EXHIBIT C
Everett Carll Ladd
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1996 Vote: The "No Majority" Realignment Continues
Peace, Interdependence, and the Middle East
Governing, Campaigning, and Organizing the Presidency: An Electoral Connection?
Deciphering Africa's Divergent Transitions
Transitional Electoral Systems in Post-Communist Eastern Europe
Full Faith and Credit for Same-Sex Marriages?
Book Reviews

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From the Editor:

In this issue . . .

EVERETT CARLL LADD analyzes the 1996 presidential and congressional elections and finds continuities with other contests of the so-called postindustrial era. Party ties are weak for a large and growing segment of the population so that neither the Republicans nor the Democrats have been able to become a long-term dominant majority. From this condition of unanchored voters emerges divided government and powerful splits along race, region, religion, and gender in ways without precedent.

STEVE A. YETIV examines the effect of Middle East peace on Israel's national welfare and on its regional and global relations. He argues that changes in global politics and economic relations, and specifically Israel's particular economic and security position, have significantly increased the costs of conflict for Israel and the potential benefits of peace.

KATHRYN DUNN TEMPS and MATTHEW J. DICKINSON assess the growing dominance of the presidential staff in presidential reelection campaigns. This dominance, they conclude, contributes to a higher incidence of staff turnover, as presidents must juggle their advisors to respond to the diverging tasks of governing and campaigning.

MICHAEL BRATTON documents and analyzes the divergent political trajectories of sub-Saharan African regimes in the early 1990s. While some regime transitions have resulted in a minimal form of democracy, others have been flawed, blocked, or precluded.

JOHN T. ISHIYAMA examines causes for the emergence of different post-Communist electoral systems in Eastern Europe. He argues that the type of democratized electoral system that emerged depended on the degree to which the Communist party and opposition leaderships had begun to think of their organizations as primarily vote-maximizing political parties, rather than as mass movements.

KEN I. KERSCH addresses federalism questions involving the obligation of states to recognize same-sex marriages under the full faith and credit clause. He argues that a consideration of traditional norms of comity among states along with the nation's experience with analogous disputes concerning slavery and antimiscegenation statutes would be useful to policy makers grappling with the issue.

RAYMOND L. GARHOFF's review essay critiques the memoirs by Robert Gates, a past director of the Central Intelligence Agency and National Security Council staffer. Garthoff concludes that Gates's memoirs, while not without bias, nonetheless offer interesting insights into bureaucratic political interplay and the role of intelligence in the policy process.

Demetrios James Caraley

1996 Vote: The "No Majority" Realignment Continues

EVERETT CARLL LADD

My last three election articles in Political Science Quarterly have emphasized the powerful continuities evident in the contemporary "postindustrial" parties and elections system: "The 1988 Elections: Continuation of the Post-New Deal System"; "The 1992 Vote for President Clinton: Another Brittle Mandate?"; and "The 1994 Congressional Elections: The Realignment Continues." I hope I do not try readers' patience by returning to this continuity theme in assessing the November 1996 outcomes.

In multiple understandings of the term, the 1996 vote was a status quo election. It was obviously such in the sense that it left control of the government essentially unchanged. The Republicans retained majorities in both the House (where their margin dropped from the thirty-two-seat edge they enjoyed following the 1994 balloting to twenty seats) and the Senate (where they gained two seats, bringing their majority to fifty-five to forty-five). This is the first time the GOP has managed congressional majorities for consecutive terms since 1928. Meanwhile, as Table 1 shows, President Bill Clinton won reelection by a margin similar to the one he gained over George Bush four years earlier. Clinton again won despite persisting doubts about his character because his political skills surpassed his opponent's and because the economy (seen as bad in 1992, good in 1996) was on his side again.

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It was a status-quo election, though, in a more fundamental sense. The partisan realignment that ushered in our contemporary system is now fully mature, its essential features set. One large part of this realignment involves a clear and decisive shift in the agenda of politics—what I will call the "philosophical realignment." The other principal element, involving the parties' competitive standings, is more ambiguous. The Democrats have long since lost the majority status they held from the New Deal to the Great Society, but the Republicans have not been able to claim the mantle. Voters again chose in 1996 to divide control of the national government between the two major parties. Finally, 1996 saw the now-familiar patterns of social group voting that began emerging in the late 1960s.

In this article I will discuss some factors peculiar to the 1996 contest and its candidates, but I will concentrate on placing the balloting squarely in the context of the postindustrial party system. That system is distinguished by the following features:

- a philosophical realignment which sees the electorate significantly more conservative than it was in the preceding era, especially in the sense of being far less inclined to accept claims that "more government represents progress;"
- markedly weakened ties of voters to the political parties;
- television's dominance as the campaign's medium and an institutional setting that is a vast departure from predecessor systems. Candidates lacking television access to voters on a par with their opponents in a very real sense lack political free speech. New political gatekeepers, including television news producers, on-air journalists, and talk show pundits, are a major force in this "electronic democracy." 1
- In large part due to factors that inher in the loss of party loyalty and the dominance of television, the contemporary system lacks a majority party and shows little prospect of adopting the "sun and moon," majority party/minority party model that Samuel Lubell described so vividly nearly a half-century ago.2
- Divided government does not inevitably follow in a no-majority-party era, but it is naturally more readily obtained in one. Other factors that I will describe below have contributed to persisting split party control, making it a deeply established, far from coincidental feature of contemporary politics.

Finally, the composition and alignment of social groups that we see today in politics—differing sharply as they do from those of the New Deal years—persist because they reflect central structural features of the postindustrial economy and the group conflicts and cultural tensions of this era. 3

Understanding Realignment

Each of the major partisan transformations the U.S. has experienced historically has grown out of broad shifts in the country's socioeconomic setting. Once established, the underlying properties of the new system shape subsequent election results in many ways. They do not, obviously, determine who the winners will be in each election. The personal appeal (or lack thereof) of the candidates is always a key independent element, and parties have opportunities to fashion appeals and build majorities whatever the sociopolitical setting.

There was plenty of mystery and uncertainty at the start of the 1996 campaign. It was by no means certain in late 1995 that Bill Clinton would win reelection. He responded boldly to his then-nascent electoral fortunes, adopting or emphasizing positions closer to what conservative majorities in the electorate favored than he did in his first two White House years. From proclaiming that "the era of Big Government is over" in his January 1996 State of the Union Address, to calling for programs that rally the "vital center" in his December speech to the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC). Clinton responded to a changed political environment. We cannot know precisely how much the subsequent rise in his approval ratings and electoral standing accrued from these changes in direction, but it is apparent that Clinton helped himself with the voters.

On the Republican side a variety of important short-term factors hurt the GOP's chances to retain the presidency. Urged by many Republican officials to seek the party's presidential nomination and enjoying a high level of public encouragement (through the polls), Colin Powell nonetheless said no. The GOP found itself with a weak field of candidates and nominated a man who had never, in a long and distinguished political career, shown the ability to rally the nation. Ross Perot, who announced so formidable a challenge to George Bush's reelection in 1992, had by 1996 lost much of his appeal. Many Americans who had seen the economy in trouble in 1992, had by the 1996 campaign come to feel better about their own eco-

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1 For an extensive description of this dimension of the contemporary party and elections system, see Lawrence K. Grossman, The Electronic Republic: Redefining Democracy in the Information Age (New York: Viking, 1955).
nomic positions and that of the country. All these factors contributed to Clinton's re-election.

Still, for all the unpredictability which resulted from short-term factors, one can see the imprint of an underlying sociopolitical setting in the election. Movement from one setting to another precipitates shifts in social needs and problems and in the public's thinking about what needs to be done, and it reshapes the contending coalitions of groups and interests. Early in a realigning era these elements are in flux, and we are often startled by departures from predecessor systems, but the mystery vanishes when the transition is largely complete and we have observed the properties of the new sociopolitical era over a series of elections. That was the situation in 1996.

The U.S. has experienced four great sociopolitical eras. The emergence of each has precipitated broad partisan transformations. The first era involved the post-Revolution maturation of a rural republic that was unprecedentedly egalitarian in its distribution of social relations but which permitted slavery. The Jeffersonian/Jacksonian party system was the creature of this era. The post-Civil War years saw the growing ascendancy of an urban and industrializing order in the population centers of the North, and a South isolated by memories of the war and by its nonparticipation in industrial development. The Republicans assumed leadership of industrial nation building and from this base gradually established a decisive national majority outside the South. The third broad setting emerged with the maturation of the industrial system, which resulted in an America distinguished by institutional scale, interdependence, and complexity. These developments placed new demands on government, and on national government in particular. Over the last several decades, the U.S. has entered a fourth major sociopolitical period that I call, following Daniel Bell's seminal work on the subject, the postindustrial era. Dispersion and decentralization are as distinctive a feature of the technology and economy in this period as increasing scale and centralization were in the preceding era.

