

That's the pot calling the kettle black

There was an amusing little tirade in a recent issue of the daily newspaper, in which a transplanted Louisianan made easy accusations against the three members of Wyoming's congressional delegation. Accused them of things he condones himself.

Like every left-leaning newspaper in the nation, our Monrovia editorialist criticized Craig Thomas, Mike Enzi and Barbara Cubin for their tardiness in either returning or donating campaign contributions each had received from the admitted felon, Jack Abramoff and/or "his clients."

Ponder the self-righteousness of one with a background in news coverage of Louisiana politicians - real crooks. Crooks who end up spending time in a real prison.

The Cheyenne Herald is no fan or supporter of Mrs. Cubin. But the \$250.00 she is accused of receiving from this guy back in 1996 could have been legitimately earned and donated. Probably not but that amount is minuscule compared to the shenanigans in local political campaigns.

This ethicist from the local newspaper not only had no problem with the McCracken newspaper providing discounted or free advertising for a sales tax proposition without disclosure, but repeated the action.

The newspaper (WT-E) made what was believed to be illegal campaign contributions to the Downtown Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce in an amount that figured to be about 50% of their spending at the time. Mrs. Cubin should accept no money that is tainted but \$250.00 wouldn't calculate on a Texas Instrument, it would be so far to the right of the decimal point.

Abramoff and "his clients" did not only target Republican candidates or office holders. But, as Chuck Schumer (D-NY) has pointed out, the \$65,000 given to the Democratic leader of the House, Harry Reid of Nevada, did not come from Abramoff. It came from "his clients" so the Democrat will not give back or up the funds. No surprise there.

Will the local Louisianan now condemn Mr. Reid for splitting hairs?

Consider once again the impact a \$250.00 campaign contribution (even if totally and undeniably illegal) made to Barbara Cubin's campaign had in 1996 - her pursuit for re-election. Not a helluva lot.

But closer to home, a local developer made \$150.00 contributions to candidates for the Cheyenne City Council. But only those who were seeking re-election. Not those challenging and not yet in office.

This developer is also an advertiser in the WT-E. Spends a bit of money with them.

Oh, did we mention that he had business before the Cheyenne City Council at the same time he made the contributions?

A campaign contribution of \$150.00 to a city council campaign would be the equivalent of \$10,000.00 or better to a congressional candidate's campaign.

The Cheyenne Herald pointed out the questionable campaign contributions. The WT-E was strangely silent. Could it have anything to do with, a.) their support for the candidates receiving the money, or, b.) their love of the advertising revenue provided by the giver of the money?

The McCracken editorialist charged Mrs. Cubin with being an apologist for Tom DeLay because she hasn't jumped on the bandwagon to demand DeLay return any contributions he has received from Abramoff or "his clients." He should.

But this Democratic apologist does not make the same demand of Harry Reid.

So, here we have a guy surfacing from the bowels of the most corrupt political and backward educational state in the Union pretending to have electoral integrity even though he has intentionally and with planning circumvented the spirit and intent of Wyoming election (campaign) law by providing one side of a political issue with free or discounted advertising, while not offering the other side similar consideration.

He and the McCracken family will continue to put advertising and advertisers first. So they will ignore questionable or illegal campaign contributions made by advertisers in the WT-E. But, Barbara Cutin has little time for their unfair editorial posturing about candidates, so she ignores their invitations to sit for a meaningless endorsement interview. Thomas and Enzi need the approval or support of the left-leaning Cheyenne daily newspaper like they need a hole in the head. And to be accused of lacking integrity by this proven integrity-lacking group is truly the pot calling the kettle black. Get real, Reed.

Diploma mills continue to be discredited

The City of Cheyenne may endorse, and the State of Wyoming tolerate, bogus degree sellers but not every jurisdiction follows their lead. Fortunately.

A recent story out of Montana discloses that two teachers who bought master's degrees from the unaccredited and disreputable Columbus University may have to pay back \$37,000 each for additional pay given them on the strength of those bogus master's degrees.

The school board in Canyon Creek unanimously agreed to cut the female teachers salaries back to the pre-master's degree levels. The teacher's union filed a grievance and the Montana Department of Labor is considering that grievance. An investigation is also being conducted which could result in criminal charges.

The school superintendent contends the women acted "intentionally," motivated only by the additional pay a master's degree would bring. The teachers knew all along that the master's from Columbus University (a bogus degree seller of the first degree) would not be recognized by the Montana Office of Public Instruction.

They admitted they did no course work, did not correspond with any instructors, took no exams and wrote no thesis papers. They said they paid less than \$3,000 for their degrees and were required only to compile transcripts from previous college courses and workshops and provide information on classroom practices.

They, like Cheyenne Police Chief Bob Fecht, believe that such lack of effort entitled them to a legitimate master's degree.

Words from a distance learning forum: "Wow! I coulda had a masters in 14 months for \$2025 [about as exciting as Wow! I coulda had a V8!]. I wish I had heard about Lacrosse before I completed my masters in 20 months at a cost of \$12500 [snicker, snicker]."

Lacrosse University is the degree mill from which Fecht purchased a "master's degree" last year with public funds.

It is incredible that both Lacrosse and Columbus universities are still operating illegitimately after all these years. Wyoming and a handful of other states have aided and abetted these bogus operations for years. Finally, the Wyoming Legislature appears to have caught on to the real purpose of these make-believe "educational institutions." It is to make money.

Also on that forum: "Before I discovered this forum, I had searched the internet by search engines for a degree in Criminal Justice, Criminal Justice Management, Security, Security Science, etc.

I ordered catalogs from many schools. So far I have received catalogs from Columbus University, Lacrosse University and Madison University. (All WAUC accredited.) Note: WAUC is a bogus accreditor.

I would have chosen to take my degree from Lacrosse University (being unfamiliar with accreditation) based on what I received.

I submitted to Lacrosse University my resume, professional credentials, previous college credits and my work experience.

They granted me sixty hours of credit for this. ... I realize now that this would have a waste of money and time."

Wyoming is just as guilty for allowing American City, American Global, American Capital, Preston, Paramount, Kennedy-Western and the other unaccredited degree sellers to operate within its borders, as Mississippi is to allow Columbus and Lacrosse to sell degrees from Mississippi addresses.

Now Preston University officials are claiming that if Wyoming would allow other scoundrels to set up shop here, the diploma mill industry would be as big in the state as coal. Hardly. Wyoming should not welcome those enterprises here. Production of adult videos in the state might also generate some revenue but they should be unwelcome as well.

Entrants to this nefarious form of retailing continue to surface. From Chase University, you can buy a Doctoral Level Degree for \$800. For another \$350, a transcript will be provided. The transcripts are "of the highest quality and authenticity, and are printed on forgery-proof paper ..." Transcripts of grades for classes you do not take. What a concept! Chase U. also claims false accreditation and makes the following statements in small print:

"You will not obtain documents or products for the purpose of publishing a news story in any form of media ..." and "You are not obtaining documents or products to use as evidence in any type of civil or criminal investigation." Finally, "documents obtained are only for your own personal use."

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