as government,” he said.

Stacey added that, in this particular case, there has been no limitation on free speech