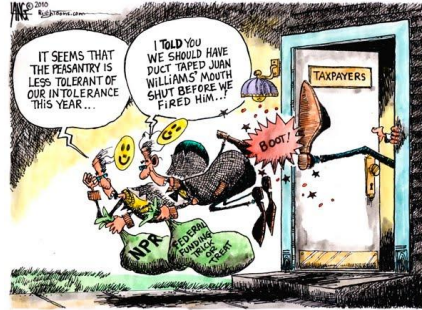
 **SO YOU THINK I
DON'T LISTEN
TO LIBERALS?
I do! (but I'm not
easily swayed!)**

Stephen L. Bakke  January 9, 2015



*Hey SB! You always insinuate you are open-minded when it comes to others' opinions – even when you are in serious disagreement with them. While I can never prove the veracity of any response, are you bold enough to publicly profess (and confess) to a list of prominent liberals who you at least respect and listen to. I'm not saying you have to agree with them! And I'm taking bets that you **WON'T** accept this challenge!* – **Stefano Bachovich** – obscure curmudgeon and wise political pundit – a prolific purveyor of opinions on just about everything – SB's primary “go to guy.”

OK, I accept the challenge! Over the last few years, as I have grown more convinced of my conservative opinions, I have also become more and more tolerant of those who disagree with me!

Some of you think I am so solidly ideological that I listen only to politicians and commentary coming from those with whom I am sure to agree. I respectfully beg to differ! I do have a group of prominent liberals whose opinion I respect **even while I am fervently and enthusiastically opposed to most of their opinions and methods. For me to pay real attention to them, I must be convinced they are absolutely sincere and consistent in their positions.** I have positive feelings about this group, even though I'm usually tempted to grab their shoulders and shake out their misguided priorities. They would have similar feelings about me I am sure!

*Let me emphasize that listening to someone and respecting that person, doesn't necessarily translate into agreement! Nevertheless, sincere, honest, consistent commentators have, I believe, earned my respectful attention. **BUT THEY HAVE NOT EARNED MY AGREEMENT UNLESS I FIND THAT THEY ARE CORRECT IN THEIR OPINION – and I don't often reach that conclusion!** Think about it, how can you advance a meaningful debate unless you listen? And how can you win that debate if you don't understand what your opponent is saying? If opponents are sincere and earn each other's respect, I believe everybody wins!*

Following are those whose opinions I pay attention to because they are consistent and absolutely sincere – even though often misguided. I could probably come up with a few more, but this will give you an idea of how I'm thinking – **plus, it's enough to get my conservative friends “up in arms”!** I believe these people have earned and deserve my/our (somewhat reluctant perhaps) attention!



Bob Beckel
Political pundit and former
Democrat political operative
Fox News political analyst



Alan Colmes
Radio talk show host
Former host, Fox News



Lanny Davis
Special Counsel to
President Clinton



Elena Kagan
Supreme Court Justice



Leslie Marshall
Radio talk show host



Tavis Smiley
Talk show host



Amy Klobuchar
U. S. Senator, D-MN



Leonard Pitts, Jr.
Pulitzer Prize winning columnist



Shepherd Smith
Fox News Anchor



Dennis Kucinich
Former U.S. Rep, D-Ohio



Kirsten Powers
Political analyst, USA Today
columnist and Fox News contributor



Juan Williams
Journalist and Fox News
political analyst



Rachel Maddow
MSNBC talk show host

I would like to get to know these folks (to tell them how wrong they can be, of course), and I think they would somehow become respectful of me (and would probably point out my foolishness as well). I may revise this list as I think more about it. Please send me some of your “favorites” and I will consider adding them to my list.

And please, if you are irritated by my opinions of these few liberals, attempt to be polite and gentle in your expressions of disagreement – I’m sure I will get a lot of “PUSH BACK”!

Last, I would like to make a comment about my selections. Note that all of them are currently active. Another person I also considered was Mario Cuomo whose funeral was this week. He really didn’t belong on this “current” list, but I thought he deserved honorable mention as someone I admired “way back when.” He was honest and sincere, and I loved to listen to him until that point in time when he attacked then President Reagan for trying to lift American Spirits through his “Shining City on the Hill” message. For that mistake, I subtracted points from Mr. Cuomo!



Mario Cuomo (recently deceased)
– Former Democrat Mayor of NYC and Governor of NY

How about the following question for future consideration: "Which conservative personalities do you have trouble respecting and/or taking seriously? Actually, I don't know if I'm ready to give you "my conservative rejection list." That may come at another time. Meanwhile, I'd be happy to read your "rejections" confidentially and with an open mind! Let me hear from you!