

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

January 9, 2006 LB 542

to war at all, and others wanted to sign up when there was no shooting war, which they can do under the law. But what I'm looking at as a black man is the fact that it took Congress, under the pressure of black people again, to pass a voting rights bill after the U.S. Constitution is supposed to have guaranteed the right of black people to vote. But the Constitution was not enough. In a recent case, retiring Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor said that voting rights cases must be analyzed against the background of racial discrimination in voting in America. Then she outlined all of the schemes and stratagems used throughout history, the history of voting being allowed to black people, which had been used--poll taxes, literacy taxes, grandfather clauses, all of it. And in the context of that discussion, the Supreme Court arrived at the decision that both houses of bicameral legislatures must be apportioned on the basis of population alone. That sounds good, too. In that Voting Rights Act, certain states with a history of discriminating against black people when it came to voting had to get prior approval from the U.S. Justice Department before altering their election system. Georgia, which never got over Sherman marching to the sea, have people in their legislature who passed a bill saying that on election day a person must produce a state-issued identification card, knowing that poor people, elderly people, especially black people, are not going to have the wherewithal to purchase these cards. And it's the poll tax in a thin veneer, in the year 2005. While America is imposing democracy all over the world, they say, they're depriving black people of the right to vote. This is Bush's work. This is the "Repelicans'" work, this is the white racists' work. And when some people in the U.S. Justice Department who take seriously the oath that they swore to uphold the laws and constitution of this country told those white racist political operatives of George Bush that this proposal violates the Voting Rights Act, the spirit and the letter, and it violates the constitution, so the Justice Department should not approve of this, the white racist political operatives of George Bush overruled the lawyers and the Justice Department, the staff members who knew the law and wanted to apply the law, and compelled the approval, and a "Tio Taco" U.S. Attorney General went along with it. While people of his derivation are facing dogs, fences, armed vigilantes, he's doing the work of