Each of these four eras displays features that reach beyond the socioeconomic setting narrowly construed. Each has witnessed, for example, an important redefinition of the thrusts of American individualism, at once extending opportunities and recognition to groups previously excluded and posing new tensions and problems. Each has had its special mix of ethnic groups and its distinctive frontier of ethnic conflict. That the U.S. of the first era was essentially a nation of British ancestry with a large, enslaved minority of African ancestry was enormously important to the politics of the time; these elements were not, however, products of the rural republic setting. Similarly, politics in the 1990s is influenced by current shifts of ethnic make-up—that are not a feature of postindustrialism, though they accompany it. Each of the four eras demarking U.S. politics historically has had, then, along with its distinguishing socioeconomic core, many important, ancillary elements.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL REALIGNMENT

Calling this change in direction in the public's thinking about government and politics a shift toward "conservatism" is, of course, simplistic—as was describing the New Deal change in terms of "liberalism." In every era, the populace displays considerable variety in political outlook, and many people don't sign on unambiguously and en masse to any of the contending positions. Given these qualifications, it makes sense to describe the New Deal setting as liberal and the present one as conservative—as long as the meanings attached to these terms are carefully delineated. In the political era bounded by Franklin Delano Roosevelt's election in 1932 and Lyndon Baines Johnson's Great Society of the mid-1960s, public support for expanding governmental programs and initiatives was high, set against American historical experience. Few thought, for example, that there was too much power in the hands of the national government.

FIGURE 1

Does the government in Washington have too much power? (Gallup, April 1941)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>12%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where is the danger of a group becoming too powerful? (ORC, September 1934)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>16%</th>
<th>18%</th>
<th>40%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Appendix 1 for the full question text and related data.

Our postindustrial era is distinguished by far greater skepticism about government, though for most not by hostility toward it. This shift has two different sources. For one thing, it took the creation in the Great Society years of "big government" with its inevitably more visible failings to swing individualism America away from its relatively brief and historically anomalous enthusiasm for expanding national government. The other source comprises the dispersion and decentralization...
induced by postindustrialism, that have made central national government bureaucracy seem ever more cumbersome and out of phase. Americans have not come to see less government as progress—as some Republicans found to their acute disappointment in the public’s response to the work of the 104th Congress in its first year. But we have come rather decidedly to reject the idea that more government is progress.

In the mid-1990s the U.S. is no longer seeing significant year-to-year change in public sentiment about government and its proper role. The 1994 congressional elections were widely taken as a call for a Republican-led “revolution” against the New Deal/Great Society state, although much of the commentary in 1996 had Americans calling off this revolution (if indeed they had ever sought it). But survey data show great continuity over this span in public thinking about government.

**FIGURE 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gov’t Doing More</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gov’t Doing Too Much</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: CBS/NYT, October 1994*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gov’t Doing More</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gov’t Doing Too Much</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: CBS/NYT, September 1996*

The conservative swing indicated by these data has not, of course, occurred evenly across the population. African-Americans give much more support than most other groups to a broader governmental role. Differences by gender are less striking, but women in 1996 continued to provide more support than men for governmental activism—which probably goes far toward explaining the electoral gender gap evident again in the 5 November balloting (Figure 3). The 1996 election day voters’ poll taken by Voter News Service (VNS) found big regional differences on how much government is desirable, with Texans at one end of the continuum and New Yorkers at the other (Table 2). Overall, though, questions posed by the opinion polls in 1996 confirmed the electorate’s desire to stay with a relatively conservative stance on role-of-government questions.

Two sets of surveys—one taken by the Hart and Tector research companies for NBC News and the Wall Street Journal, the other by Gallup for CNN and USA Today—point up the extent to which today’s relatively conservative mood reaches...
beyond role-of-government issues. Hart and Teeter asked respondents which political party they thought would do a better job handling fourteen issues (Table 3). The list is a carefully balanced one reaching across the policy spectrum, including foreign policy, crime, taxes, reforming welfare, Medicare, and education. At this supposed low point in GOP fortunes, pluralities gave the party the edge on nine of the fourteen. These 1996 assessments can be compared to those made in 1994 just before voters elected Republican majorities to the House and Senate. In May 1996, when Hart and Teeter asked about ten of the fourteen issues they had examined in mid-October 1994, they found no change during this nineteen-month period. Not only did Republicans lead on the same seven (of the ten) in both October 1994 and May 1996, but they led by virtually identical margins. They gained 15 points on the Democrats on controlling government spending, while losing 8 points on health care, but on most issues the shift was minuscule.

In late April 1996, Gallup conducted an opinion referendum for CNN and USA Today in which respondents were asked how they would vote, supposing that "on election day this year you could vote on key issues as well as candidates," on twenty-six propositions, including a balanced budget amendment (BBA), prayer in schools, the death penalty for murder, and a ban on assault rifles. As in the Hart-Teeter survey, the overall list was balanced. A few of the propositions, such as doctor-assisted suicide and selling off public lands, don't fit on a liberal-conservative continuum; but by my count twenty of the twenty-six do. On only five of the twenty issues did pluralities come down on the liberal side: banning assault rifles, reducing defense spending, raising the minimum wage, (not) reducing social spending, and (not) banning all abortions except to save the life of the mother. On
most of the fifteen issues where the conservative side carried, including the BBA, term limits, reducing all government agencies, and school choice, it did so overwhelmingly (Figure 4).

The realignment has not produced a new majority party

As noted, although the philosophical side of the postindustrial realignment has come swiftly and decisively, the partisan side has not. The 1996 bailout reflected the general partisan parity that has prevailed since the postindustrial system took clear form a decade and a half ago. Clinton won reelection, and the Republicans retained congressional majorities. Republicans now lead the Democrats in governorships by thirty-two to seventeen (with one Independent in Maine), one of their largest margins ever; but the Democrats still lead in state legislative seats, 3,833 to 3,470 (though this margin is down sharply from what it was after the 1992 vote).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Legislatures: GOP Closing But Democrats Still Lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current of State Legislatures by Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State with Both Legislative House and Governor of Same Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National surveys asking about partisan identification typically find a small Democratic edge, on the order of 2 to 4 percentage points. Thirty-nine percent of those interviewed by the VNS on 5 November called themselves Democrats, 35 percent Republicans. There has been no significant movement in party identification distributions since 1984—the point at which Reagan's leadership and Democratic miscalculation had brought the Republicans back from their deep deficit to parity.

Two different explanations may be offered for this state of affairs. One focuses on failures of leadership in both parties, the other on underlying characteristics of the contemporary electorate and the way elections are now conducted. Elements of both may be valid.

FIGURE 4

The 1996 Gallup Opinion Referendum Found a Distinctly Conservative Til

Question: Suppose that on election day this year you could vote on key issues as well as candidates. Please tell me whether you would vote for or against each one of the following propositions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>For</th>
<th>Against</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balanced Budget Amendment</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial preferences in jobinterviews</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as the official language</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life sentences for drug dealers</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death penalty for murder</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congressional Term Limits</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legalization of marijuana</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer in school amendment</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing all government agencies</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-year offset for welfare without work</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legalization of gay marriages</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School funding for racial imbalance</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School choice</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ban on partial birth abortions</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ban on assault rifles</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce defense spending</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal flat tax system</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce social spending</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ban on all abortions except for life of mother</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising the minimum wage</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The bars show the percentage of all respondents taking what is conventionally called the more conservative response on the issue. The numbers shown in parentheses after the bars are the percentages taking the opposing response. Included in the referendum but not shown here are the following items: withdrawal of U.S. from UN, five-year freeze on legal immigration, reestablishing relations with Cuba, doctor-assisted suicide, mandatory job retraining, and selling off public lands.
Explanations One

At any time, decisions and actions of a party’s leaders will be, in varying degrees, helpful or harmful to its standing. Today it may be argued that neither party has produced leaders able to reconcile conflicting themes and impulses in voters’ thinking in anything like the persuasive fashion achieved by Franklin Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Jackson, and Thomas Jefferson. Ronald Reagan did strengthen the Republican party by understanding the extent of the philosophical realignment that was occurring and by being the kind of political personality—sunny and optimistic—Americans persistently seek in presidents. But he has found no successor. Whereas Reagan grew up politically a Roosevelt Democrat, both George Bush and Bob Dole entered Republican politics in an era of Republican failure. Theirs is—in a way the older Reagan’s never was—a prerealignment Republicanism. Many postrealignment Republican conservatives have long complained about this. Bush and Dole are clearly in the American conservative tradition, but their roots are in the conservatism-in-retreat era of GOP minority status. The delay in bringing a new generation of Republican leadership to the fore in the presidential party has blunted Republican efforts to expand their base.

Along with these weaknesses in recent Republican presidential leadership, the party’s congressional leadership overreached in 1995—mistaking the public’s clear rejection of the idea that “more government is progress” for a conclusion it has not reached, that “less government is progress.” There may have been an “underreach” in the Republican response—one that 1996 presidential hopeful Lamar Alexander discussed in a Wall Street Journal op-ed piece following the election. To become the majority, Alexander argued, Republicans need to do more than demonstrate failures of the New Deal/Great Society system. They must offer plausible alternatives to it, ones that meet public expectations for a better society. New solutions need to be offered, clearly and positively. Alexander gave the following example of what he believes, Republican politicians need to say and do: “Nothing is more important to me than making it possible for you to send your child to such a school, one of the best schools in the world—a safe, neighborhood school where every child is expected to behave and learn high standards. I am ready to make the changes necessary to create those schools and give you the opportunities, and the Democrats are not. There will be time to explain the policies—charter schools, high standards, a GI Bill for Kids—after we paint the picture.”

