



The Nose was deep into our bedtime rituals when the phone rang one night. “I’m being represented by a Republican!” said the voice on the other end. The rant continued for a moment or two, with a sense of outrage generally reserved by this person for Dick Cheney, any team playing the Green Bay Packers and bloggers.

One of The Nose’s best friends was on the line. He doesn’t live in Mississippi or Utah. He lives right across town in Foggy Bottom, in Ward 2: “Oh, I’m sorry. Am I calling too late? I’m just reading the paper.”

The Nose’s friend then gave a quick summary of his exasperation. “He’d rather cut schools and city services than tax his wealthy Georgetown neighbors. Why does he keep getting elected? I thought DC was a liberal place.”

This stung particularly hard. The Nose’s friend is a Virginia native.

Then again, The Nose’s friend grew up in People’s Republic of Arlington, and DC Councilmember Jack Evans would probably have a tough time getting elected there. He champions tax cuts no matter what, gives away big chunks of the city’s future revenue base to developers, and is the lead council supporter of publicly-funded, money-draining monoliths such as the convention center headquarters hotel and the baseball stadium.

Arlingtonians just say no to that nonsense.

So should Ward 2. The Nose knows his column reaches far and wide, and many of you Dear Readers do not live in Ward 2. But Evans-creep impacts every resident of this city, whether you live in Dupont Circle or Fort Dupont.

The Nose has lots of reasons to question Evans’ decision-making skills, not small among them his devotion to Harry Potter ties, frat-boy sports rock, and being seen at Café Milano, Ruth’s Chris Steakhouse, or, really, anywhere, with Mark Plotkin. His constant badgering of Washington Post Reliable Source divas to put him in the gossip column is just plain icky. And

it’s an old chestnut, but a good one: Can the man be any more of a “white guy”? We mean, when Chris Rock makes fun of white people, he takes notes on Evans. He makes Phil Mendelson seem like Henry Louis Gates, and Tommy Wells look like James Brown.

OK, not really.

But The Nose is a substantive person, so enough with the ad hominem.

First of all, let’s talk economics. Evans likes to tout himself as the Ben Bernanke of the council, having graduated many years ago from the Wharton School of Business. That makes him the only real Ivy Leaguer on the council.

Just to show off a bit and equal Evans’ academic hoity-toityness, The Nose will explain a critical divide in economics. On the one hand, there’s the Chicago School, which is a bunch of right/libertarian-leaning thinkers such as Milton Friedman, who want to cut taxes by any means necessary and think the market should dictate everything. Then there’s the MIT/Harvard/Paul Krugman group, a generally left-leaning bunch who sees government playing a role in places the market is known to have shortcomings, such as health care.

Then there’s Jack Evansonomics, an unholy hybrid of the two, which basically boils down to this: Cut taxes whenever possible, rant about out-of-control government spending on programs that help poor and moderate income residents, but then turn around and give upwards of \$700 million in taxpayer dollars to the Lerner family, \$40 million to the Corcoran, and millions of other dollars to developers across the city. He’ll even throw in a public library or fire station.

Not exactly Nobel-prize winning thinking.

This economic philosophy is not only perverse, but downright dangerous. Especially because Evans is head of the Committee on Finance and Revenue, a perch he has held for years. The perils of Evansonomics was particularly evident during the recent budget-gap-closing, when he threatened to “leave the room” if his colleagues discussed progressive measures to address the shortfall, such as a tax on the wealthy.

According to the Post, that prompted Tommy Wells to say: “You want no sales tax

increases. No property tax increases. No income tax increases. But these guys got to take it,’ Wells said, referring to social service agencies. “There’s got to be some fairness.”

Damn right, James Brown! This is what most people would call the Republican platform.

Hence, the frustration of The Nose’s good friend.

But that’s not The Nose’s only issue with Evans. There’s his questionable political tactics. The Nose is not talking about his notorious bullying. Or Jack PAC, which prompted a front-page Post expose on how Evans used his political action committee as a slush fund to fly a woman he was wooing to China.

No, The Nose is referring to the recent crime bill debate, when Evans carried water for Mayor BlackBerry and Consigliere Peter Nickles on the provisions that Harry Thomas memorably characterized as ones that would label his kids the “Thomas gang.” When the controversial measure came up for a vote, the bill listed seven co-sponsors. Yet it did not receive seven votes. The Nose later found out that Evans had put down the names of colleagues, even though he never received firm commitments of support from them.

Not cool.

And The Nose wants to pause a minute on Evans being all BFF (best friends forever) with Mayor BlackBerry. Wasn’t Evans the guy three years ago who called Fenty a threat to the well-being of the District, helping scheme up embarrassing questions about whether he knew the names of Wall Street bond rating agencies?

Evans has a poster of Robert Kennedy in his office, but it seems his real hero is the recently departed Robert Novak. Perhaps Evans should come out of the Karl Rove closet, switch to the Republican Party, and move to a place he’d have a real electoral future. Some place like Prince William or Fauquier Counties.

Ward 2 needs a progressive, forward-thinking leader.

The Nose is starting a campaign to draft his good friend.

*Have a tidbit for The Nose? E-mail thenose@hillrag.com. ★*



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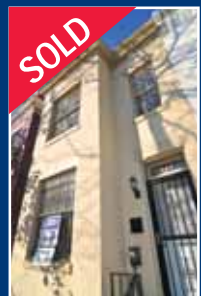
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