

**THE BLOG**

Take My Tinfoil Hat - Please

By Marty Kaplan

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I'm sure I'm reading the Supreme Court's Texas redistricting decision wrong. There must be something I don't understand. Because if I'm not mistaken, then the silent coup crowd - the Republican Party - has just been handed our country's future on a silver platter.

Tom DeLay got the Republican legislature in Texas to do an early-decade redistricting that minimized the number of House seats Democrats held. Except for objecting to the impact on Hispanic voters in one of those districts, the Court has now said that states can redistrict any time they want, not just every ten years along with the federal census. Only a minority of the Court was willing to state that gerrymandering for political purposes — screwing Democrats, in this case — is unconstitutional.

The threat of the U.S. House falling into the hands of a Democratic majority freaks out Republicans. Even without a Democratic Senate, or a Democratic White House, it would still give subpoena power, oversight power and the power of the purse to Democrats.

So what's to stop the Republican-controlled state legislatures in the country from redrawing their partisan little hearts out, starting today, in order to tilt as many districts as they can away from Democrats? A couple of seats here, a couple there, and the possibility of a slim Democratic majority in the House would be gone quicker than you can say Elbridge Gerry.

I'm sure I've got this wrong. Surely the Founders would never have opened so wide a loophole, never have issued so reckless an invitation for one-party tyranny.

On the other hand, I don't recall the Constitution saying much about signing statements, either.

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