

The Unelected President

By Tammy Ballard

Introduction:

Part I

The Honorable President William Jefferson Clinton endured every kind of slander spewing from the American right wing “press” imaginable throughout the full eight years of his presidential terms.

When the “news breaking” story regarding a sexual scandal involving Monica Lewinsky occurred, I laughed, “yeah, right. Like President Clinton is the only guy in the Oval Office that has ever engaged in an extra-marital affair.”

I was not condoning his behavior, but, since when was that a crime?”

I remember having the uneasy sense that someone was going to try to make it a crime because the “press” was making every effort to make sure that we the people knew every little sordid detail.

It certainly was not our business to know, just as it never has been in past administrations.

I was astounded at the astronomical amount of “news coverage” this insignificant incident received.

I realize this was not an insignificant incident to Hillary, but it surely should have been insignificant to us.

After all we have our own everyday problems to hurdle.

Why would we feel the need or the inclination to be concerned with the president’s sex life?

Every hour of everyday, “breaking news updates” on the sexual habits of our president was shoved down American throats.

Why?

I found this distasteful coverage of our president not only to be ridiculous but, the longer this out of control “press” expounded mindless accusations, the more dangerous this folly became.

Why did our “news media” make such a big deal out of an incident that was not threatening the safety or the sovereignty of our nation?

Then my mind wandered back further to Hillary’s health care plan.

What was wrong with Hillary trying to develop a better health care plan for American’s?

She did nothing different then past administrations have done.

Obscure terms started popping out of my television set.

“Corporate America, Corporate Media.”

I don’t know how long this terminology floated through the airwaves before I took note of it, but my ears were full standing on 12-12-2000 when five US Supreme Court Justices allowed George Bush to take up residence at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue without being elected.

Introduction: Part II

The reason I have titled this primer The Unelected President is because many studies of the uncounted and disputed ballots from Election 2000 have taken place.

We now know these studies have revealed that Al Gore was indeed elected by about 500,000 more votes than Bush.

We now know that if the ballots had been counted as required by law, the electoral dispute would not have been necessary.

Only one candidate can be elected to the presidency in America.

Up until December 12, 2000 the elected candidate was the candidate that received the majority of votes.

That candidate was Al Gore.

Introduction:

Part III

In the 50's and through the 60's the evening news meant just that.

Settling in for the evening, families gathered around their brand new, high tech, round screened black and white television sets to listen to and watch the national events of the day.

Some parents fixed the kids a bowl of popcorn and handed them a bottle of White Rock soda to keep them quiet.

Television was a new and exciting innovation.

It did not take much to entertain Americans in those days.

Just the fact that we could see someone on our screen in Portland, Oregon that was in Hollywood California or Washington D.C. was miraculous in and of itself.

The news anchors monologue was generally read from a prepared report, which he read word for word in a monotone manner.

He offered no personal opinions and he did not change his facial expression throughout the whole newscast.

This would be a gruesomely boring news hour in terms of today's demand for entertainment, but it was all very entertaining and fascinating to us.

Not only was it extraordinary at the time, but we were listening to the real news of the day.

No punditry or fanfare was involved.

The anchorman was merely doing his job.

He was informing the public.

I think we now know that there was a lot that we were not told, but at least we were not lied to about what we were told.

I think they had it right.

News anchors could either inform the public, or not inform the public, but at least they did not lie to us.

The spin and fantasy that flows out of today's networks has turned the phrases investigative journalism and news anchor almost into a joke.

I will often use the terms "press" and mainstream "media" in quotation marks.

In general, I am referring to some network and radio broadcast pundits, although, I cannot ignore the fact that a certain amount of the propagandist punditry that is so prolific in America has also found a place in print as well.

Please Note:

All the articles that are mentioned in this primer were acquired from The Internet.

Introduction:

Part IV

The informed reader will watch the events of election 2000 unfold before their eyes, just as I did, off of the Internet.

Although my message is delivered on paper, The reader will view excerpts and highlights from the very articles that have been keeping me informed for almost two years.

Rather than to weigh this primer down with footnotes, I chose instead to bring the source to the reader.

So, sit back, relax and behold some of the most ruthless characters that comprise our very own American populace.

The Unelected President

Chapter 1

I thought I was the only American that felt unease during The Presidential Campaign of 2000.

George Bush ran the worst Presidential Campaign that I ever had the misfortune to behold.

Insincerity blatantly flowed from him with such obvious ease.

He called himself a “uniter not a divider.”

Who did he think was divided that called for a “uniter?”

I guess we now know that America is very much divided, but I did not know that until I realized that many Americans rejoiced on Stolen Election 2000.

I thought that all Americans were united in the belief in the democratic process.

The democratic process, the right to vote and the right to free speech were very old and fundamental values in America up until Election 2000.

Bush’s followers gave me the eerie sensation that they thought they were cheering for a football team rather than a National Presidential Election that would shape the future of America and the world for the next four years.

Watching them cheer for him with such aggressiveness gave me the uneasy sense that there was something about this Republican crowd that was quite different from crowds that had been televised during past Presidential Elections.

If you looked real close, you could see blood in their eyes.

They were that part of American Society that had been Limbaughed to their very core.

Some of us were fighting for democracy while they were fighting for the legitimacy of the installation of this individual into The People's White House. Bush had gotten his slogan backwards.

He should have told us he was a "divider and not a uniter."

He had blood boiling on both sides.

He called himself a "Compassionate Conservative".

What is a "Compassionate Conservative?"

Is he implying that a regular conservative will bomb folks with a thermonuclear weapon and a "Compassionate Conservative" will only use an M16?

The term "Compassionate Conservative" is not only a glossy phrase used for hype and effect, but it is a term that is seemingly used for defense.

Defense of what?

It seemed to me that he was using this obscure term to gloss over something far deeper, maybe something erroneous or cynical.

In other words, what is wrong with being a regular conservative?

During the debate, Bush avoided questions instead of answering them.

His empty rhetoric set off red and yellow lights in my mind.

The "fuzzy math" remark during the debate was the most profound statement I had ever heard flow from the mouth of any politician.

Al Gore was explaining his economic policies to the American people in a rational manner.

He eloquently explained his economic formula in a way that should have made sense to all of us.

I noticed the wrinkle over W's brow, as if he was puzzled.

And then, it flowed from his mouth.