As the GOP was encountering its problems, national Democratic leaders were trying to respond to criticisms of the failings that had contributed to their party’s electoral decline. From the Vietnam War on through the 1980s, the national Democratic party seemed unaware of the extent of the emerging conservative realignment. The party seemed tone deaf. This was the situation in which Bill Clinton and his party found themselves in December 1994 after their “blow-out defeat.” Subsequently, though, the president has changed direction. He has been criticized for waffling and lacking firm principles. But it is sometimes hard to tell precisely where waffling and lacking principles leave off and pragmatism and flexibility begin. Since the 1994 debacle, the determinedly centrist thrust of his speeches and such decisions as signing the welfare overhaul bill in 1996 helped Clinton give a new look to the national Democratic party.

The President’s December 1996 DLC speech is especially instructive on the reach of his effort to redirect the Democratic party so as to bring it into phase with the philosophical realignment. He called upon the party to mobilize the “vital center” by making six main commitments:

- balance the budget;
- give young people the best education in the world;
- reform welfare by demanding “responsible welfare recipients,” while avoiding the more “political” aspects of Republican approach;
- press the fight against “gangs and guns and drugs and violence;”
- strengthen families; and
- pass “meaningful” campaign finance reform legislation and modernize government operations.

While there are liberal elements in such program—e.g., seeking expanded family leave (though “in a very limited way”)—his call to the DLC meeting, like much of his 1996 campaign, was largely devoid of a liberal agenda.

Explanations Two

An alternate explanation begins with an entirely different perspective—that the chief reason no party has majority status is that large segments of the electorate are abandoning firm partisan ties. For decades many political scientists and journalists were mesmerized by the New Deal realignment, which had seen a new majority emerge quickly and decisively. Realignment became virtually synonymous with new majority, but the historical record shows that each of the country’s historic realignments followed its own course. Broad changes in social structure, yielding new demographics, new social problems, and new views of government’s role and policy needs, need not result in one party’s ascendancy for an extended period.

There is strong evidence that the continuing weakening of voter ties to parties is one key dimension of postindustrialism. Growing segments of the electorate are

thereby up for grabs in each contest. The postindustrial electorate is more highly educated and more confident of its ability to make political judgments independent of party cues. It draws its information not from party-influenced sources but from independent, adversarial mass media. Surveys such as one the Roper Center conducted for the Media Studies Center in November/December 1995 show national journalists heavily Democratic in both party identification and presidential voting. The idea that journalists, however disciplined professionally, can escape in reporting the claims of their underlying political preferences, seems to me as silly as claims that those of us teaching American government and politics can approach our students unencumbered by our own political preferences. But journalists are surely right when they insist that their overriding guide is not loyalty to a political party. They see themselves in an adversarial relationship to parties generally. Today most Americans derive their political information from a source that tends to discourage rather than encourage stable party loyalties.

Political parties just are not important institutions for most Americans today. Contrary to arguments advanced by Robert Putnam and others, I find evidence that "civic America" remains active and vital. But political parties, never huge actors in civic America, are perhaps smaller ones now than ever before. There seems to be a general inclination across the public to reject the confines of "us and them" distinctions. We see this in religious group identification, where the proportion describing themselves as Protestant or Catholic is yielding to a growing proportion choosing the label "other Christian." Seventeen percent of voters interviewed by VNS on 5 November 1996 chose this "I don’t want to be part of that old divide" response, as did 19 percent in the election day poll done by the Los Angeles Times nationally. Similarly, being tied to the Republican or Democratic side seems to draw less favor than in times past.

Survey work done by the Roper Center for the Media Studies Center in 1996 reveals an electorate remarkably unanchored in partisan terms. Thus 65 percent indicated in the February 1996 poll that they "typically split [their] ticket—that is, vote for candidates from different parties." In 1942, Gallup had found that only 42 percent described themselves as ticket splitters. Sixty-three percent said, in 1996, that they had "voted for different parties for president." Back in 1952, when the University of Michigan’s Center for Political Studies first asked this question, just 29 percent reported having voted for different parties in past contests.

An experiment the Roper Center conducted in its February 1996 survey gives further indication of how weak party ties are for many voters, even when voters claim ties in some form. The Center asked the party identification question regularly used by the National Election Studies (NES): "Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an independent, or what?" Thirty-six percent identified with the Democratic party, 33 percent with the Republican party, and 24 percent claimed to be independents. The Center also asked another, different party identification question: "In your own mind, do you identify with one of the political parties or not?" If the respondent said yes, a follow-up asked, "Which party ...?"

The bivariate relationship between the NES question and the Roper question is instructive. Only three-quarters of Republican identifiers on the NES item were recorded as Republicans by the Roper Center question, and only two-thirds of Democrats on the NES measure remained Democrats in the Roper version. Overall, 32 percent of voters gave no consistent response—that is, were not Republican/Republican, Democrat/Democrat, or independent/No Party—on the two questions. On both asking, only 24 percent of registered voters identified with the Republicans and 24 percent with the Democrats. Thus, in both measures, a slight majority (52 percent) did not consistently identify with either major party. Even those who were "consistent" Democrats or Republicans said that they often do not vote the party line: about 60 percent of both groups typically vote split tickets.

**TABLE 5**

In the same poll, on two occasions, at least one-fifth of those who called themselves Democrats or Republicans in the NES party identification question didn’t identify with a party in the Roper Center question on party ID (Column percentages; read down)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NES ID (February 1996)</th>
<th>NES ID (September 1996)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, Rep.</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, Dem.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Identify</td>
<td>32</td>
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</table>

In September 1996, the Roper Center recontacted more than 500 randomly selected voters from the February survey in this panel study. It again posed the party identification questions and found significant movement in the NES measure over this seven-month span. Eighteen percent of those calling themselves Republicans in the February survey said in September that they were Democrats or Independents.
and 24 percent of Democrats in February said they were Republicans or independents in the fall.\footnote{For a further discussion of the party identification data from the Roper Center/Media Studies Center surveys, see Kenneth Danziger, "Partisan Instability in the 1996 Campaign," The Public Perspective (October/November 1996): 22-34.}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>February (%)</th>
<th>September (%)</th>
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<tr>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
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Such erosion in party loyalties makes it appear unlikely that the U.S. will in its postindustrial era experience a majority party of the type that the Democrats had in 1836, the Republicans in 1900, or the Democrats in 1940. The electorate is too weakly tied to parties to sit still as the "sun and moon" model that Lubell used in describing the New Deal party system requires.

Divided Government

The U.S. historically has had two prolonged periods where divided government has been the rule not the exception; the half-century or so from the early 1840s through the mid-1890s, and the period from the mid-1950s to the present. In both eras major realignment was occurring. And in both, neither of the major parties had attained majority status. The first was a time of slow, incomplete realignment that left both parties at rough parity for an extended span. By the time of the Civil War, although the new Republican party had come far, the Democrats had "won" a truly solid South and retained substantial Jacksonian-era-type backing outside Dixie. Not until industrialization had progressed far enough to erode the socioeconomic fabric of Jacksonian America did national Republican ascendency become possible.

The divided government of our era also reflects the fact that changes in party strength have been occurring slowly. The Republicans have again gained ground (not, of course, as a new party but by progressing from their weak number two position during most of the New Deal/Great Society years), but they have climbed only to parity. This relatively even, two-party balance doesn’t mandate that control of government will be divided, but it makes split results more likely.

Today—in contrast to the late nineteenth-century experience—a growing segment of the electorate really doesn’t belong to any party and is disinclined to place much long-term faith in either party’s leadership or direction. Historic American political individualism has long helped sustain our Madisonian Constitution, through which governmental authority is divided among different institutions (presidency, Congress, federal courts; national government, state and local governments) each with powerful resources to resist the other. Madisonianism has now become overtaken with a new feature: the unwillingness of many voters to commit themselves to any party.

Why hasn’t the postindustrial realignment yielded a new majority party? Will it in the future? My strong understanding is that large parts of both interpretations just reviewed are valid. Both major parties are grooping for a satisfactory response to the electorate’s changed outlook, following the decisive but subtle realignment of political outlook. Finding the right leadership and voice could advance either party toward majority status. But this said, today’s postindustrial sociopolitical environment makes it exceedingly difficult for any party to establish stable, long-term loyalties across much of the population.

Social Group Alignments

Republicans won the three presidential elections of the 1980s and have lost the two of the 1990s. But while the parties’ presidential fortunes have waxed and waned with the popularity of their candidates and voter reactions to current conditions, the underlying structure of social group support has remained essentially unchanged. The groups that in 1996 were the Republicans’ best had been their best in the immediately preceding elections; the same is true for the Democrats.

Data from the exit polls done by Voter News show how closely Clinton’s 1996 coalition resembled that of 1992 (see Appendix 2). His share of the popular vote was up among most groups because it climbed 6.2 percentage points for the entire electorate, Dole’s popular vote percentage, compared to George Bush’s, rose 3.4 points, and Ross Perot’s declined 10.4 points. Perot’s support base strayed massively but in even proportions across the various groups (Appendix 3). His 1996 support was 11 points down among whites, who had given him a whopping 20 percent in 1992, down 3 points among African-Americans, among whom he had been extremely weak four years earlier; his support was cut roughly in half in both groups. VNS also found Perot’s 1996 drop-off roughly comparable in each income stratum. In both elections he did better among men than among women and much better among independents than among Democrats or Republicans; he lost support between 1992 and 1996 in similar proportions in these groups.

