

just decisively centrist, but resolutely centrist, in the Times' opinion. The records of every one of these Supreme Court Justices have been anything—anything—but moderate or centrist in the years since. They have been resolutely leftwing. But that is the point. "Moderate" isn't exactly a true descriptor for Democratic Supreme Court nominees; it is just burned into the printing presses of the editorial boards.

Yet, even the New York Times has had to admit that President Obama's current nominee would give Americans the most leftwing Supreme Court in 50 years—in 50 years. That is why the far left is squarely behind President Obama's campaign to deny the American people a say in this momentous decision.

The American people understand what is at stake. The administration doesn't want the American people messing this up for them, and they will say what they always say to get what they want today: a far-left Supreme Court for decades to come. That is just one more reason why the American people are lucky to have a Judiciary chairman like Senator GRASSLEY in their corner. Senator GRASSLEY is passionate about giving the people of this country a voice in such a critical conversation. He has stood strong for the people throughout this debate, and he has proven himself a dedicated legislator throughout this new majority, with yet another Judiciary Committee-passed bill clearing the Senate on a bipartisan basis just this week. He understands that we don't need to get stuck fighting about one issue. He understands that we can let the American people have their voices heard on this matter while the Senate continues doing its work on important legislation.

REMEMBERING STEPHANIE AND JUSTIN SHULTS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I was deeply saddened by the death of Lexington, KY, native Stephanie Moore Shults. Ms. Shults, 29, along with her husband Justin Shults, 30, was killed in the terrorist attacks in Brussels last month. Funeral services for the young couple will be held in Lexington tomorrow.

Stephanie Shults graduated from Bryan Station High School and Transylvania University and was looking forward to the promising future ahead of her. She found part of that future when she met Justin, a native of Tennessee, at Vanderbilt University, where the two earned their master's in accounting. The pair moved to Brussels in 2014 for work and loved to travel extensively through Europe. They recently visited Barcelona. They were planning a future trip to Finland, where they hoped to stay in a glass igloo under the Northern Lights. Now that spirit of adventure is gone, stolen by a brutal act of terror that targeted the innocent.

My wife Elaine and I join all Kentuckians in sending our deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of this young couple. We share their heartbreak over the fact that Stephanie and Justin were taken from us entirely too soon. And we extend our prayers and sympathies to all the families who lost loved ones in Belgium.

Attacks like these remind Americans everywhere that we must defeat ISIL and other terrorist groups who not only threaten our interests but critically, importantly, threaten innocent civilians.

Today we honor the lives of Stephanie and Justin. We mourn their loss. And we rededicate ourselves to our important fight against terror.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I agree with the Republican leader that it is important that we get the FAA bill done as soon as possible, but I would just have everyone reflect—when we were in the majority, we tried to bring up the FAA bill, and that went on for weeks and weeks, with unnecessary filibusters. The FAA came to a screeching halt.

As we have said, if you are a responsible minority, you work to get things done. That is what we have done. We have worked hard with the majority to come up with an FAA bill we can support. So I hope everyone understands that obstruction doesn't work. We understand that. That is why we have tried to be as collegial as we can be on legislation.

I just finished my "Welcome to Washington" this morning. A little boy asked me: How do you get things done?

I said: Well, you know, things in Congress are done just like in life. I have had the good fortune in my time in public service, my time in Congress, to be able to have things with my name on them, bills that have passed, but I have never ever gotten something that I wanted—it was always a compromise. We always have had to compromise to get something passed.

Frankly, that is the way life is. Life is a time where we work with people to try to get along to work things out. That is the way things used to be done here, but with the untoward obstruction during the Obama years, it has been difficult to get things done.

So I agree that the FAA bill is something we need to pass. As I have said, we are constructively working with the Republicans—those on the other side of the aisle—to get things done.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we can play around all we want with the Supreme

Court and what the Constitution says or doesn't say, but we know that the Constitution says that the President shall—not may, but shall—nominate Supreme Court Justices. He has an obligation. He has to do that. The Constitution is also very affirmative: There has to be advice and consent. That is what we are instructed in the Constitution.

It is a little strange how we can have from the Republicans advice and consent when the vast majority of the Republicans won't even meet with the man. They refuse to hold hearings and certainly to have a vote.