It was amazing.

He shook his head in frustration and said something to the effect that Al's formula was just "fuzzy math."

I could not believe he had made such a ridiculous statement.

How could he call Al's formula "fuzzy math?"

After all, it made sense to me and I am not an Einstein or a mathematician.

After reading about Enronomics, I can now understand why a sensible economic formula would not compute with W.

The Al Gore formula was based on real numbers or projected numbers.

W's concept of real numbers must be figures that have been depleted and then inflated with the push of a pencil.

I could not believe the applause that Bush received from American "media" for his backward performance during that presidential debate.

That is when I noticed it loud and clear, without question, the American "press" wanted Bush to win.

There was a matter of alcohol and drug abuse that was shrugged off, even after public admission of alcohol abuse on the part of Bush himself.

The "media" rode well with his ridiculous buzz- words and sound bytes like a seasoned cowboy riding on a horseback.

I listened to mindless "news casters" tell me how smart Bush was and what a wonderful campaign he was running.

Were they stupid?

Were they just not paying attention to his meaningless rhetoric?

Were they just trying to feed Americans propagandist lies?

As I observed my local "media" twist and turn Al Gore's words, not only totally obliterating what Al had really said, but at some point accusing Al of lying, I opted for the latter.

American "news media" was feeding propaganda to Americans.

Why?

The daily lies coming from American "media" was mind boggling.

I could not have been the only viewer to notice.

Anyone that heard what Al had to say and then witness the "media" spin it's spin had to notice how indiscrete the "media" was in blatant lying.

Did they think we did not notice?

Maybe they did not care if we did notice.

It was probably a little of both analogies.

Some Americans not only did not notice, some sadly did not care.

Election Day finally came.

At last, American's could air our views at the polls.

American's could put this ridiculous "media" spin to rest and elect Al.

Then, without notice, sleaze oozed from Florida.

First the network called Florida for Al, no, it was Bush, no, it was for Gore, no, it was for Bush.

A box of cast ballots from Broward County had disappeared.

That is when the helicopters full of attorneys for both sides emerged.

The Florida State Supreme Court ruled to count the ballots.

The GOP flew a mob to Dade County to stop the counting of cast ballots there.

Scalia said the decision of The Florida Supreme Court would hurt Bush and called The Florida State Supreme Court wrong.

The US Supreme Court interfered with Florida Law and stopped the counts.

Our ballots were put on hold.

My solution was simple.

If Florida was incapable of running a legal election their votes should be excluded.

Not so fast says The US Supreme Court.

American Votes will be excluded and Bush will reside in Our White House and we will be forced to acknowledge him as a President.

I was dumbfounded.

Democracy had been stolen from America with the stroke of the pen from five felonious Judges.

My first reaction was to turn on the computer to try to make sense out of what had just happened.

It was plastered all over the net.

"A Corporate Coup had just occurred in America."

Those obscure terms, Corporate America and Corporate Media loomed in front of me like a big bright balloon.

Republicans spoke the words "get over it," Democrats said "NEVER."

Now I knew what he meant by “Compassionate Conservative.”

They had performed a coup via the ballot box and not via the military.

A bloodless coup was a compassionate coup.

I read on.

Big donors to Bush and The Republican Party: Enron, Exxon, Unocal, GE, and many others.

I read on.

Bush and Family had their Big CEO hands in everything from Big Oil to Baseball Teams.

A Baseball Stadium obtained in a somewhat shady deal involving tax money.

An oil deal with a guy named Baath that involved the Bin Laden Family and Arabian Oil.

Was that Arbusto (Bush in Spanish) or Harken?

The list went on and on.

Shady deals insolvent businesses.

Neil Bush was involved in the Silverado S&L Scandal.

Reagan, Bush Sr. and Iran-Contra.

Cheney and Halliburton.

Each story I read had been well documented at one time or another during this family’s public history.

Poppy Bush, an ex CIA agent.

Osama Bin Laden, an ex CIA agent.

Poppy Bush, The Bin Laden Family and The Carlyle Group.

Poppy, Saddam and an oil pipeline that was built through Iraq.

Bush Jr. gave the Taliban 4 million dollars in American tax money.

This appeared to be a gift to a “religious” group that was halting the growth of poppy in Afghanistan.

I read on.

No, it was not just a gift after all.

Bush delivered this “gift” with a message to the Taliban.

The message went something like this:

We intend to build a pipeline through The Afghan Mountains.

You will comply.

We will either give you a carpet of gold or a carpet of bombs.

The Unelected President

Chapter 2

Stolen Election 2000

A Presidential Election had just been hijacked in America right under our noses. Since when was it ok for The US Supreme Court to tell Americans that our votes don’t count?

Why wasn’t the outrage and audacity of their decision plastered in our “news” headlines and national “news media?”

Why was this outrage so readily accepted by American “mainstream media?”

Other nagging questions still loomed.

Why did American “media” spend eight years smearing our last Elected President?

Why did American “media” use public airwaves to produce an uninformed electorate?

Why did American “media” smear Vice President Al Gore?

Perhaps the most troubling question of all was why did American “media” spend exhaustive hours trying to hide W’s blunders and bad grammar with puff pieces, photo ops and excuses?

Why weren’t the following articles in mainstream “media?”

Greg Palast of gregpalast.com is an investigative reporter.

Some of his stories have aired in The UK on BBC News.

He wrote extensively on the subject of election 2000.

The following is a sample of what he has written regarding the subject:

“THE GREAT FLORIDA EX-CON GAME”
“How the ‘felon’ voter-purge was itself felonious”
Harper’s Magazine

Friday, March 1, 20 by Greg Palast

“In November the U.S. media, lost in patriotic reverie, dressed up the Florida recount as a victory for President Bush. But however one reads the ballots, Bush’s win would certainly have been jeopardized had not some Floridians been barred from casting ballots at all.

Between May 1999 and Election Day 2000, two Florida secretaries of state - Sandra Mortham and Katherine Harris, both protégées of Governor Jeb Bush-ordered 57,700 ‘ex-felons,’ who are prohibited from voting by state law, to be removed from voter rolls. (In the thirty-five states where former felons can vote, roughly 90 percent vote Democratic.)

A portion of the list, which was compiled for Florida by DBT Online, can be seen for the first time here; DBT, a company now owned by Choice-Point of Atlanta, was paid \$4.3 million for its work, replacing a firm that charged \$5,700 per year for the same service.

