

# “Progressive?”

In a recent editorial column in the daily paper, Reed Eckhardt echoed on about the “progressives” on Cheyenne’s city council that he adores so completely.

He first referred to “Mr. Segrave and fellow progressive Mark Rinne,” and that got his juices flowing. “... in an effort to wear the progressive majority down,” Eckhardt intoned. “As pleasurable as it is to see the progressives turn the tables ...” and “there are hundreds of progressive voters in Ward I,” and “For progressive council members to begin to dismiss Ward I projects,” and “If they believe the progressives never would pull the plug on a Ward I project, ...” then, “the progressives might be willing to give them a pass right now.”

But, does Eckhardt understand what a political “progressive” is? Does he understand that Socialist Rep. Bernard Sanders of Vermont is considered one of Congress’ most “progressive” members?

Does he recognize the name Diane Watson (D-33) of California who, “In 2006, the National Journal ranked Watson as the most liberal member of Congress.” She also is the “only member of Congress with a perfect progressive action score, ...” Fourteen other members of Congress have “acted progressively” on all but one of the issues used to grade their “progressive record.” Included in the 14, besides Mr. Sanders, are Jerold

Nadler of New York and Barney Frank of Massachusetts. Every one of the 15, including Ms. Watson, are Democrats.

In 2006, Barney Frank was one of only three Representatives to oppose the Respect for America’s Fallen Heroes Act, which restricted protests (notably those of Fred Phelps’ Westboro Baptist Church) at soldiers’ funerals. He opposed the bill, which passed unanimously in the Senate, on civil liberties and constitutional grounds.

The Wyoming Tribune-Eagle has repeatedly editorialized in favor of electing only “progressives” to the city council. In spite of wanting to sell newspapers on the claim that the WT-E is conservative, the truth is, it has become a very liberal Democrat-leaning organ.

In the Senate, the leading “Progressives” are: Barbara Boxer (CA), Richard Durbin (IL), Frank Lautenberg (NJ), Edward Kennedy, (MA), Jack Reed (RI), Bernard Sanders (VT), and Sheldon Whitehouse (RI). A progressive is defined as one who most often votes *against* conservatives issues in the Senate.

Any remaining questions about the McCracken paper leanings now?

Another nearly perfect progressive, Rep. Janice Schakowsky (IL) rose on the floor of the House to condemn remarks

made by a colleague from Iowa that members of Al Qaeda would be “dancing in the streets” if Barack Obama became president - because of Obama’s middle name (Hussein) and his father.

Ms. Schakowsky was right to rise in condemnation but part of her brief remarks included: “Senator Obama, like all of us in this House, swore on the Bible to defend our country from all enemies foreign and domestic. He has done nothing to warrant this attack.”

Actually, newly elected Keith Ellison (D-MN), who is a Muslim, chose to use the Koran for his photo reenactment of the swearing in. The official ceremony is done *en masse* without any books. Like the WT-E, which encourages “saying the right thing,” even if completely factually wrong, Ms. Schakowsky did not take her oath on the Bible, she took a “reenactment” oath on the Bible. Mr. Ellison also did not take his oath on the Bible, but he took his reenactment oath on a two-volume Koran (Quran) which had been owned by Thomas Jefferson.

Earlier in American history, William Jennings Bryan was considered the “leader of the Progressive movement.” The Progressives were in opposition to capitalism. That sounds similar to the Wyoming Tribune-Eagle under Reed Eckhardt. The paper has also adopted a philosophy that residents need the government to care for them and provide for them - that they are incapable of doing things for themselves. Progressive.

Bryan’s “Progressivism” was also a battle between the city and the country. Another common thread between progressives and the WT-E. Except Bryan did not trust the city. Obviously, the WT-E does not trust the country (county). Bryan and Cheyenne’s mayor share a progressive philosophy: “Bryan proposed that the nation’s problems could be solved by listening to one’s morals.” Were it to be so.

“In the early twentieth century, a powerful and pervasive shift from laissez-faire to government activism, called the Progressive Movement, swept across the nation. Progressives wanted to rid politics of corruption and inefficiency, curtail the power of the business trusts, and protect the general welfare of the public. They saw government not as only a protector of private property and individual freedom, but as an agent for social justice.” The WT-E’s position.

“The challenge for Progressive politicians like Presidents Theodore Roosevelt, William H. Taft, and Woodrow Wilson was the difficulty of walking a political tightrope, balancing the radical elements of socialism and populism on the left (what TR called “the lunatic fringe”) and the conservatives who controlled both the Republican and Democratic parties on the right.”

Progressives then became the lunatic fringe themselves.

Many progressives hoped to make government in the U.S. more responsive to the direct voice of the American people by instituting the following institutional reforms:

**Ballot initiative** A procedure whereby citizens could vote directly on whether to approve proposed laws.

**Recall** A procedure by which a public official could be removed from office by a direct vote of the citizens.

**Professional administrators** Many progressives argued that governments would function better if they were placed under the direction of trained, professional administrators.

**Socialism** Some progressives believed that privately owned companies could never be made to serve the public interest. Therefore, the federal government should acquire ownership of large corporations and operate them for the public interest.

**Prohibition laws** Some of the progressives adopted the cause of prohibition. They claimed the consumption of alcohol limited mankind’s potential for advancement. Progressives achieved success in this area with the enactment of the Eighteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1919.

From the New Deal to the 1960s, the progressive movement was largely subsumed into modern American liberalism.

The term “progressive” is today often used in place of “liberal”.

Exactly what type of city council members and mayor does the WT-E want? Do they really want progressives? Do they want liberals? Do they want socialists?

Sources: Wikipedia and articles on progressive politics and politicians.

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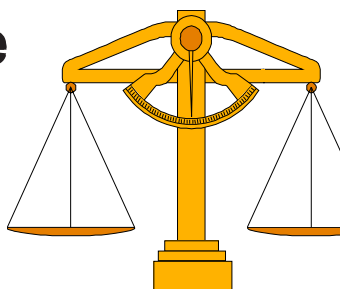
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