

Judge Brown Moves Toward Confirmation for Nomination

Parties divided over two-year filibuster barring final vote

(AP) - The Senate on Tuesday ended a two-year filibuster of California judge Janice Rogers Brown, clearing for final vote her nomination to the U.S. Appeals Court.

Republicans have argued that Brown was worthy of confirmation to a court that many call the second most important in the nation, one also viewed as a stepping stone to the Supreme Court.

Brown would be the second African American woman to sit on that court, which decides important government cases involving separation of powers and the authority of federal agencies.

The Congressional Black Caucus argues Brown has unacceptable records in cases involving racial and ethnic discrimination.

"Ms. Brown rejects the civil rights remedies Congress has enacted and that the courts have approved," said U.S. Rep. Melvin L. Watt (D-NC) and CBC chairman.

Other Democrats have been blocking Brown because they see her as a conservative judicial activist who ignores the law in favor of her own political views. They are critical of her record as a jurist who supported limits on abortion rights and corporate liability and opposed affirmative action.

Last month, Senate centrists struck a deal to confirm Brown and two other controversial nominees to avoid a fight over the judicial filibuster. Because of that deal, as many as four of Bush's nominees to the regional U.S. Appeals Courts could be confirmed before the end of the week.

Controversial judge Janice Rogers Brown is headed toward confirmation for the U.S. Court of Appeals. (AP Photo)



Washington Election Dispute Resolved

(AP) - A judge on Monday upheld Washington's 2004 gubernatorial election, rejecting Republicans' bid to nullify the 129-vote victory of Democratic Gov. Christine Gregoire.

Chelan County Superior Court Judge John Bridges denied Republican claims that election errors, illegal voters and fraud stole the election from GOP candidate Dino Rossi.

Republicans were seeking a new election in November. Rosi conceded after Monday's verdict and said he would not appeal to a higher court.

Bridges' ruling came after a two-week trial that turned over rocks in election departments around the state, exposing flaws and quirks that usually don't matter because the results usually aren't so close. Rossi won the first count by 261



Gov. Christine Gregoire

votes, then watched his lead shrink to 42 in a machine recount. In a hand recount of nearly 3 million ballots, Gregoire won by 129 votes, and her margin was the smallest in percentage terms of any governor's race in the nation's history.

Jobless Numbers Reach 10 Percent

Rate for blacks doubles that of white population

The U.S. Department of Labor said the jobless rate for black Americans totaled 10.1 percent in May, more than double the 4.4 percent for white Americans.

"I am confident that the actual rate is even higher because many African Americans have simply stopped looking for jobs," said U.S. Rep.

Melvin L. Watt, D-N.C., chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus.

"The possibility of obtaining a job and developing economic security remains out of reach for too many African Americans and this negatively impacts every aspect of life," Watt said. "Unemployment makes it impossible to have access to health care, widens the opportunity gap in education and makes it impossible for individuals to achieve their full potential."

Watt said even more alarming is that President Bush doesn't seem to be taking any steps to reverse the ongoing trend.

"We call on the President, once again, to show his personal commitment to closing these disparities and call on him to rally the country behind the persistent and unfinished business of closing these disparities," Watt said. "Only then can our country realize its full potential and honor its commitment to provide equal opportunity for all."

Senate to Give Overdue Apology for Lynchings

White mobs called terrorists of their day

(AP) - Justice may finally be served ... a little. The great-great granddaughter of a black South Carolina farmer who was killed by a white mob nearly a century ago will be on hand next week when the Senate belatedly apologizes for failing to pass anti-lynching legislation.

Doria Dee Johnson, an author and frequent lecturer on the subject of lynchings, says she will be in the chamber Monday when the

Senate is expected to approve a resolution expressing remorse for not stopping a crime that took the lives of at least 4,742 people, mostly blacks, between 1882 and 1968.

Johnson, from Evanston, Ill., said her family "lost property and family solidarity that still affects us today" when Anthony Crawford, a wealthy cotton farmer, was killed in 1916 by several hundred residents of Abbeville, S.C.

Senate filibusters in the past blocked House bills and presidential requests to pass anti-lynching legislation, she said. "It will be nice to have an apology from that same body," she said.

The Senate resolution, sponsored by Sens. Mary Landrieu, D-La., and George Allen, R-Va., notes that nearly 200 anti-lynching bills were introduced in the first half of the 20th century and that seven presidents between 1890 and 1952 petitioned Congress to end lynching. But nothing got through the Senate.

The nonbinding measure apologizes for this failure and expresses "most solemn regrets of the Senate to the descendants of victims of lynching."