If the hope was that DBT would enable Florida to exclude more voters, then the state appears to have spent its money wisely.”

The following are a few paragraphs from an article that was written by Greg Palast and Julian Borger:

“Inquiry into new claims of poll abuses in Florida” (by Julian Borger and Gregory Palast) the Guardian (London) Saturday, February 17, 2001 by Greg Palast

“The US civil rights commission was yesterday investigating allegations by the BBC’s Newsnight that thousands of mainly black voters in Florida were disenfranchised in the November election because of wholesale errors by a

private data services company.

Information supplied by the company, Database Technologies (DBT), led to tens of thousands of Floridians being removed from the electoral roll on the grounds that they had felonies on their records.

However, a Guardian investigation in December confirmed by Newsnight found that the list was riddled with mistakes that led to thousands of voters - a disproportionate number of them black - being wrongly disenfranchised.

The scale of the errors, and their skewed effect on black, overwhelmingly Democratic voters, cost Al Gore thousands of votes in Florida in an election that George Bush won by just 537 votes.

Moreover the Florida state government, where Mr Bush's brother Jeb is governor, did nothing to correct the errors, and may have encouraged them.

Under DBT's contract, seen by Newsnight, the company was obliged to check its data by 'manual verification using telephone calls and statistical sampling'.

DBT was paid \$4.3m for its purge of the voters' roll, but company officials confirmed that they did not call voters they had included on their list to check if they had identified the right person."

The following is more from Greg Palast on the subject:

"Florida's 'Disappeared Voters': Disfranchised by the GOP"

The Nation

Monday, February 5, 2001 by Greg Palast

"In Latin America they might have called them votantes desaparecidos, 'disappeared voters.'

On November 7 tens of thousands of eligible Florida voters were wrongly prevented from casting their ballots some purged from the voter registries and others blocked from registering in the first instance.

Nearly all were Democrats, nearly half of them African-American.

The systematic program that disfranchised these legal voters, directed by the offices of Florida Governor Jeb Bush and Secretary of State Katherine Harris, was so quiet, subtle and intricate that if not for George W.

Bush's 500-vote eyelash margin of victory, certified by Harris, the chance of the purge's discovery would have been vanishingly small."

In the following article, Greg Palast and tompaine.com point out that the UK was very much aware of Florida's hanky panky.

Why weren't Americans being told?

"SILENCE OF THE MEDIA LAMBS:" "The Election Story Never Told"

www.tompaine.com

Thursday, May 24, 2001

“Here's how the president of the United States was elected:

In the months leading up to the November balloting, Florida Governor Jeb Bush and his Secretary of State, Katherine Harris, ordered local elections supervisors to purge 64,000 voters from voter lists on the grounds that they were felons who were not entitled to vote in Florida.

As it turns out, these voters weren't felons, or at least, only a very few were. However, the voters on this 'scrub list' were, notably, African-American (about 54 percent), while most of the others wrongly barred from voting were white and Hispanic Democrats.

Beginning in November, this extraordinary news ran, as it should, on Page 1 of the country's leading paper. Unfortunately, it was in the wrong country: Britain. In the United States, it ran on page zero -- that is, the story was not covered on the news pages.

The theft of the presidential race in Florida also was given big television network coverage.

But again, it was on the wrong continent: on BBC television, London.”

In the following article Greg Palast and salon.com try to inform Americans that 173,000 names had been purged from Florida voter rolls as follows:

“Florida's flawed ‘voter-cleansing’ program” - Salon.com's politics story of the year www.Salon.com Monday, December 4, 2000

“If Vice President Al Gore is wondering where his Florida votes went, rather than sift through a pile of chads, he might want to look at a ‘scrub list’ of 173,000 names targeted to be knocked off the Florida voter registry by a division of the office of Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris.

A close examination suggests thousands of voters may have lost their right to vote based on a flaw-ridden list that included purported ‘felons’ provided by a private firm with tight Republican ties.

Early in the year, the company, Choice-Point, gave Florida officials a list with the names of 8,000 ex-felons to ‘scrub’ from their list of voters.

But it turns out none on the list were guilty of felonies, only misdemeanors. The company acknowledged the error, and blamed it on the original source of the list -- the state of Texas.

Florida officials moved to put those falsely accused by Texas back on voter rolls before the election.

Nevertheless, the large number of errors uncovered in individual counties suggests that thousands of eligible voters may have been turned away at the polls.”

All of the stories mentioned above can be found at gregpalast.com.

Robert Parry of Consortiumnews.com reveals the following in an article entitled:

“Gore’s Victory” by Robert Parry (November 12, 2001)

“So Al Gore was the choice of Florida’s voters -- whether one counts hanging chads or dimpled chads.

That was the core finding of the eight news organizations that conducted a review of disputed Florida ballots. By any chad measure, Gore won.”

This article further states as follows:

“With Bush rejecting a full recount and media pundits calling for Gore to concede, Gore opted for recounts in four southern Florida counties where irregularities seemed greatest.

Those recounts were opposed by Bush’s supporters, inside Gov. Jeb Bush’s administration and in the streets by Republican hooligans flown in from Washington. (For more details, see consortiumnews.com stories from ([Nov. 24, 2000](#) and [Nov. 27, 2000](#))

Stymied on that recount front, Gore carried the fight to the state courts, where pro-Bush forces engaged in more delaying tactics, leaving the Florida Supreme Court only days to fashion a recount remedy.

Finally, on Dec. 8, facing an imminent deadline for submitting the presidential election returns, the state Supreme Court ordered a statewide recount of ‘under-votes.’

This tally would have excluded so-called ‘over-votes’ – which were kicked out for supposedly indicating two choices for president.

Bush fought this court-ordered recount, too, sending his lawyers to the U.S. Supreme Court.

There, five Republican justices stopped the recount on Dec. 9 and gave a sympathetic hearing to Bush’s claim that the varying ballot standards in Florida violated constitutional equal-protection requirements.

At 10 p.m. on Dec. 12, two hours before a deadline to submit voting results, the Republican-controlled U.S. Supreme Court instructed the state courts to devise a recount method that would apply equal standards, a move that would have included all ballots where the intent of the voter was clear.

