

MI RIGHT TO RAM ROUND-UP

The reviews on MI GOP's anti-union power-grab on Thursday are still coming in. And they're mostly blisteringly critical, especially of the way the GOP rammed this through the legislature.

At MLive, Susan Demas argues it undermines the entire *raison-d'être* of Snyder's Administration.

In a single day last week, he did far more than flip-flop on RTW. Rick Snyder undid the entire premise of his governorship: government transparency, data-driven decisions and bipartisan cooperation.

No, governor, you don't get to have it both ways anymore after you unfurl these words at a Thursday press conference:

"I'm asking that we pass an act that gives workers freedom in the workplace. When it arrives on my desk, I will sign it."

You asked for it. You own it. It's yours.

[snip]

Now I'm sure Ricky and Republicans will be whining a lot in the months and years to come about how Democrats aren't playing fair, whether it's voting "no" on all bills, filing recalls against Republicans or going for a constitutional amendment.

Sorry, boys (and the very few girls on your side). You didn't just give up the moral high ground. You obliterated it on Thursday by choosing a government process one would expect in the Soviet Union of old, not the modern-day USA.

Expecting moderate responses to radical

actions is usually unwise.

The Free Press called bullshit on Snyder's rationale.

Watching Snyder explain his right-to-work reversal was disturbing on several levels.

His insistence that the legislation was designed to promote the interests of unionized workers and "bring Michiganders together" was grotesquely disingenuous; even as he spoke, security personnel were locking down the capital in anticipation of protests by angry unionists.

Snyder's ostensible rationale for embracing right-to-work legislation – it was, he insisted, a matter of preserving workers' freedom of association – was equally dishonest.

The real motive of Michigan's right-to-work champions, as former GOP legislator Bill Ballenger ruefully observed, is "pure greed" – the determination to emasculate, once and for all, the Democratic Party's most reliable source of financial and organizational support.

And the Livingston Daily (in SE MI's conservative Ex-Urbs) decried the abuse of democracy.

Elected Republican officials in Lansing last week showed in breathtaking manner how little respect they have for the democratic process. In one of the Capitol's most amazing days Thursday, the House and the Senate rushed through lame-duck legislation that will make Michigan a so-called right-to-work state.

[snip]

But Republicans thumbed their noses at the quaint (to them) concept that voters matter. Right-to-work legislation was introduced and passed in a flick of an eye Thursday. No referral to committees, no meaningful debate, no hearings.

Who needs facts when you have a overwhelming majority?

If this was such important and fact-supported legislation, Republicans could have introduced it at any time in the last two years. But that would have made them put their cards on the table before the last election. They could have waited until January, when they would still have legislative majorities – albeit a slightly smaller edge in the House – and let the decision be made by the lawmakers most recently selected by the public.

But democratic procedure – as well as any pretense of factual argument – gets in the way of Republican lawmakers who are beholden to special interests and who are eager to stick it to labor unions. This was about punishment and revenge, not good public policy.

MI doesn't have much of a newspaper culture left (thanks, in part, to union busting). But it is fairly remarkable how unified even papers from places like Holland and Livingston have been about the abusive way Republicans rammed this through.

The GOP will still vote it through on Tuesday. But by then they won't be able to claim they had any moral authority to do so.