

Gore's Own Vote-Stealing In Arkansas Pursues Him Now

by Edward Spannaus

A comparison of two figures can stand as a crucial marker of what was wrong with the 2000 Presidential election campaign:

- The number of votes by which Al Gore lost to George W. Bush in Arkansas—50,213;
- The number of votes obtained by Lyndon LaRouche in the May Democratic Primary in Arkansas, according to the official certified results, and openly stolen by Al Gore—53,150.

If most of those 53,000 LaRouche voters were angry enough at having had their votes stolen by Gore, so that they either didn't vote on Nov. 7, or they voted for Bush, Ralph Nader, or Pat Buchanan, that would have been sufficient to cost Gore Arkansas's six electoral votes.

Had Gore won Arkansas's six electoral votes, he would be now be President-elect, irrespective of Florida; Gore would have 273 electoral votes, three more than the 270 needed to win the Presidency.

Keeping those 53,000 discarded votes in Arkansas in mind, then listen to Al Gore's hypocrisy, in his Nov. 27 nationally televised statement:

"A vote is not just a piece of paper. A vote is a human voice, a statement of human principle. And we must not let those voices be silenced, not for today, not for tomorrow, not for as long as this nation's laws and democratic institutions let us stand and fight to let those voices count.

"Ignoring votes means ignoring democracy itself. . . . This is America. When votes are cast, we count them."

Unless those votes are cast for somebody Gore fears, like Lyndon LaRouche.

What They, And You, Deserve

Of course, it's not just Gore. Democrats in Florida and throughout the country are complaining that many Democratic voters were disenfranchised in Florida by not having their votes counted, even once. Many are complaining about intimidation and thuggery carried out by Republicans, and of violations of the Voting Rights Act by election officials or law-enforcement officials who prevented many black and minority voters from casting their ballots.

But where were these voters, when Gore and the Democratic National Committee (DNC) were disenfranchising Democratic Party voters in Michigan, Arkansas, and other states? Where were these Democrats when Gore and the DNC were demanding that the Federal courts, and the U.S. Supreme Court, nullify the Voting Rights Act of 1965, by dismissing LaRouche's claims against the Democratic National Committee, which were brought pursuant to the Voting Rights Act?

Where were these voters when Gore stole six or more delegates to the Democratic National Convention, which LaRouche had legitimately won outright in Arkansas, based on 23% of the vote cast for him in the Arkansas primary. Or, when Michigan Democratic Party officials threw out the results of the Democratic primary, which LaRouche, being the only candidate on the ballot, had won, and then used thugs and goons to prevent LaRouche supporters and observers from participating in the "private party" caucuses?

And where were these voters when there was a bipartisan agreement among both the Democratic and Republican parties *in Florida*, to tell Secretary of State Katherine Harris to

keep LaRouche off the primary ballot for the March 14, 2000 Democratic primary in the Sunshine State?

The outrageous conduct of Gore and the Democratic National Committee toward LaRouche's candidacy is exemplary of the corruption of the 2000 election campaign. It was not just—as we showed in last week's issue of *EIR*—that this was the most corrupt election in history, corrupted by fraud, media rigging of the nominations, unprecedented amounts of money, and the like. The voters themselves were corrupted, by what they allowed to happen—how they tolerated the thugery and fraud by which Al Gore won the nomination, and how they tolerated the rigged nomination process overall, by which two utterly unqualified candidates became the nominees of the two major parties.

In this respect, the American electorate, and especially the Democratic Party, are getting the leadership they deserve, just as Al Gore, himself, is reaping what he sowed when he stamped out opposition to the rigging of the nomination for himself.

Gore Lost the Lower 80%

An insightful analysis into another aspect of how Gore and the Democratic Party defeated themselves, was published in the online *Salon* magazine on Nov. 27 by Jim Hightower, the former Texas Agriculture Commissioner. While the national focus has been on the few hundred votes difference in Florida between Al Gore and George Bush, the real crisis is “the more than 100 million votes that went astray on Election Day,” Hightower wrote. These ballots weren't lost to pregnant chads or by some conniving election official; these were the uncast ballots of almost half the American electorate, who chose not to vote this year, because they believe that they have been cast out of the electoral system. These are middle- and low-income people, making less than \$50,000 a year, and “they make up some 80% of the U.S. population,” Hightower wrote, and he pointed out that this year, for the first time, they made up less than half of the voters. The under-\$50,000 earners were 63% of voters in 1992, and after eight years of the North American Free Trade Agreement, the World Trade Organization, globalization, and income stagnation and decline, they now make up only 47% of the voting population.

Hightower attributes this to the policies of what he calls “the Clinton-Gore-Lieberman Democrats” who “have jerked the party out from under this core populist constituency.” (It would be more accurate to say, that this is a direct result of what Al Gore did in 1996, around welfare reform, budget-cutting, and similar austerity policies.)

As an example of how the Democratic Party lost the election, Hightower shows how Gore lost key constituencies in Florida that normally go Democratic—voters over-65, and white women. And while the Democratic Party wants to blame Ralph Nader for Gore's loss, the fact is that, in Florida, 308,000 Democrats voted for Bush, as compared to only 24,000 Democrats voting for Nader.

Hightower made another useful point, with respect to both Gore and Bush, saying that the deeper question of “legitimacy” around this election is not the outcome of recounts and court cases in Florida, but that “the only clear finding of this election is that Americans didn't want either of them.”

“The close popular and electoral votes were not a reflection of evenly divided support, but of which guy people would vote to throw off the island first. Both ‘won’ this negative contest.”

Hightower shows this, as follows:

- 52% of eligible voters either didn't vote, or voted for a third-party candidate, so only 48% voted for either Bush or Gore, giving each about 24% of eligible voters.
- “But wait—a good half of these voters were not actually choosing the candidate they marked on their ballots, but rather voting against the other guy.”
- “This means that neither Bush nor Gore could muster the support of more than 12% of the electorate,” Hightower says. “This is the real crisis for our democracy.”

The Florida Farce

This is the context, in which the American population and the world must understand the farce of what has been going on in the counting, recounting, and contesting of votes in Florida.

Even within Florida, the counts and recounts have turned into a circus, with whatever accuracy could be gained by recount after recount, being cancelled out by increased confusion. For example, in Palm Beach County, after a series of recounts, 50 Gore votes had vanished into thin air. The problems of the confusion attributed to the infamous “butterfly” ballot could probably never be sorted out, nor could the problems of “undervotes” and “overvotes” on the punch-card ballots. The Votomatic system used in Florida, with its 1960s punch-card technology, has been notorious for such problems for decades—and these problems have been compounded as the machines get older and worn out.

Likewise, the confusion over military ballots; a the charges of civil rights violations, and harassment of minority votes, brought by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Congressional Black Caucus, and others.

The way out of his mess, is to follow the path provided by the United States Constitution. The Electoral College was not intended by the Framers of the Constitution as a rubber-stamp for the popular vote or the parties: the Electors were to exercise their judgement to ensure that only the most qualified candidates could be President. The second line of defense is Congress itself. Any member can object to any Electoral vote which is not “regularly given,” and has the power to examine the circumstances of any election for federal office—including fraud and corruption. The most notable example occurred in 1876: the establishment of a National Electoral Commission to resolve the dispute over competing slates of Electors in the Tilden-Hayes election.