The hitch was that the U.S. Supreme Court gave the state only two hours to complete this assignment, effectively handing Florida’s 25 electoral votes and the White House to Republican George W. Bush.”

www.consortiumnews.com/2001/111201a.html

“So Bush Did Steal the White House” (Nov 22, 2001)

By Robert Parry

“George W. Bush now appears to have claimed the most powerful office in the world by blocking a court-ordered recount of votes in Florida that likely would have elected Al Gore to be president of the United States.”

“A document, revealed by [Newsweek magazine](#), indicates that the Florida recount that was stopped last year by five Republicans on the U.S. Supreme

Court would have taken into account so called “overvotes” that heavily favored Gore.

If those “overvotes” were counted, as now it appears they would have been, Gore would have carried Florida regardless of what standard of chad – dimpled, hanging, punched-through – was used in counting the so-called ‘undervotes,’ according to an examination of those ballots by a group of leading news organizations.”

Parry explains as follows:

Bush lost the national popular vote by more than a half million ballots. The article states that Bush “would have lost the key state of Florida and thus the Presidency, if Florida’s authorities had been allowed to count the votes that met the state’s legal requirement of demonstrating the clear intent of the voter.”

The Newsweek disclosure is a memo.

Parry reveals more about Newsweek Magazine’s discovery as follows:

The presiding judge in the state recount sent a memo to a county canvassing board.

The memo shows that the judge was instructing the county boards to collect “overvotes” that had been rejected for indicating two choices for president when, in reality, the voters had made one clear choice.

Judge Lewis was assigned by the Florida Supreme Court to oversee the statewide recount.

Judge Lewis writes as follows:

“If you would segregate ‘overvotes’ as you describe and indicate in your final report how many where you determined the clear intent of the voter.”

“I will rule on the issue for all counties.”

Lewis’ memo was written to the chairman of the Charlotte County canvassing board.

The memo was written on Dec. 9, 2000.

Within hours after Judge Lewis’ memo was written, Bush succeeded in getting five conservative justices on the U.S. Supreme Court to stop the Florida recount.

Parry states as follows:

“Lewis has said in more recent interviews that he might well have expanded the recount to include those ‘overvotes.’

Indeed, it would be hard to imagine that he wouldn’t count those legitimate votes once they were recovered by the counties and were submitted to Lewis.

The ‘overvotes’ in which voters marked the name of their choice and also wrote in his name would be even more clearly legal votes than the so-called

'undervotes' which were kicked out for failing to register a choice that could be read by voting machines."

Parry describes media mis-information as follows:

"Misguided Articles"

"This new information indicates that the wrong presidential candidate moved into the White House.

It also makes a mockery of the Nov. 12 front-page stories of the New York Times, the Washington Post and other leading news outlets.

All of which stated that Bush would have won regardless of the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling."

"Those stories were based on the hypothetical results if the state-ordered recount had looked only at 'undervotes.' The news organizations assumed, incorrectly."

"In going with the 'Bush Wins' headlines, the news organizations downplayed their more dramatic finding that Gore would have won if a full statewide recount had been conducted in accordance with state law.

Using the clear-intent-of-the-voter standard, Gore beat Bush by margins ranging from 60 to 171 votes, depending on what standard was used in judging the 'undervotes.'"

Parry compares different news versions of the recount story.

The New York Times wrote the following:

"A comprehensive review of the uncounted Florida ballots reveal that George W. Bush would have won even if the United States Supreme Court had allowed the statewide manual recount of the votes that the Florida Supreme Court had ordered to go forward.

Contrary to what many partisans of former Vice President Al Gore have charged, the United State Supreme Court did not award an election to Mr. Bush that otherwise would have been won by Mr. Gore."

Parry writes more on the Times article.

The Times notes as follows:

The examination of all rejected ballots "found that Mr. Gore might have won if the courts had ordered a full statewide recount. ... The findings indicate that Mr. Gore might have eked out a victory if he had pursued in court a course like the one he publicly advocated when he called on the state to 'count all the votes.'"

Parry reveals as follows:

"Bush rejected Gore's early proposal for a full statewide recount.

Bush also waged a relentless campaign of obstruction that left no time for the state courts to address the equal-protection-under-the-law concerns raised by the U.S. Supreme Court in its final ruling on Dec. 12, 2000.”

The article tells us that the Times front-page headline on Nov. 12 stated as follows:

“Study of Disputed Florida Ballots Finds Justices Did Not Cast the Deciding Vote.”

Following are the headlines from the Washington Post:

“Florida Recounts Would Have Favored Bush.”

Parry offers insight to the media spin as follows:

“Spreading Confusion”

“The pro-Bush themes in the headlines and stories were repeated over and over by television and other newspapers, creating a widespread belief among casual news consumers that Bush had prevailed in the full statewide recount, rather than only in truncated recounts based on dubious hypotheses.”

Parry points out that Judge Lewis’s memo indicates it is not clear that the state-ordered recount would have proclaimed Bush the winner.

“It also appears likely that the interference by the U.S. Supreme Court was decisive.

Based on the new evidence, the major newspapers look to be wrong on both these high-profile points.”

The media all but ignored the fact that Gore lost thousands of unrecoverable ballots because of flawed ballot designs and the Florida voter purge in several Democratic counties.

Parry reveals more about the Times report as follows:

“The New York Times also reported that Bush achieved a net gain of about 290 votes by getting illegally cast absentee votes counted in Republican counties while enforcing the rules strictly in Democratic counties.”

“The new recount tallies did not include any adjustments for these irregularities. The news organizations estimated that Gore lost tens of thousands of votes from these disparities.”

Parry correctly states as follows:

“For months, the leading news organizations have been bending over backwards to protect Bush’s fragile legitimacy, possibly out of concern for the nation’s

image in a time of crisis. Yet, whatever the motivation for trying to make Bush look good, the evidence is now overwhelming that Bush strong-armed his way, illegitimately, to the presidency.”

“Bush obstructed a full-and-fair recount in Florida, even dispatching hooligans from outside the state to intimidate vote counters.

Gore pressed for recounts in the courts.

Bush sent in lawyers to prevent the tallies.

Then, after losing before the Florida Supreme Court and the federal appeals court, Bush ultimately got a friendly hearing from five political allies on the U.S. Supreme Court.”

