

SARA TAYLOR REFUSES TO AGREE TIM GRIFFIN HAD “SUBSTANTIAL” EXPERIENCE

I’m just now catching up on the Sara Taylor non-testimony (the webcast is still available here). And I find her to be interestingly sharp—in that she backs off of some points that the Republicans would like to put in her mouth.

There’s an exchange with Arlen Specter, for example, in which he prods her to say that Tim Griffin was very qualified to replace Bud Cummins (this happens just before and following the one hour mark). But she backs off the grandiose terms Specter wants her to use.

Specter: Mr. Tim Griffin was known to you from having served as the Deputy Political Director? Would you ... you’re nodding yes ...

Taylor: Yes, he was known to me, he was the Deputy Political Director and I had known him for quite a bit longer than that.

Specter: Mr. Griffin had extensive experience as a prosecuting attorney, correct?

Taylor never answers his prompt with a yes answer, affirming that she agrees he had “extensive” experience. Rather, she starts listing his experience, which doesn’t seem all that “extensive.”

Taylor: My knowledge is that he had been a prosecutor, a federal prosecutor, for three years, in different jobs, I think two different jobs if my memory serves me correct. I also know that Mr. Griffin was a ten-year JAG officer in the United States Army [she’s referring to notes]

where he was also an Army prosecutor.

So Specter prods her again, to add to her description of Griffin's qualifications.

Specter: And he had served as an Assistant to the Special Prosecutor in the Cisneros, uh ...

Taylor: I believe that's correct.

Specter: So he had very substantial experience as a professional in the prosecution field.

Taylor: I believe he had significant experience.

But again, Taylor backs off Specter's qualification, choosing her own word, "significant" rather than his "substantial."

The exchange is all the more interesting since, in the following exchange, Taylor claims that Griffin is "exceptionally qualified." (The whole thing is clearly Specter's set-up to put the Griffin hiring in better light and refute McNulty's testimony that Griffin Cummins [thanks folks] was fired solely to make room for Griffin, which may well be why Taylor agreed to testify.) Specter goes on to ask whether Taylor was closer to Griffin than McNulty—a sort of bizarre way of undercutting the outstanding allegations from McNulty that Cummins was fired just to make way for Griffin.