

Acrimony and divided government: It's the American way

Like many other U.S. states, New Mexico is a deep Blue state. For those of you who've been living somewhere way off the grid that means that our state legislature and our executive branch are comprised of a majority of Democrats or as they like to be called these days, 'Progressives,' who have been voted in by our fellow citizens.

We are about half-way through a 30-day legislative session where eager Liberal representatives and senators from all over the state are gathering at our capitol, Santa Fe. They are busy putting the final touches on laws that resemble the 'brave new world' that the Dems have been trying to create since the rise of their Liberal community organizer, Barack Obama. Democrats have had a stranglehold on New Mexico for nearly nine decades out of our 118-year state history.

Every so often, when enough voters wake up from their self-induced political comas to realize that the Liberals in our state have gone a bit too far and are pushing a radical new age Progressive agenda that will affect them, personally, they throw them out of office. This doesn't last long, however, but long enough for a little damage to be done to their Liberal agenda. Unfortunately, when conservative New Mexicans do regain power, they just turn over the topsoil of the issues and don't bother with fertilizing that soil with a 'reimagining' of what the state could be under their administration. No, they squander the opportunity as they did with the last two terms of our first Latina Governor, Susana Martinez. It's as if, after a change election from the Ds to the Rs takes place that Republicans believe that the public has chosen them as their political spirit guides for decades to come, instead of for just a term or two.

Maybe Republicans actually believe that the voting public thinks that far into the future and has tapped them to lead because they're the best hope when, in actuality, New Mexico voters are more reactionary than visionary.

Eventually, voters get tired of a governor - any governor - whether from the Left or the Right and want something new. Too bad they don't feel the same way about their state representatives and senators. Maybe things would be different if there were term limits for those two bodies. Perhaps we could break the cycle of political patronage and nepotism and actually find people who were open to new ideas that empower us rather than taking the destructive path of crafting laws that limit our individual rights. And maybe, just maybe, those same people would reject the call of big government that does nothing to open our minds, but rather is content to pick our pockets.

Instead, our politicians on the Left hold a restrictive historical view of New Mexican voters as innocent children that must be told what to do and, like cattle, must be driven through a chute to the voting booth and told to pull the 'D' lever if they know what's good for them. THAT is precisely the problem. By continuing to choose to believe that their world can only become better, more inclusive, more equitable and more profitable under Democrat rule, voters re-install the same people to power from one election to the next. In reality, New Mexicans willingly enter a vicious cycle of dependence on a bunch of demagogues and political hacks who will say and do anything to remain in power. They have shown us that they are comfortable enacting more and more laws instead of re-examining the old ones and modifying or eliminating them. In other words, lawmakers prefer *volume* as the measurement of success.

Before you think that our Democrat lawmakers are just reacting to some recent complaint or some special interest group's pressure when they write new legislation, think again. The Left definitely has an overarching political philosophy, and like an underground stream that touches many communities' water supplies, New Mexican Democrats are interconnected by an all-encompassing ideology that is grounded in elitism or as I would call it, a profound sense of know-it-all-ism. It's this attitude that makes it possible for the tail to wag the dog. It is their fervent belief that there is only one way to live our lives, work at our jobs, learn in our schools, police our streets, interact with one another...and vote.

They embrace only those solutions that give a competitive advantage to the collective over the rights of the individual. The recipe for Liberals' success is rooted in a naïve belief in the malleability of Man and the effectiveness of behavioral modification and peer pressure to achieve results. It also relies on a deep and abiding *faith* and *hope* in success rather than drafting a sensible plan that takes into account what could go wrong if faith and hope don't produce the desired results.

We saw ample evidence of this on a national level during the Obama Administration. Lofty rhetoric was expected to move mountains of people onto the healthcare rolls, for example. A steadfast belief in the goodness of illegal immigrants was proved wrong as they streamed across our largely unprotected border and thumbed their noses at us by committing more crimes. As Democrats do, the Obama Administration downloaded massive amounts of 'TARP' money to the states that promptly used it to pay off current expenditures instead of creating 'shovel-ready' jobs. That's what we did here in the Land of Enchantment. I know. I watched it happen from the inside during the Richardson Administration. To Democrats, money, like power, is both a means to an end and an end in itself which is why we need opposing parties occupying our legislature and our executive branch. I know there are those that will say that this produces political gridlock, but knowing how the Democrats exercise power in New Mexico, we need to balance it in our government.

Unfortunately, I do not believe that this will happen anytime soon. The current Lujan-Grisham Administration is Hell-bent on moving the Progressive agenda into every community in this state with laws that reflect her world-view and those of her Party. This is a world that limits free speech if it should offend *anyone*; that presumes *guilt* above innocence as in the newly-passed 'red flag' law; that will make legal a Federal Schedule One drug - marijuana - simply because its legalization could make some money for the state. Expedience over common sense; that is the Progressive motto, and before the month is out we will see more of the same as the legislature approves more laws along purely partisan lines.

In this way, we resemble our lawmakers in Washington, men and women who are so ideologically divided that they cannot even sit in the same room with each other. Soon, the only way to protect them from each other will be to divert more funds from our military budget and build a wall straight down the middle of the House Chamber with Republicans on one side and Democrats on the other.

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