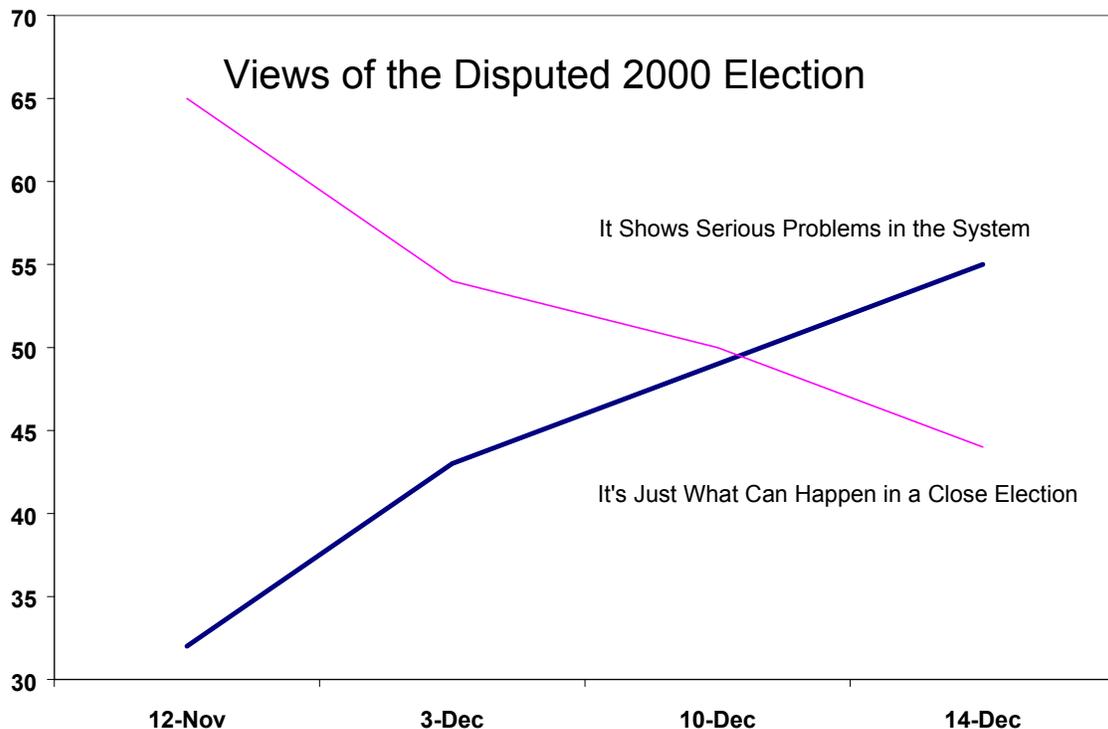


Broad Praise for Gore’s Departure; Next: Bipartisanship, and Election Reform

Al Gore gets far more credit for bowing out of the presidential race than the Supreme Court does for showing him the door. And looking ahead, most Americans urge two remedies to salve the nation’s political wounds: bipartisanship – and election reform.

Nearly three-quarters approve of Gore’s decision to concede the presidential race to George W. Bush, better than 20 points more than the number who approve of the U.S. Supreme Court decision that forced Gore’s hand. More than a third see political motivations behind the majority’s ruling.

For the first time since the vote-count controversy erupted, most Americans now say the issue reveals “serious problems” in the way this country elects the president – up 23 points in the last month. As to a solution, six in 10 say the federal government should establish uniform nationwide voting rules, rather than leaving these to states and counties.



BUSH and the BREACH - Bush, for his part, could help heal the breach by appointing Democrats to his cabinet. An overwhelming 86 percent of Americans say he should do so, including 82 percent of Republicans. Bush meets Friday with Sen. John Breaux, D-Louisiana, who's reportedly under consideration for energy secretary.

More broadly, 95 percent of Americans say Bush should mainly seek compromise between Democrats and Republicans in Congress, rather than mainly working within his own party to implement his policies – a nearly unanimous call for bipartisanship after the divisive 2000 campaign.

OUTCOME – Many of the divisions the election revealed remain firmly in place. Americans divide about evenly between satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the outcome, 50-49 percent. Naturally, Bush's supporters are overwhelmingly satisfied, Gore's not.

But passions are not riding all that high. Twelve percent of Americans are “angry” about the outcome; 14 percent, across the emotional spectrum, are “enthusiastic.” Well over twice as many are in the calmer middle – simply “satisfied” or “dissatisfied.”

Even among Gore's supporters, just 21 percent are angry. (Among Bush's, 33 percent are enthusiastic about the outcome.)

View of the outcome:					
NET	Enthusiastic	Satisfied	NET	Dissatisfied	Angry
50%	14	36	49	37	12

SCOTUS – Fifty percent approve of the Supreme Court's decision while 47 percent disapprove – essentially an even split. Not surprisingly, there's more partisanship here: Among Bush's supporters, 90 percent approve of the ruling; among Gore's, 82 percent disapprove.

