

A rough stretch for John Chisholm

This autumn, we put a disappointing Milwaukee Brewers season in the rearview mirror, as the Green Bay Packers make another Super Bowl run and the University of Wisconsin band and raucous crowds at Camp Randall drown out (almost) the incessant whining from UW bureaucrats still sulking over state budget cuts.

Slam-dunking the Doe

The John Doe probe targeting conservatives had been moribund for months but was given a definitive quietus when the Wisconsin Supreme Court declared in July that “the special prosecutor’s legal theory is unsupported in either reason or law.”

The court not only rebuked the prosecutors but also issued a ringing exoneration of the targets whose homes were raided, reputations trashed and lives turned upside down by what turned out to be a partisan witch hunt:

“It is utterly clear that the special prosecutor has employed theories of law that do not exist in order to investigate citizens who were wholly innocent of any wrongdoing. In other words, the special prosecutor was the instigator of



a ‘perfect storm’ of wrongs that was visited upon the innocent Unnamed Movants and those who dared to associate with them.”

On the bright side, the end of the Doe should give prosecutors, most notably Milwaukee County District Attorney **John Chisholm**, more time to devote to their day jobs.

Unintended journalism

In May, The New Yorker magazine featured a lengthy paean to Chisholm’s novel approach to criminal justice, “The Milwaukee Experiment: What Can One Prosecutor Do About the Mass Incarceration of African-Americans?”

The article by Jeffrey Toobin was intended as a puff piece but turned out to be an unintentional expose. It described Chisholm’s attempt to reinvent the role of prosecutors. “Chisholm stuck his neck out there and started saying that prosecutors should also be judged by their success in reducing mass incarceration *and achieving racial equality*.” (Em-



phasis added.) They supposedly did this by trying to “send fewer people to prison while maintaining public safety.”

The evidence suggests that the approach has been less than successful, especially for the African-American community.

Three months after The New Yorker piece ran, a headline in The New York Times read: “Murder Rates Rising Sharply in Many U.S. Cities.” Dateline: Milwaukee.

MILWAUKEE — *Cities across the nation are seeing a startling rise in murders after years of declines, and few places have witnessed a shift as precipitous as this city.*

The victims of this failed experiment? “Almost all of our shootings,” Chisholm admitted to Toobin, “and almost all of our homicides are black-on-black crime.”

Mine, mine, mine

In the wake of a constitutional amendment ratified by Wisconsin voters in April, the state Supreme Court moved quickly to oust progressive Shirley Abrahamson as chief justice. Abrahamson, insisting that she was entitled to the job despite the constitution and the vote of her colleagues, quickly sued. Her lawsuit (predictably) got tossed in federal court, but she has appealed to the federal appellate court.

To legal observers, her lawsuit seems quixotic and a trifle bitter. But there’s nothing mysterious about Abrahamson’s penchant for litigation. She’s a Madison liberal. It’s what they do.

A recovering liberal?

Speaking of Madison...

Over the summer, Madison Mayor **Paul Soglin** looked out over the result of decades of liberal policies on homelessness — and saw a godawful mess.



Noting that the city’s “transient, drifter population is growing every week,” Soglin said that the kumbaya attitudes of his fellow aging hippies had “created a circus atmosphere, where anything goes.” And he seemed

genuinely surprised by that.

At a press conference in July, Soglin proposed time limits for people on benches and sidewalks, arguing that the measure is needed “because the city’s posture of compassion with no rules toward the homeless and drifters leads to behavior problems, including violence, drunkenness, drug use and trading sex for drugs.”

Ultimately, he said, “we have to have a change of culture and behavior.” But while Soglin seems to have been mugged by reality, he remains a distinct minority in Mad City.



Let 'em steal

In August, a UW-Madison official named **Everett Mitchell** suggested a solution to what he saw as the problem of “over-policing” and “mass incarceration.” As Media Trackers reported, Mitchell, at a panel on policing practices, proposed ignoring the five-finger discount, at least from the fat cats who run big-box stores.

“I just don’t think that they should be prosecuting cases or [unintelligible] up cases for people who steal from Wal-Mart. I just don’t think that, right? I don’t think Target or all them other places — them big-box stores that have insurance — they should be using justification, the fact that people steal from there as justification, to start engaging in aggressive police practices, right?”

Mitchell’s title is director of community relations, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Surely, the university can serve as a role model for Mitchell’s vision by announcing that it henceforth will not prosecute any shoplifting from its campus bookstore. Right?

Walker = Hitler?

UW-Madison also made news when one of its more outspoken faculty members, educational policies professor Sara Goldrick-Rab, shared her insight that Gov. Scott Walker was pretty much indistinguishable from a well-known genocidal maniac.

“My grandfather, a psychologist, just walked me through similarities between Walker and Hitler. There are so many, it’s terrifying,” she tweeted in July. Two days later, she tweeted a follow-up, describing Walker as a “fascist.” Because, science, you know.

Goldrick-Rab explained to The College Fix: “If you reread the tweet, you will see that I stated that an expert

in the field — a psychoanalyst with decades of experience — compared the ‘psychological characteristics’ of the two individuals, and that I was struck by his analysis,” she stated. “There do appear to be commonalities.”

We wonder whether the “expert” she cited has ever heard of Walker Derangement Syndrome.

‘Literally’

Not to be outdone in Walker derangement, Milwaukee Congresswoman Gwen Moore compared the governor’s policies to lynching.

Walker’s policies, she said in August, are “tightening the noose, literally, around African-Americans” in Milwaukee and Wisconsin.

We suspect that Moore quite literally does not understand what the word “literally” means.

The EPA drops a hammer

Was it something we said?

When the Obama administration’s Environmental Protection Agency dropped its latest clean air edicts on the nation, Wisconsin was hit harder than all but a handful of states. By one estimate, Wisconsin will have to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 34% from 2012 to 2020. Only five states would be hit harder.

But worse may be yet to come. Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers say that new ozone regulations will be the most expensive in history — and may turn Wisconsin into a “no grow” zone. At least we were warned.

Trump card

The summer was not kind to Walker’s presidential bid, as we witnessed the rise of The Donald. In August, I wrote:



“**Donald Trump** is a cartoon version of every leftist/media negative stereotype of the reactionary, nativist, misogynist right. Except that he’s not a cartoon ...

“To be clear, Trump is not only a cynical opportunist and an incoherent ideologue, but a generally repellent human being. Even reading his tweets makes you dumber.”

As a measure of my influence in conservative politics, Trump promptly extended his lead as the GOP front-runner.

Wisconsin Interest editor Charles J. Sykes is founder of the Right Wisconsin website and a talk show host on AM-620 WTMJ in Milwaukee.