Landrieu, in an interview, said lynching and mob violence were "an American form of terrorism" documented in at least 46 states. She said that now, when the United

States is fighting a war against terrorism, was a good time to apologize for the past and "remind ourselves that terrorism existed in the United States in different ways."

According to Johnson, her great-great grandfather owned 427 acres of cotton land and was a community leader, starting a school for black children and a union for black farmers.

He was arrested after he accused a white buyer of cheating him by giving him less for his cotton than white farmers were receiving. Between 200 and 400 local residents and government officials hanged him from a pine tree and riddled his body with 200 bullets, she said.

Heroin Overdose Warning

The Multnomah County Health Department has recently been made aware of seven fatal heroin overdoses in a 7-day period in the Portland metro area.

It is important to note that while this cluster is of concern, the medical examiner's office has confirmed that there are less heroin overdoses overall.

Injecting drugs has many risks, overdosing being one, and abstaining from drug use is the best way to eliminate the risk of overdose. However, we do know that there are messages we can give people that access our services to help prevent a fatal overdose.

These measures include: Fix

with a friend. If someone goes down, call 911. Any information you can give paramedics about the situation can help save a life, specifically what drugs a person has taken. Use precautions if you have been clean for awhile (e.g. jail, detox, hospital, or you just cut back yourself). Your tolerance level may have changed and you may want to use a smaller amount. Don't mix drugs. Mixing heroin, alcohol, and other drugs can be deadly. Take control of your own drug preparation and intake—different people have different tolerance levels, what is fine for one person might be lethal for another. Do a tester shot - some batches are stronger than others.

Jury Deliberates Michael Jackson Molestation Case

(AP) - Michael Jackson was optimistic Tuesday as he awaited a decision by the jury in his child molestation and conspiracy case, the Rev. Jesse Jackson said.

"Michael is very well embraced through all of this by his supporters throughout the world," the pop star's friend told reporters outside the courthouse in Santa Maria, Calif.

Inside, the jury of eight women

and four men was in its second full day of deliberations on the 10-count indictment against Michael Jackson.

The 46-year-old singer is charged with molesting a 13-year-old cancer survivor in 2003, giving the boy alcohol and conspiring to hold his family captive to get them to rebut a documentary in which Jackson appeared with the boy and said he let children into his bed but it was non-sexual.

The scene outside the courthouse was much calmer than on Monday, when the pop star's father showed up and news media and fans surged around him.

Rev. Jackson, who has been a Michael Jackson confidant throughout the trial, was asked why he came to the courthouse during deliberations.

"If Michael's friends did not stand up for him in a public way, you would ask, 'Where are they?'" he said.

"Through all of this Michael remains amazingly optimistic - A, declaring his own innocence, B, declaring his confidence in the jury," Rev. Jackson said.



News photographers angle for position as members of the media await a verdict in the Michael Jackson child molestation trial in front of the Santa Barbara County Courthouse in Santa Maria, Calif., Tuesday. (AP photo)

Pentagon Details Mishandling of Quran

Muslim holy book kicked and splashed with urine

(AP) - The Pentagon on Friday confirmed for the first time that a U.S. soldier deliberately kicked a Guantanamo Bay prisoner's Muslim holy book in violation of the military's rules for handling the Quran.

In other confirmed incidents, prison guards threw water balloons in a cell block, causing an unspecified number of Qurans to get wet; a guard's urine splashed on a detainee and his Quran; an interrogator stepped on a Quran during an interrogation; and a two-word obscenity was written in English on the inside cover of a Quran.

The findings are among the results of an investigation last month by Brig. Gen. Jay Hood, the commander of the detention center in Cuba, that was triggered by a Newsweek magazine report — later retracted — that a U.S. soldier had flushed

one Guantanamo Bay detainee's Quran down a toilet.

The story stirred worldwide controversy, and the Bush administration blamed it for deadly demonstrations in Afghanistan.

Last week, Hood disclosed that he had confirmed five cases of mishandling of the Quran, but he refused to provide details. Allegations of Quran desecration at Guantanamo Bay have led to anti-American passions in many Muslim nations, although Pentagon officials have insisted that the problems were relatively minor and that U.S. commanders have gone to great lengths to enable detainees to practice their religion in captivity.

Hood said last week that he found no credible evidence that a Quran was ever flushed down a toilet. He said a prisoner who was reported to have complained to an FBI agent in 2002 that a military guard threw a Quran in the toilet has since told Hood's investigators that he never witnessed any form of Quran desecration.

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