So I don't know how anyone is reading the Constitution, but we need to do our job. We are not doing our job when we don't hold hearings and have a vote. We shouldn't be here talking about Supreme Court nominees being far left or far right or moderate.

To show how off track this has gotten, 2 days ago the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the senior Senator from Iowa, gave a speech here. Guess who he was attacking. Justice Roberts, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. He said to the Chief Justice: Heal yourself. The Chief Justice. Is there anyone in the world—anyone in the United States, anyone in the legal field, anyone in the political field—who thinks he is some kind of crazy liberal, John Roberts, who worked on the court with Merrick Garland? They wrote opinions together. They agreed almost 90 percent of the time on their opinions.

So it is really too bad that now we are here with a Supreme Court Justice—for the first time in the history of the country, because we are in the final year of a Presidency, we are not going to do anything. We are going to wait. In the meantime, justice will be delayed. We have already had a significant number of tied, 4-to-4 decisions by the Court, and, using the logic of the Republicans, this is going to go on for another 18 months. So it is unfortunate that this has turned into something that has never happened before.

They go back and keep repeating: The Biden rule. The Biden rule. The Biden rule.

The year he gave that speech—and he gave a speech at Georgetown University just a week ago saying: Read my speech. Read the whole thing.

And what was the result of his action as chairman of the committee that year? He brought nominations to the floor even though they didn't get enough votes in the committee to be reported. The nominees lost in the Judiciary Committee, but Biden brought them here anyway.

There was an op-ed written by one of my predecessors, former Democratic leader George Mitchell, a stunningly good Senator from Maine. He wrote that 2 days ago. It appeared in a Boston newspaper. He said that when Clarence Thomas came before the Senate, he had lost in the committee. He didn't get enough votes to be reported out of the

committee. Biden reported him out anyway: Bring him to the floor. Let's have a debate.

That is what Senator Mitchell talked about. We had a debate. And he had pressure. It wasn't tremendous, but he had pressure. People asked: Why don't you filibuster him? He said: I am not going to filibuster. Let's have a vote, and that is the way it used to be done. He had 52 votes. Could that have been stopped? Of course. Would the Court have been better? Observers can make the determination themselves as to whether we would be better off without Clarence Thomas on that Court. But the fact is he could have been stopped easily, and it wasn't done.

PROTECTING AMERICA'S PUBLIC LANDS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am grateful that the Presiding Officer today is from the State of Nevada—my friend, the junior Senator from Nevada. When I think of home, I think of the desert, and you can't talk about Nevada as a desert only, even though the vast majority of the State of Nevada is a very arid place. Nevada also has beautiful Sierra Nevada—the Ruby Mountains. We are the most mountainous State in the Union except for Alaska. We have 314 separate mountain ranges. We have 32 mountains over 11,000 feet high. We have one mountain that we share with California that is almost 14,000 feet high. It is a beautiful State, but today I am going to focus on some of those arid places—the place where I was born and raised.

Having been back here such a long time—37 years—I often think of the blue skies in Nevada. They hover over a beautiful canvas. No one can paint a picture as beautiful as these mountains, which are in the middle of the desert, Joshua trees, or sagebrush. It is that beauty that is drawing thousands of visitors to Nevada and Nevada's wilderness every year.

Yesterday, the Reno Gazette-Journal had a tremendous article that reported just how important this quiet recreational industry is to our country. They said:

The big time solitude found in the big empty spaces of the western U.S. generates big money for regional economies. That's according to a study that attempts to put a dollar value on "quiet recreation" on Bureau of Land Management property.

That is an editorial comment by me: "quiet recreation." People are now biking, packing, and camping. Quiet is what is referred to as when there are no motorized vehicles.

To continue the quote:

It found that sports like hiking and mountain biking on BLM land generated more than \$1.8 billion in spending in 2014, that's roughly equivalent to two months of gambling revenue in Las Vegas casinos.

Our public lands are jewels that we must protect. To its credit, the Bureau of Land Management—when I was first elected here, the BLM was the hiss and

cry of government. They were on par with the Internal Revenue Service. No one liked them, but now they are admired. They have done a remarkably good job in taking care of public lands. As I said, to their credit, the BLM and their dedicated employees do a remarkable job in safeguarding these national treasures so that all Americans can enjoy them.

