

# Twelve Angry Men

*Cheyenne's Tea Party membership rolls*

I admit to having been unnecessarily harsh on Tea Party joiners. Several of those who show up at sparsely-attended public rallies here in Cheyenne have been my friends. I've always known their extremist views but we coexisted.

I often use hyperbole for effect but I shouldn't categorize all who are looking for a place to belong and feel the unofficial Tea Party is the place that will accept them, as "the lunatic fringe."

There have been instances in this country where the head of an organization may be a lunatic - David Koresh and Jim Jones come to mind - but their followers are not necessarily so. That is the case with the Tea Party group. Probably.

It's hard for me to give the Tea Party clan, and so far as I know it's not a registered political party with candidates in elections, much respect when I receive e-mails or phone calls from some who identify with the group and spout, verbally or in writing, absurd and unsupportable bromides.

I have asked those who believe we have lost our constitutional rights around the Second Amendment what gun they would like to purchase but are forbidden by law from doing. I can't get an answer. If a reader has an answer, let me know and I'll research whether your lament is true or not. And publish the result.

One guy e-mailed me and tried to provide answers as to how he had been put upon - how the government was stomping on his rights and favoring others. What follows are parts (in bold italics) from his e-mail of May 6, 2010:

***So, if any one says that citizens have not lost a bunch of rights, I must think that person is one of those who is denying the rights of the commoners.***

I think he's saying that I am one of the people who deny rights to others. He might want to read some of my other mail - from people whose rights I have defended and from some "commoners" who think I am their only resource. I am unaware of the Tea Party or its membership doing anything to help "commoners" except hold rallies at which angry white men lament their collective lots in life and rail against anyone who has done better.

***And, if someone should take those complainers seriously, the Government can easily claim they were crazy. (Sir Isaac Newton, Christopher Columbus, et al.)***

Newton was a Brit and Columbus Genoese. We don't bestow titles like "Sir" in this country. We have no "Sir" Garth Brooks, etc. And, if Columbus were considered crazy, he still has a national holiday in his honor. He hasn't exactly been relegated to the scrap bin of history.

***We do not have the right to not have an autopsy; the Communist Government of the U.S. of A. in its ignorance forces autopsies on people, even when they already knew the cause of death.***

It seems like this guy would like for Americans to be able to carry a card in their wallet / purse that says, "No Autopsy. No Exception." and when their body is found and they appear to have been poisoned, authorities cannot determine that by an autopsy. Oh, yeah, that's a good idea.

***Criminals have rights; honest citizens don't.***

***Blacks and Chicanos have rights; whites don't.***

***Illegals have rights; citizens don't.***

***Women have rights; men don't.***

***Children have rights; parents don't.***

Wow, where do I start? This guy is passing himself off as a typical Tea Party supporter. I guess I won't even dignify the five statements above with a response.

***The Constitution very clearly states that all rights are given to the States that are not taken for the Federal Government, meaning that the Department of Education and Obama's healthcare are un-Constitutional.***

The Tenth Amendment argument is used when States want their way about something - never when they want federal funds. And, the Constitution did not give women the right to vote and had other imperfections that had to be changed or modified over time. While a marvelous document, it was [is] imperfect.

# Has Mayor Maybe given up on the 5<sup>th</sup> penny sales tax extension?

Now is not the time for any of the city elected officials to run from a fight.

But, that seems exactly like what they're doing.

The Cheyenne Herald has it on good authority that "the City" does not expect the 5th penny of sales tax to be extended at the election in November.

So, they're going to curl up in a corner, pull the blankie over their collective heads, and whimper themselves to defeat?

Granted, they don't have a lot to rely upon for confidence but the 5th penny has never been rejected by voters since it was first approved. It's as much a sure thing around here as the wind.

Voters are upset. Of that, there is no doubt. But, the mayor and city council members, as well as small town officials and county commissioners cannot "assume" defeat and take it lying down.

Past elections have not been close. And there has never been organized opposition.

In 2006 - 20,259 "For" - 10,574 "Against"

In 2002 - 21,174 "For" - 8,978 "Against"

In 1998 - 19,610 "For" - 8,085 "Against"

Support in every way imaginable, legal and illegal, has come from the Wyoming Tribune-Eagle. In every election, for every tax (so long as their product and sales are exempt from sales tax).

The upcoming election will have opposition. The silent, disgruntled class that sees the empty downtown and potholes that are damaging their vehicles, in addition to the layoffs of city employees, renege on payment of \$1 million that they, voters, approved nearly 30 years back, and many other negative images of the City, are lying in the weeds. Many who will not say anything will simply go to the polls and vote "no" for the first time on the 5th penny sales tax.

Even with untruthful lobbying by the daily newspaper, both the recreation center so coveted by the past mayor and city council members who believed they were invincible and the additional ten mills of property tax on downtown buildings and land, went down to defeat. The electorate is not happy.

And, for Mayor Maybe and those loudest when most sure of themselves to hunker down in the City Building and send an "assistant" department head out to make the public presentations, is unwise and may prove decisive. For those who are quoted in the WTE about how critical the Optional One Cent Sales Tax is to the

survival of the City to fear facing voters wrath and push a mid-level employee in front of the bus is foolhardy.

According to the WTE, the first presentation was attended by two members of the public - two regulars who religiously attend meetings of the city council for reasons known mainly to themselves. City officials blamed the lack of interest to the weather - much like the DDA still deludes itself into believing the weather played a role in the recent defeat of 1/4 of their funding.

Insiders can believe whatever makes them feel most comfortable. My belief is, that while the weather may have reduced the mill levy crowd, losing votes did not happen. Voters are not going to attend these 5th penny meetings this cycle because they simply do not believe what they are told by city officials now.

In a conversation with a reliable source in the know about the upcoming 5th penny sales tax election, I was told that the mayor and others have given up. That they are resigned to seeing the 5th penny proposition go down to defeat in November. That is probably why those who should be able to persuade voters to extend the collection period for another four years have gone into hiding.

Losing an election hurts. And losing one that all your predecessors for three decades have won will hurt even more. For Rick to play "Rope-a-Dope" now is a mistake. The City needs the \$40 million collected over a four year cycle - more now than ever. It's not a question of *if* they can get by without it. If the vote fails, they will *have* to get along without it.

Because of their bungling, city officials even have voters mad that the 5th penny has provided some funding for social agencies. It *always* has and, if within the Wyoming Constitution, it should continue. No money from the 5th penny should go to any charitable organization that is a "go-between" like United Way. Funds should go only to those who directly aid the poor and disadvantaged. And that is all the Wyoming Constitution allows.

***"Neither the state nor any county, city, township, town, school district, or any other political subdivision, shall loan or give its credit or make donations to or in aid of any individual, association or corporation, except for necessary support of the poor ..."***

Can Mayor Maybe or other spokespeople of the council convince voters to give them one more chance? Just one more? Convince enough voters for passage that they've learned from their mistakes and will spend the money almost entirely on streets and road maintenance and find enough money from general funds for police cars, fire trucks, etc., and that donations to aid the needy will be prominently revealed before the election?

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C.A.R.S.



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Tough people stay.*