Clinton made a big gain among voters of Hispanic background—presumably in reaction to highly publicized, Republican-led efforts on immigration reform, such as that by Governor Pete Wilson in California. The president strengthened his position
Race, Region, and Religiosity

The racial background of voters, the region in which they live, and the extent of their religious participation have become important factors in the postindustrial party system. The most obvious of these factors is the influence of economic status on political behavior. The most important of these factors is the influence of economic status on political behavior. The most important of these factors is the influence of economic status on political behavior.

Religion—from Denomination to Religiosity

Historically, the religious factor has been central in American politics—but with religion operating largely as a surrogate for ethnicity in the form of denominational affiliation. Older ethnic groups (in terms of arrival in the United States) tended (outside the South) to back the Republicans, newer groups the Democrats; the former are heavily Protestant, the latter Catholic. This historic ethnic/denominational dimension can still be seen, but it has greatly eroded. In the 1996 vote for the U.S. House of Representatives, for example, non-Hispanic Roman Catholics gave Republicans a small plurality for only the second time in U.S. history. They first did so in 1994. (See Appendix 4.)
TABLE 8

1996 Vote and Political Stance by Region and Religiosity
(in percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Frequency of Church Attendance</th>
<th>Presidential Vote</th>
<th>Self-Described Ideology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clinton</td>
<td>Dale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>58</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>Regularity</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Religiosity, not denomination, sharply divides the electorate. Table 7 shows the extraordinary power of just one measure of religious participation: frequency of religious service attendance. According to the Los Angeles Times exit poll, those who do not practice a religion (9 percent of the electorate) backed Clinton by 62-to-22 percent; those who attend services regularly (once a week or more) gave Dole a large margin. House voting, party identification, and liberalism-conservatism all show this same strong pattern.

The relationship between religiosity and the vote is strong for both non-Hispanic whites and for Hispanic-Americans. For example, 51 percent of the former who rarely ever attend religious services voted for Clinton on 5 November, while just 31 percent of non-Hispanic whites who attend church regularly backed the president. Among Hispanics who rarely attend church services, 77 percent voted for Clinton, while among those who attend regularly, 64 percent voted for him. Among African-Americans, however, there is no relation whatsoever between frequency of church attendance and vote choice or party identification. According to the Los Angeles Times exit poll data, 87 percent of African-Americans who rarely or never attend church backed Clinton—and 89 percent who attend church regularly did so.

Region

A solidly Democratic South was a key component of the New Deal Democratic majority, as it had been a major part of the Democrats' coalition in the preceding Republican era. The South has long since swung Republican, however; and in 1996 it solidified its position as the Republicans' best region. When the election was over, there were fifteen Republican senators from the eleven states of the old confederacy and only seven Democrats; seventy-one Republican members of the U.S. House and fifty-four Democrats; and eight Republican governors compared to three Democratic. In the state legislatures of the region, Democrats still outnumbered Republicans (1,051 to 712), but the GOP has made huge gains since 1992.

At the same time, the Northeast in general and New England in particular have moved steadily Democratic. On 5 November 1996, Massachusetts and Rhode Island gave Bill Clinton his biggest margins among the fifty states, and Clinton's worst New England State, New Hampshire, backed him by a margin roughly 3 points bigger than what he gained nationally. Figure 5 shows the long march of New England and the South away from their historic partisan homes. Table 8 shows the powerful interaction of region and religiosity in shaping the contemporary electorate. The narrower frequency of church attendance categories used in Table 7 have been combined here into three broader groupings: persons who say they never attend religious services or do so rarely, those who attend occasionally (once a month to several times monthly), and those who attend at least weekly. Southerners who rarely or never participate in church services gave Bill Clinton a large plurality in 1996; those who attend regularly backed Bob Dole by a margin of roughly 20 points. Northeasterners who attend church regularly were the only group of regular attendees to give Clinton a plurality, but they gave him a much smaller margin (7 points) than those in the region who do not attend services (a 35-point Clinton margin).

THE GENDER GAP—AGAIN

The gender gap has become an important dimension of American politics in the postindustrial era in large part, probably, because of the big growth that has occurred in single-parent families, disproportionately female-headed, and the consequent feminization of poverty. But if gender is now an important discriminating variable—which it was not in the New Deal system—the divide it locates is by no means among the most prominent. Differences separating whites and blacks are, obviously, far larger; and so are many others, including those stemming from religiosity and regional subcultures.12

The VNS exit poll taken 5 November found women giving both Bill Clinton and Democratic House candidates solid majorities; men split evenly in presidential voting and give Republican House candidates an 8-point edge (Appendices 3 and 4). White women backed Dole by an 11-point margin, and white women favored Clinton by 5 points. In U.S. Senate races, Democratic candidates, male and female alike,

typically received higher proportions of women’s than of men’s votes in most states (Appendix 5).

**POSTINDUSTRIALISM’S POLITICAL STATUS QUO**

The 1996 election results were momentous—and in one sense a sharp departure from modern U.S. political experience. Bill Clinton became the first Democrat to win election to the presidency and then reelection since FDR. And the Republicans won consecutive congressional elections for the first time since 1928.

Nonetheless, the continuities evident in the 5 November balloting are in many ways more striking than the above departures. Voters again elected a president of one party and gave congressional majorities to the other, though for the first time this century it was the presidency that was held by the Democrats and the Congress that remained in control of the Republicans. They again signaled a desire to curb the growth of national government, though not to cut it greatly. The social group alignments of the New Deal years have been so altered that “obliterated” is not too strong a verb. Indeed, today’s alignment differs from the New Deal’s more than the latter differed from the preceding Republican era’s. Race, region, and religiosity continued in 1996 to split the U.S. electorate in ways without precedent.

Americans remained remarkably unanchored in partisan terms. Substantial numbers of those who still call themselves party adherents identify with one or the other party very weakly. Regular party identifiers are now too small a proportion for anyone to win the presidency largely on party terms. In this setting presidential elections, especially when an incumbent is running, hinge more than ever on short-term factors such as the perceived state of the economy, together with the comparative personal standings of the main contenders. Bill Clinton won decisively the vote of those uncommitted in partisan terms and thereby gained his victory.*

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* I wish to express my deep appreciation to the following colleagues for their valuable contributions in data analysis and manuscript preparation: Janice Baerstel, Cathy Cohen, Regina Dougherty, Rob Parsons, Marita Simons, and Lynn Zeyvakowsky.
APPENDIX 1

Greater Confidence in Government and Support for More National Government in the New Deal Era

1941
Question: Do you think there is too much power in the hands of the government in Washington?

1954
Question: One problem is keeping any group in the United States from getting too big and too powerful. Where do you feel this problem is greatest today...?

Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, 10-15 April 1941.
Source: Survey by the Opinion Research Corporation, 23 August-3 September 1954.

1960
Question: On the whole, do the activities of the national government tend to improve or worsen conditions in this country or would we be better off without them?

1984
Question: Which one of the statements listed on this card comes closest to your own views about governmental power today?

Source: Survey by the National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago, March 1960.

APPENDIX 2

Views on Role of Government: No Change, 1994 to 1996

Questions: How do you feel about the way the federal government works...enthusiastic, satisfied but not enthusiastic, dissatisfied but not angry, or angry?

1994

1996

Source: Surveys by ABC News/Washington Post, October 1994 and March 1996

Questions: Would you say you favor smaller government with fewer services, or larger government with many services?

1995

1996

Source: Survey by the Los Angeles Times, January 1995.
Source: Survey by ABC News/Washington Post, August 1996.

Questions: Which comes closer to your views: Government should do more to solve national problems, or government is doing too many things better left to businesses and individuals?
APPENDIX A

Democratic Senate Candidates Received Higher Proportions of Women's Votes than Men's
In Most States
(In percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>All Voters</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Gender Gap</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Voting</td>
<td>% Voting</td>
<td>% Voting</td>
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<td>Alaska</td>
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Peace, Interdependence, and the Middle East

STEVE A. YETIV

In the second half of the twentieth century, analysts of Middle East and world politics have focused great attention on the causes and implications of war in the Middle East. By comparison, little attention has been devoted to examining the implications of regional peace. Using a holistic perspective, this article examines the impact of peace on foreign investment in Israel, and in turn on Israel's national welfare and interstate interaction. The obstacles to peace, including the opposition of intransigent actors such as Hamas, Iran, Iraq, and Libya, make such analysis all the more important, as does the potential for increased economic cooperation between Israel and parts of the Arab world.

In his seminal book, *National Power and the Structure of Foreign Trade*, Albert Hirschman offered a classic account of the power implications of foreign trade. Although Hirschman's book has undergone some challenges since its publication, it remains one of the most important books in modern political economy. This article draws on Hirschman's framework and on analysis of Middle East and world politics, not only to examine the likely impact of Middle East peace but also to explore questions relevant to the broader study of war and peace, political economy, and interdependence.