(For more on studies about the election results, see Consortiumnews.com stories of [May 12](#), [June 2](#), [July 16](#) and [Nov. 12](#).)

www.consortiumnews.com/2001/112101a.html

More on the “mob” in Dade County as follows:

“Mob Rule Wins for W”

(November 24, 2000)

“Texas Gov. George W. Bush appears to have sealed his claim to the White House through a premeditated mob action that influenced the Dade County decision to halt a crucial recount.

Egged on by Republican phone banks and heated rhetoric over Cuban-American radio, a pro-Bush mob of about 150 people descended on the Dade County canvassing board Wednesday as it was preparing to evaluate 10,750 disputed ballots.

‘Republican volunteers shouted into megaphones urging protest,’ The New York Times reported in today’s editions. ‘A lawyer for the Republican Party helped stir ethnic passions by contending that the recount was biased against Hispanic voters.’

The protestors carried anti-Gore signs, including one that read: ‘Rotten to the Gore.’ The demonstration then turned violent as the canvassing board sought to go into closed session to begin examining the ballots.”

www.consortiumnews.com/2000/112400a.html

The following Robert Parry article was published on November 27, 2001 as follows:

“W’s Triumph of the Will” by Robert Parry (November 27, 2001)

“Texas Gov. George W. Bush has claimed the mantle of president of the United States after one of the most brazen – and effective – power grabs in political history.”

“The loser of the national popular vote by about 337,000 votes and apparently not even the favorite of the six million Floridians who went to the polls, Bush assured his victory by deploying Republican foot soldiers to Florida and revving up the powerful conservative propaganda machine across the country.

According to the Wall Street Journal, Bush even called to offer words of encouragement to GOP operatives who had physically intimidated the Dade County canvassing board before it abruptly reversed its decision to count disputed ballots and instead cast those 10,750 ballots aside. (For details, see below.)

Now, barring an unlikely court ruling in the weeks ahead, the result of Bush's bare-knuckle strategy appears to be that the will of the American voters has been overturned for the first time in 112 years. The first popular-vote loser since Benjamin Harrison will ascend to the presidency.

In Bush's victory, the Republican Party also cast aside any remaining shreds of the notion that logical consistency has any place in modern politics.”

www.consortiumnews.com/2000/112700a.html

More from consortiumnews.com as follows:

“W’s Bogus ‘Election’” (June 2, 2001)

“In a better-late-than-never look at the mess that was the Florida vote count, The Washington Post discovered what critics of George W. Bush’s ‘victory’ have long alleged – that his 537-vote margin benefited from a host of irregularities, many traceable to his brother’s administration or to post-election Republican maneuvering.”

“The Post’s most important new discovery might be evidence that Bush’s side padded its lead with scores of absentee votes that were cast after Election Day or did not meet legal standards.

Those votes were counted in heavily Republican counties – though not in Democratic strongholds – after the Bush campaign rallied its supporters and the national news media to condemn Al Gore’s campaign for initially demanding that legal requirements be followed.”

GOP operatives and biased media pundits condemned Gore for insisting that these ballots be dealt with in accordance to legal standards.

Many of these ballots came from American soldiers stationed overseas.

The GOP and biased pundits said Gore was unpatriotic.

Gore’s side relented.

The article tells us that the post wrote as follows:

“The result was a rout of the Democrats in the northern counties, where Bush picked up 176 votes that lacked postmarks and other required features.” The Post study found that Bush operatives used a different strategy in counties of south Florida with high numbers of African-American, Hispanic and Jewish voters.

The Post reported as follows:

“Elsewhere, particularly in Democratic counties, canvassing boards saw things the opposite way – as did the Bush forces, who demanded that strict state rules be followed.”

“In overwhelmingly Democratic Broward County, elections officials rejected 304 overseas ballots for various technical reasons, including 119 because they lacked postmarks. Miami-Dade invalidated about 200; Volusia threw out 43 and Orange 117. All three counties voted Democratic.”

The article continues as follows:

“Other Findings”

“In the two-part series (May 31 and June 1, 2001), the Post also reported that:
--At least a couple of thousand voters were improperly removed from Florida’s voting rolls under an extraordinary effort by Gov. Jeb Bush’s administration to purge ex-felons. State officials specifically ordered that ‘false positives’– meaning voters whose names and other personal data did not match those of actual felons – still be put in lists sent to county canvassing boards.

--Irregularities from this felon purge and from malfunctioning voting machines fell disproportionately on African-American voters, who favored Gore by 9-to-1.”
Bush lawyer James A. Baker III complained that Florida’s ballots were repeatedly recounted.

The article points out that the Post study revealed the following:

“18 of the state’s 67 counties ‘never recounted the ballots at all,’ only rechecking the tallies of the original results.

‘To this day, more than 1.58 million votes (or about one-quarter of Florida’s total) have not been counted a second time,’ the Post said.”

“Some county officials blamed the divergent recount procedures on Katherine Harris.

Harris is a Bush loyalist.

Harris provided no guidance on how to proceed.

Gore ‘likely lost about 6,500 votes’ in Palm Beach because of the poorly designed ‘butterfly ballot’ that confused many elderly Jewish voters, according to the Post’s analysis.

In other counties, many more ballots were despoiled by confusion resulting from a ‘wraparound’ ballot developed by Harris’ office, the Post said.

Though the Post series took pains to note that ‘no one has proven intent to disenfranchise any group of voters,’ the study made clear that the cumulative impact of official decisions made both before and after Election Day benefited the Bush campaign, in large part by depressing the African-American vote.”

“The Purge”

“Following up on groundbreaking work by BBC reporter Greg Palast about the felon purge, the Post concluded that ‘hundreds, perhaps thousands, of non-felons in Florida’ were removed from Florida’s voting rolls. ‘The effort was so riddled with errors that a more precise tally will probably never be possible,’ the Post said.

‘But it is clear that at least 2,000 felons whose voting rights had been automatically restored in other states were kept off the rolls and, in many cases, denied the right to vote,’ the Post added.”

The article continues as follows:

Florida requires ex-convicts to petition for their restoration of voting rights. This is an expensive and time-consuming process.

“The Post also noted that ‘the impact of this botched felon purge fell disproportionately on black Floridians and, by extension, on the Democratic Party, which won the votes of nine out of every 10 African-American voters, according to exit polls.’”

