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SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUALITY: A MIXED BAG OF OPINIONS

By Steve Bakke  January 18, 2019



I thank the writers (1/18) who responded to my editorial letter re: “.....Total equality, liberty are incompatible” (1/17). Their objections described my argument as “specious,” a “straw man,” and that I seem to “misconstrue the progressive agenda of equity with one of equality.” In other words, they believe my arguments are not only deceptively appealing and fallacious, but also perhaps a bit confused.

Criticism that my comments were too inclusive by applying to “all” progressives is fair. I shouldn’t have made a sweeping generalization. But perhaps it’s fortunate I did because it created this discussion. Discussion produces clarity, and clarity leads to understanding. So, let me clarify further.

Even a shallow search on the subject of equality or social justice will evidence what the primary focus is for “many” progressives. One finds frequent references similar to: *unequal outcomes are prima facie evidence of unequal opportunity, and should produce further adjustments and accommodations*. Unfortunately, this leads to a tangle of programs that produce no improvement.

There are many progressives who pay almost exclusive attention to wealth inequality, or disparate economic outcomes. I suggest those “few or many” (whichever the case may be), quit wasting our time and the time of these more moderate writers. Such an approach has been, and is, a recipe for disappointment.

Rather, we should focus on what our Founders set as a worthy and achievable goal. Let’s commit our hearts and minds to an ideal of truly equal opportunity and equality under the law.