Hirschman identified two principal effects of foreign trade, which he termed the supply and influence effects. The supply effect refers to the valuable goods supplied by trade, which enhances the capabilities of states, and reflects the economic aspect of economic interaction.1 By contrast, the influence effect, on which Hirschman focused most of his attention, reflects the political side of trade. It refers to how economic interaction can establish relationships of asymmetrical

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EXHIBIT D
The 2000 Presidential Election: Why Gore Lost

GERALD M. POMPER

The presidential election of 2000 stands at best as a paradox, at worst as a scandal, of American democracy. Democrat Albert Gore won the most votes, a half million more than his Republican opponent George W. Bush, but lost the presidency in the electoral college by a count of 271–267. Even this count was suspect, dependent on the tally in Florida, where many minority voters were denied the vote, ballots were confusing, and recounts were mishandled and manipulated. The choice of their leader came not from the citizens of the nation, but from lawyers battling for five weeks. The final decision was made not by 105 million voters, but by a 5–4 majority of the unelected U.S. Supreme Court, issuing a tainted and partisan verdict.

That decision ended the presidential contest, and George W. Bush now heads the conservative restoration to power, buttressed by thin party control of both houses of Congress. The election of 2000, however, will not fade. It encapsulates the political forces shaping the United States at the end of the twentieth century. Its controversial results will affect the nation for many years of the new era.

The Shape of Politics in 2000

The Geography of the Vote

Not only two candidates, but virtually two nations confronted each other in the election of 2000. While Gore and Bush received essentially identical support in the total popular vote, they drew this support from very different constituenc-
FIGURE 1
The Electoral Map of 2000

The electoral map (Figure 1) illustrates the cleavage. In carrying the predominance of states (30), Bush changed the landscape of American politics. He swept the interior of the nation, including great swathes of the nation's territory in the South, Border, Plains, and Mountain areas. Gore won in only 20 states (and the District of Columbia), almost all on the geographical fringes of the nation—bordering the Atlantic Ocean (north of the Potomac), the Pacific Ocean, and the Great Lakes.

Reflecting the sharp geographical divisions, which are detailed in the Appendix, the vote varied considerably among the nation's regions and states. While Gore won as much as two-thirds of the vote in New England, he won fewer than one in three in the Mountain states. These differences among the states were considerably more marked than in recent contests.¹

¹ The standard deviation of the Democratic vote was 9.1 in the 2000 election, compared to 7.0 in 1996 and 6.0 in 1992. Two-thirds of the states fall within this range, above or below the national average.

The ballots also revealed a rare instance of the conflict between "big states" and "small states" that had been feared by the framers of the Constitution.² Gore almost won because he carried six of the nine largest states, an advantage of 165 to 78, while Bush carried thirteen of the nineteen smallest, a 54-23 lead. The Texan's dominance in these small states exactly compensated for his loss of the single largest state, California. Even though he accumulated a million fewer votes than Gore (as well as a smaller plurality) in the combined totals of these states, the inherent tilt of the electoral college toward the smaller states brought a draw in this particular matchup.

The geographical pattern of party support in 2000 was quite similar to that seen in recent elections, a correlation of .94 with the 1996 results.³ Gore's support among the states was quite similar to that of Clinton—but it was critically smaller across the nation, a median loss of 5 percent. State size made, the source of Bush's victory was his success in moving eleven states—including Gore's Tennessee and Clinton's Arkansas—that had supported the previous Democratic ticket into the Republican column, adding 112 electoral votes.

The close national division was reflected in some of the states. A shift of merely a quarter of 1 percent of state votes—an infinitesimal national total of 17,000 ballots nationally—would have reversed 55 electoral votes from five states (Florida, Iowa, New Mexico, Oregon, and Wisconsin). Only in these close states, particularly Florida, did votes for the minor candacies of Ralph Nader and Pat Buchanan make a difference—but there they were still an immense influence.

Nader and his Green party won merely 3 percent (2,830,900) of the national vote, far below the 5 percent required to receive federal financial support in the future (his principal goal), even less than the support won by Ross Perot as a third-party candidate in 1996 (8 percent) and 1992 (19 percent), and vastly less than the extravagant attention Nader had attracted in the press. Buchanan did far worse, gaining less than half a million votes (439,000), even though he had over $12 million in federal money, inherited from the Reform party previously headed by Perot.

Despite their small numbers, Nader's and Buchanan's supporters provided the margin of victory for Bush. If Nader had not been on the ballot, Gore would have carried Florida and all of the other close states easily, giving him a comfortable electoral total of at least 292.⁴ If Buchanan had not been a candidate, Gore would have carried Florida and all of the other close states easily, giving him a comfortable electoral total of at least 292.

² This figure is the simple regression of the Democratic percentage of the two-party vote in 2000 and 1996, excluding the District of Columbia. The correlation with the three-party vote of 1996 is .40. Correlation of the 2000 and 1992 vote is .46 for the two-party vote and .61 for the three-party vote.
³ The VNS exit poll, approximately half (47 percent) of the Nader voters said they would choose Gore in a two-candacy race, a fifth (21 percent) would choose Bush, and a third (32 percent) would not vote. Applying these figures to the actual vote, Gore would have achieved a net gain of 26,000 votes in Florida, far more than needed to carry the state easily; increased margins in the other close states; and a net gain of nearly 6,000 in New Hampshire, bringing him to a virtual tie.
the Florida ballot might have been simpler to understand, giving Gore enough votes to win the national election simply by carrying the Sunshine State. Even without Florida, we might speculate—but cannot demonstrate—that an election without Nader would have enabled Gore to campaign in other winnable states (most obviously Tennessee and New Hampshire) and overcome his shortfall of only three electoral votes.

Parties and the Vote

The geography of the election reflected a changing pattern of party loyalties. As the nation endured this odd election at the beginning of the new millennium, major changes in the character of its political parties also emerged.

Two major divisions had structured American presidential elections for much of the twentieth century.¹ During the middle of the century, Democrats dominated, building successive victories on economic and welfare issues and on the heritage of Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal. The major controversies between the parties centered on the role of the national government, particularly its distribution of taxes and benefits—such as jobs, Social Security, and health care—among different groups. Republicans won all but two presidential elections from 1932 to 1964, assembling a winning coalition of lower-income voters, Catholics, union members, blacks, and white southerners.

During the latter third of the century, new issues and new coalitions came to the fore. Cleavages on issues of race, morality, and lifestyle developed alongside the previous divisions on economic and welfare policy. The parties differed on such issues as civil rights and affirmative action, abortion, women’s role in society, crime, and school prayer. Republicans reversed the previous pattern of presidential elections, winning five of the six contests from 1968 to 1988, assembling a different winning coalition composed of higher-income voters, white Protestants from both the North and the South, religious conservatives, and defecting Catholics and union members. Even when Democrats won—in 1976 and in the two Clinton candidacies—their victories were unconvincing.

The election of 2000 merged or obliterated many of these divisions. During the Clinton years, Democrats overcame their losing reputation on moralistic issues, as Clinton became identified with such stands as harsh treatment of criminals (including support for the death penalty) and welfare reform. The president maintained his popularity even after revelation of his sexual immorality, as seen in the failure of the Republican effort to impeach and remove him from office.

In 2000 Republicans also moved away from previous unattractive positions. On the economic dimension, no longer opposed to any government programs, the party under Governor Bush proposed new policies to improve education, expand health care, and add funds and programs to Social Security and Medicare. Still conservative, the Bush Republicans now modified their ideology by proclaiming a new “compassionate” outlook and reduced their emphasis on moral issues, particularly abortion. Without overt change in his pro-life stance, George W. Bush gave only fleeting attention to the previously divisive issue, promising no more than a ban on unpopular and rare late-term (“partial birth”) abortions.

Differences remained significant, but the election campaign was notable for the similarity of the issues stressed by the candidates and for the disappearance of older conflicts. A generation earlier, in 1972, Republicans had accused Democrats of favoring “acid, amnesty, and abortion”; that bitter campaign would be later remembered for Richard Nixon’s efforts to destroy his opponents and subvert the Constitution in the Watergate break-in.

The old controversies were gone or had become consensual policies. Drug usage was condoned, and abortion was ignored. Vietnam, the conflict that had defined a generation and its lifestyle, was now a country to be visited by Clinton, once a draft resister and now the U.S. commander-in-chief. Emblematic of the change was that the Democratic party, once the arena for the greatest antiwar protests, nominated Gore, a volunteer who had actually served briefly in the war zone, while the Republicans nominated Bush, who had found a safe billet in the Texas Air National Guard.

There remained a basic philosophic difference between the parties and their leaders. Republicans’ instincts still led them first to seek solutions through private actions or through the marketplace, while Democrats consistently looked for government solutions. That difference was evident in such fundamental questions as allocation of the windfall surpluses in the federal budget: Bush sought a huge across-the-board cut in taxes, while Gore proposed a penalty of new government programs and tax cuts targeted for specific policy purposes.

Similar differences could be seen on other issues emphasized during the campaign. To improve education, Bush relied on state programs and testing, while hinting at his support for government vouchers that parents might use for private-school tuition; Gore proposed new federal programs to recruit teachers and rebuild schools. To provide funds for Social Security, Bush proposed that individuals invest part of their tax payments in private investment accounts, while Gore would transfer other governmental funds into the Social Security trust fund. This philosophical difference could be seen even in the most intimate matters, such as teenage pregnancy, where Republicans relied on individual morality, namely, sexual abstinence by adolescents, while Democrats supported sex education programs, which might include distribution of condoms in public schools.