Emmett Mitchell was Governor Bush’s aide.
Mitchell headed the Florida State purge effort.

In March 1999 Mitchell sent the following e-mail to Database Technologies, the contractor hired to assemble the list:

“Obviously, we want to capture more names that possibly aren’t matches and let the [county elections] supervisors make a final determination rather than exclude certain matches altogether.” Database Technologies complied with this state order.

“The contractors expressed concern about the obvious danger that the state’s approach would remove non-felons from the voting rolls.

‘We warned them,’ James E. Lee, spokesman for Database Technologies, told the Post.

The list ‘was exactly what the state wanted.’”

The article continues as follows:

“Corroboration”

“The Los Angeles Times reached similar conclusions in a separate report that it published on May 21, 2001.

‘A review by the Times of thousands of pages of records, reports and e-mail messages suggests the botched effort to stop felons from voting could have affected the ultimate outcome,’ the Times reported. ‘The reason: those on the list were disproportionately African-American.

Blacks made up 66 percent of those named as felons in Miami-Dade, the state’s largest county, for example, and 54 percent in Hillsborough County, which includes Tampa.’”

The article continues as follows:

“Blocked Recounts”

A study performed by Miami Herald and USA Today indicate that Gore still might have come out on top, even with the vote suppression, if a full statewide recount had been conducted.

“The Miami Herald and USA Today concluded in May that if ‘overvotes,’ were tallied along with ‘undervotes’ that showed voter intent with partially punched chads and indentations in multiple voting categories – indicating a malfunctioning machine – [Gore would have prevailed by 242 votes](#).

Gore’s lead would have been higher if indentations only for president were counted, too.

Bush would have prevailed in a recount only if all ballots with indentations were thrown out, the newspapers concluded.”

(Miami Herald/USA Today, May 11, 2001)

A comprehensive recount was never allowed.

George Bush’s campaign, aided by Harris and Governor Bush’s subordinates, blocked any chance for such a recount.

“The last chance for a meaningful official recount came on Dec. 8, when the Florida Supreme Court ordered a statewide examination of ‘undervotes’ that had been rejected by vote-counting machines.

But Bush dispatched his lawyers to the U.S. Supreme Court and secured an unprecedented order from five Republican justices on Dec. 9 stopping the vote count. On Dec. 12, the same five justices prevented a resumption of the count or any other steps that might have reduced the inequities in the tally.”

“Election Through Suppression”

“Bush claimed his ‘victory’ and a mandate for his conservative agenda although he had lost the national popular vote by more than a half million ballots and obviously was not the choice of a plurality of Floridians who went to the polls on Election Day.”

www.consortiumnews.com/2001/060201a.html

Robert Parry reveals more as follows:

“The Media Is the Mess” by Robert Parry (July 17, 2001)

“The belated discovery that George W. Bush’s campaign applied two disparate standards for counting overseas ballots in Florida – liberal for Bush strongholds and stringent for counties carried by Al Gore – underscores again the huge advantage that the well-funded conservative news media gives the Republicans. By having a powerful media of its own – from TV networks to nationwide talk radio, from news magazines to daily newspapers – the conservative movement

can give its stamp to events during the crucial few days when the public is paying attention.

By the time, the truth comes out – if it does – it's often too late to change the outcome.”

www.consortiumnews.com/2001/071601a.html

All of the articles mentioned above can be found at consortiumnews.com

Since the time of Mr. Parry's writings, it has become publicly known that Al Gore was elected President of the United States of America in the year 2000.

Using data from revised state totals, the FEC now has the definitive official results of Election 2000.

In the popular vote, Gore beat Bush

50,999,897 to 50,456,002, a margin of 543,895.

Gore had the second highest vote total in history, behind Reagan in 1984.

<http://fecweb1.fec.gov/pubrec/2000presgeresults.htm>

On April 30, 2001 the Nation magazine ran an article entitled “How the GOP Gamed the System in Florida” by John Lantigua.

The article begins with an interesting anecdote as follows:

On July 10, 2000 during his campaign, Bush addressed the national NAACP convention in Baltimore.

He denounced such “new forms of racism” as racial profiling and redlining.

But, while Bush was speaking to the NAACP, the disenfranchisement of eligible voters, especially black voters, was taking place.

Florida State election officials had hired data crunchers.

They used computers to hone in on thousands of voters.

Many voters were purged from the voter rolls for no reason.

Because of a chaotic electoral system, thousands of votes were thrown out because of error prone voting machines and inferior ballots.

About 200,000 Floridians were either not permitted to vote in election 2000, or their ballots were discarded and not counted.

Most of these disenfranchised voters were black.

Lantigua writes as follows:

“The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights conducted two hearings in Florida in January and February to determine why so many Floridians were denied the right to vote.

In a preliminary assessment the commission noted that the Voting Rights Act of 1965 ‘was aimed at subtle, as well as obvious, state regulation and practices’ that could deny citizens the right to vote because of their race.”

The commission found evidence of “prohibited discrimination” in the state’s polling process.

On January 10, 2001 The NAACP and others filed suit against Harris and other Florida officials, charging them with violating the 14th amendment and the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

The suit demands reforms in the Florida electoral system.

Lantigua enlightens us on some Florida history as follows:

The stage for the election 2000 debacle was set by Jeb Bush's unsuccessful run for governor in 1994.

During a debate in Tampa on July 27, 1994 a journalist asked Bush what he would do for Florida's black community if elected.

Bush replied "probably nothing."

Bush said that he favored "equality of opportunity" for all Floridians.

Four years later he ran again.

He was backed by only 10 percent of Florida's black voters.

Lantigua enlightens us on the subject of Governor Bush and his policies as follows:

Bush eliminated most affirmative action programs that benefited women and minorities.

He designed a plan he called the One Florida Initiative.

Lantigua tells us about Governor Bush's initiative as follows:

"That program ended guaranteed minority and female set-asides in state hiring, in the awarding of state contracts (only 1 percent of state spending for merchandise and services went to minority owned firms as it was, according to the Miami Herald) and in university admissions.

Polls had shown that such a move would be popular with the white majority in the state.

Black and feminist leaders called it a betrayal."

Bush would not meet with these leaders to discuss his policy.

Lantigua tells us more as follows:

"Two black state legislators staged a 20 hour sit in at Bush's suite of offices."

