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THURSDAY, AUGUST 12, 2004

Democrats Wimp Out on CIA Nominee

by Michael in New York on 8/12/2004 09:14:00 AM

Bush's political hardball wins again. He floats a nominee -- Porter Goss -- who in the past year has earned Bush's trust by engaging in partisan attacks on Kerry, including distorting the Bush administration's own intelligence on North Korea to score political points. Democrats and even some top Republicans express widespread concern that Goss is too partisan. Bush nominates him anyway and **the Dems cave**.

What does this mean for our national security? Bush has chosen a CIA head who has belittled Kerry and would certainly have to be replaced in January. How does this help the war on terror? The head of the CIA is rarely a politician and usually non-partisan. One big complaint is how politicized the intelligence coming from them might have been. Goss was a major player in trying to block the 9/11 commission even coming into existence and has defended the CIA's hidebound ways for years. Sound like the man to fix those problems, however decent he might be?

Bush has purposefully chosen someone without broad bipartisan support, which means the CIA -- which has been working with an interim head -- will be raked over the coals and then get a head who might very well become a lame duck and need to be replaced just weeks after getting the job. That means if Bush loses, there will be a good seven months with the CIA without a boss it knows is there for the long haul. Is that making us safer? Is it too much to ask when the CIA needs a major overhaul and we're in a tight election race that Bush look to the future and choose someone in consultation with the Dems that could get to work on the CIA's major problems TODAY? Instead of playing politics? Bush is the one weak on intelligence here and the Dems are letting him get away with it.



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