By 2000 the parties’ supporters had become philosophically coherent as well. Fewer than one of every thirteen Republicans considered themselves lib-

eral, and fewer than one in eight Democrats were conservatives. Voters also responded to the ideological difference between the parties: four out of five self-identified liberals voted Democratic, and the same proportion of conservatives voted Republican, often giving greater weight to ideological preference than to traditional party loyalty (see Table 1). The partisan contest of 2000 was also an ideological conflict.

Social Forces and the Vote

In addition to geographical and party differences, the American electorate was polarized along social lines, as detailed in Table 1. These cleavages can be seen in the difference in the Gore vote between the following paired groups (the first group being more Democratic):

- the poor and the rich, a 14-point difference;
- single and married people, 13 points;
- working women and homemakers, 14 points;
- gays and straight, 23 points;
- nonbelievers and frequent churchgoers, 25 points;
- Catholics and white Protestants, 15 points;
- Jews and white Christians, 40 points;
- other voters and the religious right, 36 points;
- residents of large cities and rural areas, 34 points;
- high school dropouts and college graduates, 14 points; and
- union members and nonmembers, 18 points.

Only age, of the major social categories, did not show significant differences between groups. In 2000 the United States was not unified. Most prominent, though unfortunately not novel, was the "racial gap" between blacks' support for Gore and whites' for Bush (a 48-percentage-point difference in the vote of the two races). While the white vote for Gore was similar to that for Clinton, African-American support for the Republican candidate was lower than in any election since the 1960s.

Bush had made some efforts to gain more minority votes, giving blacks prominent roles in the party convention and arguing that some of his programs, such as educational testing, would particularly benefit this group. These appeals turned out to be fruitless, however, given the Republican's conservative position on welfare issues and affirmative action. Black groups, such as the N.A.A.C.P., mounted a multimillion-dollar campaign to increase minority turnout, expecting that the mobilized voters would be Democrats. Although

the black proportion of the electorate remained essentially unchanged at 10 percent, these efforts probably were decisive in close northern states. It would require more than televised black faces to win black voters for the Republicans.

Other ethnic minorities also supported the Democrats. Both parties paid special attention to Latinos, knowing that they would soon form the largest non-white group in the population and that they already comprised a significant voting bloc in critical states such as California, Texas, and Florida. Despite Bush's command of Spanish and past Hispanic backing in Texas, the Republican fell short, prevailing only among Cuban Americans in Florida. Two-thirds of Latinos voted for Gore, a proportion similar to that won by Clinton. In a possible portent of the future, Asian Americans, still a small group among voters, changed to a pro-Democratic vote from 1996, when a plurality voted for Dole.

In recent elections, much attention has been paid to the differing attitudes and votes of women and men, the vaunted "gender gap." That gap should not be exaggerated, because much of the difference can be explained simply as a reflection of party loyalties—both sexes overwhelmingly voted for the candidate of their preferred party. Democratic women and men both voted for Gore (by 87 percent and 85 percent), just as Republican women and men both voted for Bush (by 90 percent and 92 percent). Sex differences became significant only among Independents, where Gore led by 12 points among women, offset by Bush's 9-point lead among men.

Still, the gender gap was evident again, but different from the past, in the presidential vote of 2000. While Bush won 53 percent among men, he gained only 43 percent among women. Gore's opposite advantage among women (54 percent to 42 percent) was insufficient to overcome the Texas governor. This "gap" between the sexes was the largest difference in the twenty years since it first became apparent.

The Bush advantage was even greater among whites. White women divided their vote evenly between Bush and Gore, eliminating any net effect on the total vote. White men voted 5-3 in favor of Bush. This Republican strength among white males was the overwhelming gender influence in the election, probably gaining Bush a net advantage of over 4 million votes.

An explanation for this difference is not easy to find. The simplest reason would be issues with particular impact on one sex or another, with abortion the

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4 These are approximately 39.4 million white male voters: 100 million persons voted, 82 percent are white, and 48 percent of the whites are males (100 × .82 × .48 = 39.4). There is no net candidate advantage among white women. Applying the 12 point white gender difference to the male vote, the net advantage to Bush is 4.7 million votes (39.4 × .12). Among blacks, there is overwhelming support for Gore among both sexes. The gender gap there results in a female advantage for Gore. There are approximately 5 million black female voters: 50 million persons voted, 80 percent are black, and 52 percent of the blacks are females (50 × .80 × .52). Black men voted 63 percent for Gore, black women 54 percent. Applying the 8-point gender difference to the black female vote, the net advantage for Gore is under half a million votes (32 × .09). Combining the races, the gender gap resulted in a Bush gain of over 4 million votes. Calculations are based on the VNS national exit poll.

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Support for Nader was low in all groups, too low for meaningful analysis, and varied little among social groups. He received 3 percent or more in the national exit poll only among 16-29 year-old white men, non-churchgoers, white liberal Independents, and former Perot voters.

This analysis is based on the VNS national exit poll, as published in the New York Times, 12 November 2000, supplemented by data provided by CBS News.
most obvious possibility. But there is almost no difference between men and women on their "pro-choice" or "pro-life" attitudes. Moreover, although attitudes on abortion were mirrored well in the vote, that issue was actually of very little importance in this election campaign.

Issues may have produced the large gender gap in more subtle ways. Gore's policy agenda was a more "female" agenda, in a political rather than biological sense: the vice president focused on questions likely to be of more concern to women because of their social situation. The social reality in the United States is that women bear a greater responsibility for children's education and for health care of their families and parents, and that women constitute a disproportionate number of the aged. This reality was reflected in political concerns, as women saw education, health care, and Medicare as the principal issues of the election. For these reasons, Gore's greater readiness to use government to solve these problems might appeal particularly to women.

A gender gap has two sides, however, and in 2000 it reflected men's preferences even more than women's. Bush's appeal, too, can be found in particular issues. The social reality is that men are more likely to be the principal source of family income and to assume greater responsibility for family finances. This reality was again mirrored in issue emphasis, with men making the state of the economy and taxes their leading priorities, with defense and Social Security of lesser importance.

The gender difference in issue focus was the foundation of gender difference in the vote. Gore was favored among voters who emphasized the "female" issues of health care (an advantage of 31 percent), education (8 percent), and Social Security (18 percent), and Medicare (21 percent). But Bush was favored far more strongly on taxes (a huge advantage of 63 percent) and on world affairs and defense (14 percent), as well as on lesser issues that brought male attention, such as the stereotypically gendered issue of gun ownership.

The Campaign

The presidential race should have been a runaway, according to precampaign estimates. In the end, to be sure, the outcome came down to miscounting or manipulation of the last few ballots. Analytically, however, the puzzling question is why Gore did so badly, not why Bush won.

The economy, usually the largest influence on voters, had evidenced the longest period of prosperity in American history, over a period virtually identical with the Democratic administration. A second predictor, the popularity of the incumbent president, also pointed to a Gore victory, for President Clinton was holding to 60-percent approval of his job performance. In elaborate analyses just as the campaign formally began on Labor Day, academic experts unanimously predicted a Gore victory. Their only disagreements came on the size of his expected victory, with predictions of Gore's majority ranging from 51 to 60 percent of the two-party popular vote.10

The academic models failed. It is simpler to explain Clinton's inability to transfer his popularity to his selected successor. Vice presidents always labor under a burden of appearing less capable than the sitting chief executive, and there is a normal inclination on the part of the electorate to seek a change. Previous incumbent vice presidents, such as the original George Bush in 1988 and Richard Nixon in 1960, had borne this burden in their own White House campaigns, but Gore's burden was even heavier, because he needed to avoid contact with the ethical stain of Clinton's affair with a White House intern, Monica Lewinsky.

The Perils of Prosperity

The limited impact of economic prosperity is more difficult to explain. Although the public overwhelmingly thought the economy was doing well and saw the nation as on "the right track" economically, Gore received little or no political advantage from this optimism. Only a fraction thought he better qualified than Bush to maintain the good times.

There are at least three possible explanations. First, because prosperity had gone on so long, voters may have come to see it as "natural" and unrelated to the decisions and policies of elected politicians. Second, voters might not know whom to praise and reward for their economic fortunes, since both parties in their platforms claimed credit for the boom. These explanations seem weak, however, because two out of three voters believed Clinton was either "somewhat" or "very" responsible for the nation's rosy conditions.

A third explanation, better supported by the opinion data, finds that Gore did not properly exploit the advantages offered by his administration's econ-

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Gender may also have played a role in undermining Gore’s inherited advantage on the economy. Although voters who emphasized this vital factor did favor the vice president (39 to 37 percent), he gained far fewer votes (a 15-percentage gain) on the issue than Clinton had four years earlier (34 percent), even though the economy had strengthened during the period. Here, too, as on issues generally, Gore emphasized the “female” side of his policy positions, such as targeting tax cuts toward education or home care of the elderly. He offered little for men, who would not benefit from affirmative action in the workplace or who would use money returned from taxes for other purposes. As a result, he gained far less from men (57 percent) than from women (68 percent) who gave priority to economic issues.