Lantigua continues as follows:

"The sit in attracted statewide support from black's, women's groups and other Floridians, forcing Bush to accept a series of public hearings."

Thousands of citizens crowded the sessions in opposition to Bush and his One Florida Initiative.

Black student movements took place.

The GOP majority in the legislature and conservative Democrats passed Bush's One Florida Initiative.

Senator Meek and other African-Americans called for a statewide voter registration campaign.

Their aim was to defeat their political enemies, starting with the Governor's brother.

A spokesman for the movement stated as follows:

"We didn't need George W. doing to the whole nation what Jeb was doing to Florida."

Lantigua explains that the stage was now set for election 2000 as follows:

The black vote went from 10 percent in 1996 to 16 Percent.

About 300,000 more Black Americans voted in 2000 than had voted four years earlier.

Those figures only include those that were allowed to vote.

But, while Black Floridians were registering to vote, state officials were removing other blacks from the voting rolls.

Lantigua continues as follows:

After the 97 Miami mayoral race, the Miami Herald discovered that 105 people had voted despite having felonies on their records.

These people had never received clemency thus according to Florida law they were ineligible to vote.

The election was overturned because of voter fraud.

In the process of the voter investigation, it was discovered that 71 percent of the felons on the Miami County voter rolls were Democrats.

The GOP Legislature passed a sweeping voter fraud bill.

County election supervisors tried to block the bill.

The supervisors said the bill would unfairly thwart citizens from voting and discourage voter turnout.

The bill called for enforcement of an 1868 law that deprived voting rights to all former prisoners who had not received clemency.

Lantigua continues as follows:

"Florida is one of only fourteen states that do not automatically restore civil rights to former prisoners who have completed their sentence and parole."

In order to restore their civil rights Florida's former prisoners are required to petition the Office of Executive Clemency.

The governor and three other members of the Cabinet determine the final decision.

They are all partisan politicians.

Before the voter fraud bill passed, a Democratic African American legislator proposed a bill that would automatically restore civil rights after completion of the sentence and parole.

The proposed bill never made it out of committee.

The article points out as follows:

That lawmaker had reason to worry.

Blacks bore the brunt of the voter purge.

Senator Jones of Miami states the following:

“And every year the Florida legislature is trying to make more crimes felonies.”

“Why? So they can eliminate more people from the voter rolls.”

The senator makes the following argument:

In 2000 a GOP legislator proposed a bill that would have increased the sentence of an individual from 365 to 366 days.

What was this individual's crime?

Taking 2 welfare checks after becoming employed.

The bill was defeated.

“What does one more day accomplish? It makes it a felony, and you take one more person off the voter rolls. That's what. Its been going on in Tallahassee for years.”

Lantigua states as follows:

“By April 1998 the laws and political will were in place to perform a definitive purge of voter rolls.”

The Florida purge list included people who had died, been judged mentally unstable, moved and registered in more than one county or state or had ever been convicted of a felony but had not had their rights restored by Florida's Cabinet members.

The first purge list was compiled by a company known as Professional Analytical Services and Systems.

They used state database.

Their list was error ridden.

The Florida Office of Executive Clemency had no database.

Many former prisoners who had their rights restored appeared on the list of felons who could not vote.

On August 19, 1998 the director of the Division of Elections said that the list was confidential.

She directed county election supervisors not to release that list to the press.

If they had released the list to the press the many errors therein probably would have been uncovered.

In November of 98 the state hired DBT which has merged with Choice Point. DBT compiled one list in 99 and a second list in 2000.

Most of the people on those lists were African American.

DBT received complaints.

Some DBT employees were miffed when confronted by people who had unjustly had their right to vote threatened.

More than a year before election 2000 the list contained thousands of names of Floridians who had never been convicted of a felony or any other crime.

Some conviction dates were in the future.

Thousands of angry voters complained to county supervisors of elections.

The vice president of Choice Point/DBT explained as follows:

A person could be on the list if his or her name, social security number or date of birth closely approximated with a felon.

The vice president said that the problems were caused by loose parameters set by the search.

Emmett Mitchell IV was the point man of the project for the state.

DBT recommended that the parameters of the search be changed.

Mitchell made no substantial changes.

A spokesman for Choice Point/DBT stated as follows:

“After submitting them (changes in search parameters) they were not acted on by the state.”

The spokesperson made an interesting observation as follows:

As election 2000 came nearer, the state asked that the parameters be loosened. Florida’s state officials asked DBT to use its national database to provide the names of felons from other states who might have moved to Florida and registered.

Some of those names came from the 36 states that automatically restore civil rights to former prisoners.

More than 2,000 of those individuals were on Florida’s purge list.

Following public attention to this situation after the election, the state quietly changed its policy.

Lantigua suggests the reading of Gregg Palast article “Florida’s Disappeared Voters” February 5.

Lantigua writes as follows:

“In May 2000 the process went totally awry.”

About 8,000 names, most of them former Texas prisoners who were on the purge list had been convicted of misdemeanors, not felonies.

Lantigua writes as follows:

In the end, out of 4,847 people who appealed, 2,430 were judged not to be convicted felons.”

Upon its contract with Florida on August 14, 1998 DBT promised the state that the lists would be checked, including “telephonic verification of random records.” This promise was omitted from the contract and Florida did not refute the omission.

In 1999, Emmett Mitchell IV told county supervisors not to phone listed individuals, but to send them a letter instead.

Many of these individuals never received a notice that they were on the list.

The Madison County Supervisor commented as follows:

“Mr. Mitchell said we shouldn’t call people on the phone, we should send letters.”

“The best and fastest way to check these matters was by phone, personal contact, but he didn’t want that.”

“We shouldn’t have had to do any of this. Election Supervisors are not investigators, and we don’t have investigators. It wasn’t our responsibility at all.”

Lantigua explains that Mitchell offered his rationale for the loose standards used in assembling the purge lists as follows:

“Just as some people might have been removed from the list who shouldn’t have been, some voted who shouldn’t have.”

Mitchell said that former head of the Division of Elections Ethel Baxter gave her approval of the loose parameter standards used to compile the purge list after she consulted with Secretary of State Katharine Harris.

The article continues as follows:

Purging wasn’t the only method used to thwart the Democratic vote.

Lantigua explains as follows:

“An under-funded election resulted in poor equipment being used in many counties and ill trained and sometimes ill- informed poll workers also kept voters from casting their ballots.”

