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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 02, 2005

Democrats Get Backbone On Judicial Nominees? Wonders Never Cease

by Michael in New York on [3/02/2005 06:14:00 PM](#)

Can you imagine the Democrats nominating a lifelong lobbyist for Planned Parenthood to be a judge in the US Court of Appeals? The mere idea is absurd. But Bush nominated a lifelong lobbyist for the mining and ranching industries to be a judge in the very Circuit where he would be dealing with so many cases that affect those industries. William G. Myers III was blocked by the Dems -- quite rightly -- and was one of ten judicial nominations (about 5%) that didn't get approved. A 95% approval seems pretty darn high but the Republicans like to pretend that's somehow obstructionist. Ever heard anyone suggest that if you don't do exactly what they want every single time then YOU'RE the problem?

Well, the Republicans -- before launching the nuclear option of ending the long Senatorial history of filibusters -- decided to reach out the olive branch. How? By simply renominating the same extremist Myers to the same job? What could be more reasonable? Sure, Myers was a senior lawyer in the Interior Department where he drafted rulings that a judge later said perverted the clear mandate of a federal law. Sure he met with mine owners 127 times but refused to meet with Indian tribes even once. But God help us, the Dems -- perhaps emboldened by their success in countering the lies Bush pushed on Social Security -- showed backbone.

The New York Times [quotes the Senators who grilled -- and I do mean grilled Myers:](#)

"The most anti-environmental candidate for the bench I have seen in 37 years in the Senate," Senator Patrick J. Leahy of Vermont, the committee's ranking Democrat, said, according to the NYT. Senator Charles E. Schumer, Democrat of New York, said, "Your record screams 'passionate advocate' and it doesn't even whisper 'impartial judge.' "

USA Today also weighs in with a good story, reminding us that the [Senate approved 214 of Bush's judicial nominees and blocked 10](#). Every time one of them tries to throw that absurd "obstructionist" charge at the Dems, throw those figures back at them. 96% approval? How much more accomodating do they expect the Dems to be?

As for the nuclear option of ending filibusters, my God, is it too much to ask that 60 Senators are willing to back a Supreme Court Justice? I wouldn't think asking they get 75 of the Senators to support them would be asking too much frankly (that 's about what it was in the early 70s till they changed the rules). What would be the result? Moderate, mainstream justices that BOTH parties could approve of. God forbid.

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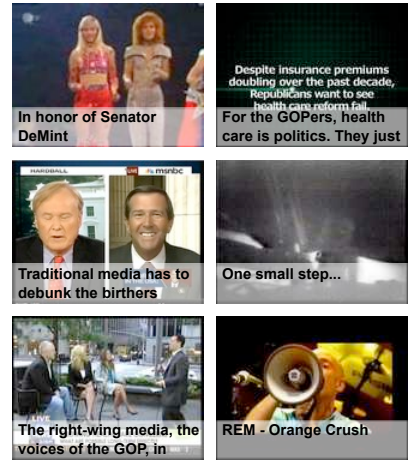
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