

 **LETTER TO THE EDITOR**
POLITICAL OPINIONS
CHANGE:

There's been movement
- But by whom
and from what?

By Stephen L. Bakke  July 14, 2014



Courtesy, Minneapolis StarTribune Paul Lachine - NewsArt

Here's what provoked me:

I was reading a lengthy analysis of a recent Pew survey and report about changing political opinions, over time, by liberals and conservatives. While I had no desire to take exception to the thoughtful analysis of the author, it still got me to thinking

Here's my response:

Political Opinions Change: There's been movement - But by whom and from what?

Re: D.J. Tice's "Liberals, the larger force for polarization?... Let's dig a little deeper..." -7-13-14. That started me thinking about changes over time in political thinking. I've constructed a comparison of the world of my 20s and 30s, with politics today, as I thankfully linger in my 60s. Following are issues that conservatives and progressives do a lot of hollering about:

- Definition of marriage
- Abortion policies
- Voter ID requirements
- Border security enforcement
- Balanced budget
- Expressions of American pride
- Government controlling health care
- Energy independence relying on fossil fuels
- Firearm ownership
- Definition of equality
- The government's role in our lives
- U.S. leadership in the world

Regarding these issues, I believe the positions held in 2014 by conservatives, many of which give progressives severe "stomach acid," would be very much the mainstream or moderate, even majority, opinions of just a generation ago. You may not agree that applies to all of these listed issues, but for the most part I'm confident in my evaluation.

Progressives accuse conservatives of "moving to the radical right." I'm not saying change is bad - much to the contrary! We have had real cultural changes which have led at least to different perspectives on old issues, and some very new issues.

Sometimes even I think conservatives should set aside a traditional belief. When they don't, do I have the right to accuse them of "making a hate filled movement to the radical right"? No! Because for the most part, they haven't changed! So who actually HAS been doing the most changing?