In theoretical terms, the vice president turned the election away from an advantageous retrospective evaluation of the past eight years to an uncertain prospective choice based on future expectations. Because the future is always clouded, voters often use past performance to evaluate the prospective programs offered by candidates, but Gore did little to focus voters’ attention on the Democratic achievements. As the academic literature might have warned him, even in good times “there is still an opponent who may succeed in stimulating even more favorable future expectations. And he may win.”

More generally, Gore neglected to put the election into a broader context—of the administration’s record, of party, or of the Republican record in Congress. All of these elements might have been used to bolster his chances, but he, along with Bush, instead made the election a contest between two individuals and their personal programs. In editing his own message so severely, Gore made it less persuasive. If the campaign were to be only a choice of future programs, with their great uncertainties, a Bush program might be as convincing to the voters as a Gore program. If the election were to be only a choice of the manager of a consensual agenda, Bush’s individual qualities might well be more attractive.

The Democratic candidate had the advantage of leadership of the party that held a thin plurality of voters’ loyalties. His party was historically identified with the programs that were predominant in voters’ minds—Social Security, Medicare, education, and health care—and both candidates were regarded in 2000 as more capable to deal with problems in those areas. Yet Gore eschewed a partisan appeal. In the three television debates, illustratively, he mentioned his party only four times, twice citing his disagreement with other Democrats on the Gulf War, and twice incidentally. Only Bush would ever commend the Democratic party, claiming a personal ability to deal effectively with his nominal opposition.

Gore neither challenged this argument, nor attacked the Republicans who had controlled Congress for the past six years, although promising targets were available. The vice president might have blamed Republicans for inaction on his priority programs, such as Social Security and the environment. He might have drawn more attention to differences on issues on which his position was supported by public opinion, such as abortion rights or gun control. He could have even revived the impeachment controversy, blaming Republicans for dragging out a controversy that Americans had found wearying and partisan. The public had certainly disapproved of Clinton’s personal conduct, but it had also steadily approved of the president’s job performance. That distinction could have been the basis for renewed criticism of the Republicans. Yet Gore stayed silent.

Gore’s strategy was based on an appeal to the political center and to the undecided voters gathered there. At the party convention and in his acceptance speech, he did try to rouse Democrats by pointing to party differences—and the effort brought him a fleeting lead in opinion polls. From that point on, however, moving in a different direction, he usually attempted to mute those differences, and his lead disappeared. If there were no important differences, then Democratic voters had little reason to support a candidate whose personal traits were less than magnetic. Successful campaigns “temporarily change the basis of political involvement from citizenship to partisanship.” By underplaying his party, Gore lost a vital margin of votes, as more Democrats than Republicans deserted.

Turnout may have made the difference in the election results. Nationally, there was only a small increase over the last election in voter participation, to 51 percent of all adults, although there were considerable increases in the most contested states, particularly by union household members and African Americans. Usually, the preferences of nonvoters are not much different from those who actually cast ballots, but the 2000 election may have been an exception to that rule. CBS News polls immediately before and after the balloting suggested that, if every citizen had actually voted, both the popular and electoral votes would have led to an overwhelming Gore victory. The nonvoters, how-

13 In the CBS poll released on 5 November, those expected not to vote favored Gore by 42 to 28 percent. In the CBS poll released on 13 November, as the electoral count remained undetermined, those who regretted not voting favored Gore by 53 to 33 percent.

13 Fiorina, Retrospective Voting, 198.
14 My thanks go to Maria Hershby, who provided this information from her computer search of the television debates’ text.
ever, had less information about the election and less confidence in the political system, and they were less likely to see a difference between the parties.\textsuperscript{21}

A stronger Gore effort to explain these differences and to bring those uncommitted citizens to the polls might have made the election result quite different. A greater emphasis on the economic record of the administration might have been particularly important in spurring turnout among lower-income voters, who voted in considerably lower proportions than in recent elections.\textsuperscript{22}

\textbf{Issues and Character in the Campaign}

In 2000 the campaign was sharply contested, but reasonably civil—until the postelection period. Attacks abounded, but they focused on real issue differences between Gore and Bush, as each contestant worried over the public's declared aversion to personal, negative campaigning.

Bush is credited with a skillful campaign, but this judgment may be nothing more than the halo effect of eventually being the winner. Actually, Bush was criticized for his campaign both at its beginning and when he faced defeat during the recount. Moreover, the exit polls indicated that those who made up their minds later in the campaign were more likely to vote for Gore, despite his defective strategy, than for the presumptively better campaigner, Bush. Overall, in fact, the campaign seemed to have had very little effect. Once the nominating conventions concluded, Bush and Gore were tied at the outset of the active campaign on Labor Day, and they remained tied on the day of the ballots—

\begin{table}
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|l|}
\hline
\textbf{Topic} & \textbf{Bush} & \textbf{Gore} \\
\hline
Foreign and Defense Policy & 3 & 2 \\
Diplomacy & 2 & 1 \\
Military defense & 3 & 2 \\
Domestic issues & 8 & 10 \\
Education/family policy & 1 & 3 \\
Health care & 5 & 5 \\
Social Security & 4 & 4 \\
Medicare, prescription drugs & 6 & 1 \\
Crime, gun control, drugs & 1 & 1 \\
Economic management & 1 & 1 \\
Taxes, budget & 11 & 7 \\
Environment/energy & 4 & 3 \\
Social issues & 2 & 3 \\
Morality, pornography, media & 1 & 1 \\
Campaign finance & 1 & 1 \\
Gay rights & 2 & 1 \\
Abortion & 1 & 1 \\
Clinton behavior & 2 & 1 \\
Political music & 3 & 2 \\
Candidate character & 6 & 4 \\
Debate preparation & 10 & 8 \\
No Public Activity & 4 & 4 \\
\textbf{Total} & 64 & 64 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Issues in the Campaign of 2000 (Days Emphasizing Designated Issues)}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{21} Reported by the Vanishing Voter Project of Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government (www.vanishingvoter.org), November 2000.
\textsuperscript{22} A minority of the voters (47 percent) had annual family incomes below $50,000, compared to 61 percent in 1996 and 68 percent in 1992. This change is far greater than the growth in income during those years.

and beyond. The lack of substantial change is seen in the track of the polls, as shown in Figure 2.

Specific events, such as the television debates, probably changed opinion from day to day, as indicated by the incessant polls, but they are probably given exaggerated importance. Bush made some errors in language, and Gore was not a model of etiquette. Gore could have been more vivacious in appearance, and Bush could have been more humble in demeanor. In the overall campaign, however, voters focused on the central decisions—the direction and leadership of their nation in the new century.

No single issue dominated the campaign. Education, health care, Medicare and Social Security, defense, the federal budget, and taxes were among the priority issues for the voters, but none focused the voters' minds in the way that the economy had done in the Clinton elections.

Both Gore and Bush talked about these issues and each gave considerable attention to the same issues, enabling the voters to make a reasoned choice between the two candidates (see Table 3). Bush apparently won on important elements of the issue debate. A slightly greater proportion found that he shared their general view of government (51 percent compared to 47 percent). More
specifically, voters tended to prefer the Republican's plan for across-the-board tax cuts and his proposal to allow individual investment of Social Security taxes.

When voters evaluated the candidates on Election Day, they took two different approaches. On most issues, Gore was preferred. On seven possible issues, Gore won the votes of more voters who emphasized five of them. Bush was seen as better only among those who were primarily concerned with taxes and world affairs, the latter reflecting men's concern with military defense.

When it came to individual character traits, however, Bush was far superior on most traits, particularly honesty and strength of leadership. He was also viewed as less likely "to say anything to get elected" and less prone to engage in unfair attacks. These individual characteristics are relevant to the conduct of the presidency, and voters should not be denigrated because they used these standards at the ballot box. On the other hand, voters gave little stress to Bush's greater "likability," a criticism of little relevance to governance. Ultimately, his perceived character traits carried the day for the governor (see Table 4).12

The calculation for the last column is a simple multiplication of the percentage of all responses giving the specific issue or trait by the percentage in that group voting for a particular candidate. Since all respondents did not answer these questions, the resulting figures are then normalized to a base of 100. For example, 18 percent cited the economy and jobs as the most important issue, 59 percent of this group voted for Gore, and all responses summed to 88 percent. The contribution to the Gore vote then = .18 \times .59 = .11. Nader's appeal was spread across many issues and traits, with some particular appeal on the foreign policy issues, probably trade, and his presumed daring quality.

The vote showed significant shifts from 1996 (see Figure 3), working to Bush's advantage. There was more party switching by former Clinton supporters than by former Dole supporters, and previous backers of Perot also moved more heavily toward the Republicans.

