

Untrustworthy Ratings?

To the Editor:

"We have good, quality judges. I think I'd take that as a significant accomplishment." You quote that comment by President Bush in the sixth article of "The Bush Record" (July 1), about his appointment of conservative judges. The reality behind this is that one of every six of President Bush's judicial nominees has been rated "not qualified" by a minority vote of the American Bar Association's evaluating panel.

We believe the real story is not the conservative court built by President Bush but the mediocrities he has nominated for lifetime Federal judgeships. Our grass-roots citizen group recently submitted a critique to the Senate Judiciary Committee documenting the unfitness of one of President Bush's nominees to the Southern District of New York. That nominee also received a "not qualified" minority rating by the Bar Association panel.

You state that "in no case has a majority of the evaluating panel found a Bush nominee unqualified." Yet our critique, based on six months of investigation, found no basis for the Bar Association's majority rating of "qualified" for the nominee we studied. The evidence strongly suggests that the rating of that nominee was not the result of any meaningful investigation at all.

Because of the danger of Senate confirmation of unfit nominees to lifetime Federal judgeships, we have called on the Senate leadership to halt all judicial confirmations pending investigation and the setting up of safeguards.

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White Plains, July 10, 1992

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