Indeed 63 percent of Gore's supporters believe the court's majority ruled in Bush's favor on the basis of partisanship – “because it wanted to help Bush become president,” not “on the law and evidence.” Hardly any of Bush's supporters agree.

There's less partisanship on the other side of the equation – why the court's minority ruled for Gore. Around three in 10 Bush and Gore supporters alike think it was mainly to help Gore; most on both sides think it was on the law. The reason could be simple: It's easier to be magnanimous in victory than in defeat.

	Think the majority ruled		Think the minority ruled	
	To help Bush	On the law	To help Gore	On the law
All	35%	60	29%	61
Bush supporters	7	91	34	59
Gore supporters	63	29	28	61

The high court's involvement in the controversy didn't crush public confidence in the institution, but it certainly didn't help. Twenty-nine percent of Americans say they have a lower opinion of the court as a result of its ruling, about three times the number – 10 percent – who think more highly of it. Nonetheless, nearly six in 10 say their view of the court hasn't changed.

PROBLEMS – Views of whether the election dispute reveals “serious problems” with the nation's election system depend in part, naturally, on which candidate you supported. Among Gore's supporters, 71 percent see serious problems; among Bush's just 35 percent agree.

Nonetheless, majorities in both groups favor standard, federally mandated voting rules in future presidential elections – 53 percent of Bush's supporters support that suggestion, as do 69 percent of Gore's. With the shouting now over, election reform is one place where most people on both sides have found room to agree.

METHODOLOGY - This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Dec. 14, 2000, among a random national sample of 603 adults. The results have a four-point error margin. Field work by TNS Intersearch of Horsham, Pa.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet, at:
<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/PollVault/PollVault.html>

Here are the full results (* is less than 0.5 percent):

1. As you may know, the United States Supreme Court on Tuesday rejected a recount in the presidential election in Florida and said it was too late for a new recount. The ruling means George W. Bush wins the election and the presidency. Al Gore conceded on Wednesday night. Do you approve or disapprove of Gore's decision to concede the presidential race to Bush?

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
12/14/00	73	26	2

2. From what you've heard or read about it, do you approve or disapprove of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision rejecting the recount in Florida?

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
12/14/00	50	47	3

3. As a result of this ruling, do you have a higher opinion of the U.S. Supreme Court, a lower opinion, or hasn't your opinion of the U.S. Supreme Court changed?

	Higher	Lower	No Change	No opin.
12/14/00	10	29	59	2
12/10/00*	15	25	58	3

*As a result of its order stopping the recount, do you have a higher opinion of the U.S. Supreme Court, a lower opinion, or hasn't your opinion of the U.S. Supreme Court changed?

4. Do you think the majority in the U.S. Supreme Court that ruled in Bush's favor did so mainly on the law and evidence in the case, or mainly because it wanted to help Bush become president?

	Mainly on law and evidence	Mainly to help Bush	No opin.
12/14/00	60	35	6

5. What about the minority in the U.S. Supreme Court that ruled in Gore's favor - do you think it did so mainly on the law and evidence in the case, or mainly because it wanted to help Gore become president?

	Mainly on law and evidence	Mainly to help Gore	No opin.
12/14/00	61	29	10

6. Do you think this situation reveals serious problems in this country's system of electing the president, or do you think it's just the kind of thing that can happen in a very close election?

	Problem in system	Happens in close election	No opinion
12/14/00	55	44	2
12/10/00	49	50	2
12/3/00	43	54	3
11/12/00	32	65	3

7. Which comes closest to describing the way you feel about the outcome of this election: enthusiastic; satisfied but not enthusiastic; dissatisfied but not angry, or angry?

	-----Satisfied-----			-----Dissatisfied-----			No
	NET	Enthus.	Satis.	NET	Dissat.	Angry	opin.
12/14/00	50	14	36	49	37	12	1

8. Do you think voting rules in presidential elections should continue to be set individually by states and counties, or should the federal government establish voting rules for all states and counties?

	Rules set by state/county	Rules set by federal govt	No opin.
12/14/00	36	61	3

9. Who did you personally want to become the next president - (Al Gore) or (George W. Bush)?

	Gore	Bush	Neither (vol.)	Other (vol.)	No opin.
12/14/00	46	41	9	3	1
12/10/00*	39	47	9	2	3
12/3/00	43	46	10	*	1
11/26/00	42	43	10	2	3
11/16/00	44	43	10	2	2
11/12/00	44	45	6	1	4

*12/10 and previous: "Who do you..."

10. When Bush takes office in January, do you think he should work mainly with the Republicans in Congress to implement his policies, or work with both Republicans and Democrats to try and reach a compromise?

Work mainly with	Work with both	No
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12/14/00	Republicans 4	Reps/Dems 95	opin. 1
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11. Do you think Bush should or should not appoint some Democrats to his cabinet?

	Should appoint Democrats	Should not appoint Democrats	No opin.
12/14/00	86	8	6

END