

'Pablo' rises to defend prosecutor

I understand that my friend Paul (Pablo) Vandenburg had a cow the other day after reading my column on Patricia DeAngelis' handling of the Jack Carroll sex-abuse prosecution - DeAngelis being the acting district attorney of Rensselaer County and the Republican candidate for the job in next week's election.

This occurred on his highly regarded and widely listened to morning talk show on WROW (590-AM), which I didn't happen to be listening to at the time but was told about by others.

Now, I should say right away that Pablo is a dear friend of mine, and I have only the highest regard for! his show. I used to listen to it often, before the antenna on my car got broken, and I will probably listen to it again after the antenna gets fixed.

Still the reader of this column who might have heard him declaim on the subject of Jack Carroll, defendant, and Patricia DeAngelis, prosecutor, should be aware of a couple of things.

One is that there is no record of Pablo ever uttering a critical word about the Republican Party in Rensselaer County. I don't know why this is, but any regular listener, or any friend, knows that his enthusiasm for Rensselaer County Republicans is boundless, heartfelt and profound. Such loyalty, such devotion is no doubt a virtue in a human being, and I do not fault him for it, but only mention it so the reader may put his defense of Republican officeholder and candidate Patricia DeAngelis in context.

Another thing is that Pablo is not exactly what you would call an expert on the case of Jack Carroll, the Troy man who was accused of sexually molesting a young girl, convicted, freed on appeal, then reconvicted and sent back to prison.

He did not attend either of the two trials; he acknowledges to me that he has not read the trial transcripts; he has not, as far as I know, interviewed any of the principals in the case (with the possible exception of DeAngelis - I don't know about that); I doubt very much if he has read any of the voluminous legal briefs.

In other words when he speaks on the subject he does so from an ignorance that is very nearly perfect.

What he satisfies himself with is the historical fact that Carroll was twice convicted by a jury, which I grant is no small thing. Indeed it's a very big thing, but it hardly bears on what I wrote about Patricia DeAngelis' conduct of the case, about her distortion of evidence, her histrionics, and so forth.

My point is that she bamboozled two juries, playing to emotions in a highly emotional case. That two juries bought her act does not end the discussion, as far as I'm concerned, but begins it.

And another little matter: Pablo declared on the air, in the course of delivering himself of the aforementioned cow, that after all my championing of Jack Carroll's cause, when Jack won his first appeal and was let out of prison he didn't even take the trouble to thank me, just to show what a lousy kind of guy he must be.

Now, I don't think the world much cares if Jack Carroll thanked me or not. A small part of the world might care if he's innocent or guilty, but that's all.

Nevertheless, when Pablo made this same charge a couple of years ago, I immediately set him straight by apprising him of a letter that Jack Carroll had written me, thanking me effusively, from the bottom of his heart, for my support. I believe I actually sent him a copy of the letter, though I'm not 100 percent sure of that. I at least talked to him about it.

Now here we are, a couple of years later, and he makes the same statement again.

I have again talked to him about it, and he says OK, he will correct it. It's a small thing, but we journalists like to get even the small things right.

The View From Here presents Carl Strock's personal commentary and appears on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday. Strock can be reached at 395-3085. The opinions of the newspaper appear in editorials on the Opinion Page every day.