John Sterling, the executive director of The Conservation Alliance, told the Reno Gazette-Journal:

The BLM is the final frontier for a primitive experience on our public lands. They represent the future of outdoor recreation.

Unfortunately, there is a growing threat to these public lands and to the Americans who protect and preserve those areas. Most Americans are familiar with what happened earlier this year in Oregon when the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in southeastern Oregon was taken over when a dangerous group of militants staged an armed takeover of the refuge. They came with their canvas shirts, camouflaged pants, guns, assault rifles, and pistols that were obvious. They had their all-terrain vehicles and set out to take over this Federal property, and they did. They damaged it to the tune of about—we don't know for sure—\$20 million. They defecated on some of the ruins and different facilities. They stopped the Indians from being able to do their annual fishing.

I am sorry to say this particular episode of domestic terrorism has roots in Nevada.

Ammon and Ryan Bundy—who are now in jail, which is where they should be—are the sons of Cliven Bundy. They were two of the participants in the unlawful takeover. Cliven Bundy is, of course, a Nevedan and has been breaking Federal laws for decades. I have been disappointed that some of my colleagues have supported this outrageous lawbreaker.

Teddy Roosevelt created the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon. This radical President, Theodore Roosevelt—and I say that sarcastically because he was, in fact, a great President—created the refuge in 1908. Roosevelt used the tools at his disposal as President of this great country, including the Antiquities Act, in order to protect our national heritage so that generations of Americans could enjoy it, as they have for more than 100 years in Oregon. Congress created the Antiquities Act to empower the President to protect our cultural, historic, and natural resources when and where Congress cannot—or will not. These cultural resources are stunning. For more than 100 years Presidents have done just what Theodore Roosevelt did.

Our current national parks were created using this authority—not all of them, but some of them. In fact, 16 Presidents—8 Democrats and 8 Republicans—have used this authority to protect lands for the benefit of the American people. The younger George Bush used the Antiquities Act. Repub-

lican Presidents have been doing this a lot, but unfortunately many Senate Republicans want to undermine this act. They refuse to defend our cultural and historic antiquities that are being systematically destroyed. That is why the Antiquities Act was created—to safeguard against these threats in the absence of congressional action. Take, for example, a stunningly beautiful place called Gold Butte, the area where Cliven Bundy illegally grazed his cattle for decades. It is a stunning landscape.

Is this worth protecting? This chart shows the beautiful landscape. Look at it. This picture is not doctored up; that is the way it is. The sky isn't as blue as I have seen it so many times. We don't get a lot of clouds in Nevada, especially in this part of Nevada. We don't get many storm clouds. It doesn't happen often, but this is part of the greatness of Nevada.

Look at that. Is that worth preserving? Of course it is. This State has such magnificent areas. There are sandstone formations just like these petroglyphs, which date back thousands of years.

Take a look at this. This is a picture of petroglyphs. These Indian writings and drawings are centuries old. They are in an area we want to protect—Gold Butte. Look at that. The picture shows panel after panel of this magnificent part of history. But because of the trouble caused by the Bundys and their pals, the Federal employees have been prevented from doing their job of safeguarding these antiquities. About 19 of the vandals have been indicted. Most of them are still in jail where they belong. These employees have been under constant physical and mental threat for doing what the American people have asked them to do—that is their job.

Petroglyphs are being destroyed, drawn over, shot at, and stolen. This is an example of one panel they have destroyed. Look at what they have done. We can see that there are bullet holes. There is graffiti all over these beautiful Indian writings. These are not bricks that have been put in place. This is the way that nature has created this land, and they are destroying it. Look at what they have done. They have also cut pieces out of this and hauled them away. It is a crime, but they are criminals. They don't mind doing it, and that is what they do. What a shame.

This is only one example, and it is right here in the middle of the picture. It was, frankly, a vulgar drawing. They knew what they were drawing. They were telling everybody how they felt about this antiquity. We can see the bullet holes here. They used it for target practice.

The final picture I will show is the damage that was done to the Joshua trees. I know a lot about Joshua trees because where I lived and had my home for many years—and I still own quite a bit of property in Searchlight—has one of the thickest Joshua tree forests in