The Clinton scandal probably had some effect on these patterns, giving more prominence to character traits and providing more reason for party switching. Although most of the country gave little weight to the Lewinsky affair, a fourth did find it "very important." Majorities of voters continued both to praise Clinton's job performance and to disapprove of his personal behavior. A particularly important group was made up of those who combined these two attitudes, a fifth of the electorate. Although these voters strongly supported Gore (by 63 percent to 35 percent for Bush), that was still a smaller vote harvest than Gore might have reaped in an electoral field uncluttered with Clinton's wild oats. Among these ambivalent voters, Gore lost 15 percent of former Clinton supporters, not a large number but enough (2 percent of the national total) to be the decisive difference in the electoral standoff. The election carried implications for the parties beyond the confusing and close results of 2000. Both could read the returns as encouraging portents for the future. The Republicans had won control, however narrow, of all branches of the government. The congressional revolution of 1994, which ended four decades of Democratic control, was maintained into a fourth Republican term.
They would hold the White House for four years, and could fill the three likely vacancies on the Supreme Court. The public was more conservative than liberal and more supportive of the party's call for reduced government. If prosperity held, the ranks of upper-income voters and the entrepreneurial spirit would grow.

Democrats could also find comfort. The plight of Bush's minority victory and the ballot recounts might enfeeble his administration and provide an immediate platform for the Democratic party's return to power in 2002 and 2004. The population was increasingly diverse ethnically, and the demographic growth among Latinos, African Americans, and Asian Americans was likely to bolster Democratic ranks. Its modernist cultural values, including gender equality, were increasingly shared throughout the nation. The union movement had revived and had demonstrated skill and unity in mobilizing its members. The nation was divided in 2000, but Democrats could hope to revive and thrive in the future.

The Outlook for American Politics

The long election of 2000 eventually settled the primary question, the identity of the new president. Yet it raised new issues, even fundamental questions about the effectiveness and legitimacy of American institutions.

The Presidency

President George W. Bush enters the presidency without any mandate and with half of the nation questioning his legitimate title to the White House. He shares power with a Congress essentially evenly divided between the parties, and he will confront the bitterness of disappointed Democrats. The public, now more knowledgeable and more cynical about political maneuvering, provides no clear policy direction for governing a divided nation.

Still, the government will function. Even though the president had only half the votes, he has all of the executive power. His predecessor, Clinton, also lacked a popular majority yet managed effectively to use the powers of his office—appointments, executive orders, vetoes, budgets, and agenda-setting. The mail will be delivered, the diplomatic corps and the armed forces will be ready to defend American interests abroad, appropriations will eventually be passed.

Perhaps the new president will show unexpected skill in consolidating his opposition and bringing the citizenry together on a moderate agenda. Perhaps he will develop a personal magnetism to inspire public enthusiasm, a quality unseen in either candidate during the campaign. More likely is failure to innovate solutions to national problems and continued deadlock on such issues as health care, Social Security, campaign finance reform, and foreign policy in the post-cold war world. Most likely is a contentious election in 2004, when the incumbent president will try to defend his questionable title to office.

The election result will reinforce the recently diminished status of the presidency. With the ending of the cold war, foreign policy became less of an immediate concern for the nation. The institutional effect was to decrease the significance of the president, the principal officer of foreign policy. Economic prosperity has had a similar effect. With no apparent need for government intervention to maintain employment and growth, the economic leadership of the president has become less critical. Instead, the vital decisions seem to be those of the unelected Federal Reserve Board, whose chair, Alan Greenspan, is often given the most credit for the long-term boom.

In addition to these general impersonal influences, Clinton weakened the moral standing of the presidency by his personal conduct, and the office was further diminished by the Republican impeachment and its focus on Clinton's salacious affair. The presidency has been a powerful position because it combines the "dignity" of a head of state with the "efficiency" of a head of government. Losing much of the majesty of the office also means a partial loss of its utility.

Because of the Clinton-Lewinsky-impeachment controversy, the personal traits of the next president became an important element in the 2000 election, and this was a principal source of Bush's appeal. The nation now may regain ritualistic "dignity and honor" in the White House, as both candidates pledged. It is less likely, however, to regain the political advantages of a strong presidency—national unity, policy leadership, and inspiration to great goals.

The Electoral College

The election vindicated the genius of the seemingly plodding institutions of the American republic, the Constitution, and particularly the electoral college. The Framers had devised the electoral system for an age in which transportation and communication were slow, but it served the country well in a time of jet planes and e-mail. By providing a long interval between the popular vote and the meeting of the electors, the system provided time to count and recount votes, to argue and settle lawsuits, to begin cooling passions, and to allow a degree of routine transition to a new administration.

Those advantages should be kept in mind and in the inevitable consideration of changes in the electoral college. If the present system were changed, politics would change, as campaigners altered their techniques and redirected their efforts, and we cannot predict all of the consequences. We can, however, make some estimates of the political impact.

[See Judith Best, The Choice of the People? (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1996) for elaboration of the competing arguments and proposals.]


The most obvious change would be to abolish the electoral college altogether and to choose the president by direct popular vote. In 2000 the result would have been a narrow Gore victory. Realistically, this change is unlikely to pass the difficult barriers to constitutional amendment, since the present system works to the advantage of small states, which could prevent an amendment from passing the Senate or the state legislatures.

If adopted, however, this new system would have its own problems. In a close election such as 2000, recounts would surely be demanded throughout the nation. The clumsy election administration evident in Florida is not unique; defects exist in every state and county. A difference of only a hundred votes per county—as little as one vote in every other precinct—would have reversed the results in 2000, so partisans would be mining every possible vein of new votes. A national recount would mean that the extended delays already experienced in the one state would be replicated everywhere, making it unlikely that America would have a president clearly accepted in time for the inauguration.

A frequently heard proposal for change within the electoral college is to alter the means of choosing the electors within the individual states, which could be done simply by state legislatures without amending the U.S. Constitution. Imitating the system presently used in Maine and Nebraska, one elector could be awarded to the leading presidential candidate in each congressional district (corresponding to the members of the House), and two (corresponding to the state's senators) could be awarded to the statewide winner. One immediate effect would be to extend the partisanship of congressional redistricting, known as gerrymandering, to the presidential election.

In 2000 the result of this system would probably be a clear Bush victory, despite his minority in the country. Assuming the presidential vote had followed that for the House, Bush would win 222 votes from the individual congressional districts where Republicans won House seats, and he would add 60 votes from the 30 states he captured. This total of 282 electoral votes would be an even greater distortion of the popular vote than the actual results in the election.

Another proposal that would divide the electoral college vote of each state in proportion to the popular vote in each state, rather than awarding blocs on the winner-take-all system. In 2000, a proportional division would have led to an even closer result, in favor of Bush, than the actual count: Bush would have received 262.6 electoral votes, Gore 261.4, and Nader 13.8. The proportional system would have made Bush the president with neither a majority nor a plurality of the popular vote. This result would again evidence the tilt of the electoral college toward the small states, but it would certainly not reflect the total electorate’s preferences any better than the present system.

Any change other than direct popular vote would lack democratic legitimacy, but the direct vote would suffer such great problems in operation that it is unlikely to be adopted. Perhaps the only change that can be easily made is to abolish the actual position of elector—to avoid the possibility of “faithless” electors—and simply award the votes mathematically. A minimum and necessary statutory change would provide a better and uniform system of electoral administration under federal law.

Restoring Legitimacy

Beyond the presidency, the election of 2000 has raised troubling questions about the stability of American government generally. In the heat of the recount controversies, the integrity of the entire electoral process was questioned. Both the Gore and Bush camps saw the opposition as preparing a “legal coup d’etat.” Party competition was denigrated as illegitimate opposition, directly contradicting the basic premise of a healthy democracy.

Democrats saw ballot manipulation in the actions of the Florida secretary of state—who was characterized as a “Soviet commissar”—and in the counting of overseas ballots. Republicans attacked the courts for “legalistic” interpretations of statutes, although courts are precisely designed for such work. Demonstrators attempted, with some apparent success, to disrupt the recount in Miami. A leading conservative intellectual found a “constitutional crisis... preferable to supreme yielding to an imperial judiciary.” In keeping with this defiant attitude, the Florida legislature considered choosing electors regardless of the ballot count, and congressional Republicans prepared plans to count the electoral vote for Bush and Cheney whatever the reported tallies.

The institutions of American democracy were eventually vindicated, but the threats themselves are very worrisome. Safety came without much help from politicians who might have acted as statesmen. The art of politics, as eloquently stated by James Madison, is to reconcile the competitive “impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the right of other citizens” in a way that promotes “the permanent and aggregate interests of the community.” This vital task is entrusted to elected representatives, “whose wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country, and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations.” These qualities were not evident among American politicians in 2000. No major official in either party spoke for any interest other than his party’s victory.

Safety came instead from the American public, who showed remarkable restraint and calm, even as it avidly followed events. America’s “willingness to accept a less than perfect outcome reflects both a realism about the way we run elections and a lack of passion about either candidate.” Even as media pundits and partisan advocates became increasingly antagonistic, the public...
held to two goals—completion and accuracy—and reiterated two basic commands: get it done, and get it right.\(^2\)

The concluding words on the presidential election were spoken long ago, by Benjamin Franklin at the conclusion of the Constitutional Convention of 1787. When a spectator outside asked whether the Framers had created a monarchy or a republic, Franklin replied, hopefully, "A republic, madam, if you can keep it."\(^3\) After the tumult, division, and enmity born of the election of 2000, Americans will need to try harder if they still want to keep their republic.

APPENDIX

The Presidential Vote of 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Electoral Vote</th>
<th>2-party Vote %</th>
<th>Populous Vote (1,000s)</th>
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