Months before election 2000 county supervisors had been sending lists of newly registered voters to Tallahassee.

It was very possible that a large turnout would emerge, especially in the black community.

There was chaos in many polling places in every corner of the state.

With about 6,000 polling places in the state, the number of disenfranchised voters is significant.

The article ends as follows:

Florida leaders deny they committed any wrongs themselves.
Florida leaders said they would fix Florida's electoral system.
The lawsuit filed by NAACP "demands that federal examiners oversee elections in specific counties in Florida for the next ten years, including the next two presidential contests, so another election isn't hijacked."
Writes Lantigua.

The following article is from World Socialist Web site and can be viewed at URL <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2001/may2001/flor-m28.shtml>:

"Florida ballot review shows voters preferred Gore"

"Media slants results to favor Bush"

By Fred Mazelis

May 28, 2001.

The article is based on a study that was organized by USA Today, the Miami Herald and Knight-Ridder newspaper chain.

Following is a review of the article:

171,908 ballots were examined.

60,647 ballots were under-votes.

Under-votes are ballots that registered no presidential vote in machine tabulation.

111,261 were over-votes.

Over-votes are those ballots that were disqualified because they were marked for more than one presidential candidate.

Like the reports that were released in February and April, for the most part, these reports are presented in the news media as legitimizing the installation of Bush.

The media has ignored the fact that Bush lost the popular vote by a significant margin nationwide.

Mazelis writes as follows:

"The widespread voter disenfranchisement that took place in Florida continues to be obscured beneath an avalanche of minutiae about various methods of ballot counting."

The article tells us that USA Today points to four possible standards for judging the validity of punch card votes.

Punch cards were used in 25 of Florida's counties in the 2000 election.

According to USA Today Bush would have won under the two standards most widely used.

If at least two corners of a chad must be detached to validate a vote, Bush's lead would have dropped from the official 537 to 407.

This tally would still have awarded him Florida's 25 electoral votes and the election.

By requiring a completely clean punch for the vote to be counted, Bush's lead would have dwindled to 152.

Mazelis writes as follows:

“Under two looser standards, in which ‘dimpled’ but not detached chads are counted, Gore would have won the state by a margin of between 242 and 332 votes.

These figures were used to manufacture headlines suggesting that Bush's occupancy of the presidency was valid and reasonable.”

Mazelis gives us a sample of the headlines as follows:

“Bush Would Win Recount of Disputed Ballots,” said Reuters.

“Bush Still Wins Florida,” reported CNN.com.

“Vote Analysis: Bush Wins, Again,” ABCnews.com declared.

Some reports acknowledged continuing doubt.

“No Clear Florida Winner,” said the Associated Press.

The New York Times ran its story on its inside pages with a one-column headline that said: “Second Review of Florida Presidential Vote is Inconclusive.”

None of the headlines stated what was already pretty obvious before the recount and was in fact confirmed by their own study.

Gore received more votes than Bush in Florida.

The cover up was in.

They did not include over-votes in their analysis.

Mazelis explains as follows:

“Most of the stories grudgingly acknowledged, well into the text, that if the over-votes had been counted, Gore would have won between 15,000 and 25,000 additional votes, leading to a substantial margin of victory in the state.

In most reports this fact was added almost as an afterthought, along with the suggestion that this is of only academic concern, since the Gore campaign never requested a review of these ballots.

The recount ordered by the Florida Supreme Court and halted by the 5-4 decision of the US Supreme Court on December 12 called only for a review of under-votes.

To the extent that the media was forced to acknowledge the huge number of uncounted Gore votes, this was reported in such a way as to blame the individual voters.

‘Florida Voter Errors Cost Gore the Election,’ was the USA Today headline.

Once again, only deep inside the article did the newspaper acknowledge that these errors were largely the result, not of voter indifference or negligence, but of

faulty ballot design and instructions that, intentionally or not, had the effect of disenfranchising less experienced and sophisticated voters.”

Mazelis points to a study of voter patterns as follows:

Anthony Salvanto of the University of California studied the 56,000 “over-votes.” His study revealed that more Democratic voters were led to make errors that rendered their votes invalid.

Mazelis writes as follows:

“Voters who marked Bush or Gore on over-vote ballots (i.e., who marked another candidate as well as Bush or Gore) usually voted for the same party's candidates in other races.

Some 83 percent of over-voters who voted for both Gore and a third-party candidate voted Democratic in the US Senate race, for example.

Only 6 percent of those who over-voted in the presidential race made the same mistake in the Senate election, which was next on the ballot.”

Gore’s name was included on 84,197 of the over-voted ballots.

Bush’s name was included on 37,731 of the over-voted ballots.

Mazelis adds the following:

“The numbers add up to more than 111,261 over-vote ballots because some ballots included the names of both Bush and Gore.

The reason for the disqualified Gore votes was design and instruction.

In Duval County, for instance, including the major city of Jacksonville, voters were shown the first five presidential candidates on one page and another five candidates on a second page.

After the first page they were instructed in writing to ‘turn page to continue voting.’

At the same time, a sample ballot distributed by election officials instructed them to ‘vote every page.’

As a result, there were 21,188 over-votes in Duval County.

This one county had more than one-fifth of the state total of over-votes.

Some 55 percent of the Duval County over-votes included just two candidates, one from the first ballot page and one from the second, indicating that the confusing instructions were the cause.

Most of these invalidated ballots were for Gore.”

Salvanto said, ‘The Duval County ballot alone likely cost Gore the election.’”

The Palm Beach County “butterfly ballot” also had a confusing design.

Mazelis describes it as follows:

“The names of the presidential candidates appeared on two facing pages, and the ballot was designed in such a way that Gore, who was the second candidate listed, was the third hole to punch.

The second hole was assigned to extreme right-wing spokesman Patrick Buchanan, which resulted in a total of 5,237 over-votes for Gore and Buchanan.”

“Once again, a fair vote in Palm Beach County would by itself have given the state's electoral votes to Gore.

A recent study indicated that the butterfly ballot cost Gore at least 3,400 votes because of double punches, and another 2,400 votes that were mistakenly cast for Buchanan.

Even if the ballot review were confined to under-votes, the number of under-vote ballots produced by officials in most counties did not match the totals reported by these same counties immediately after election day.

The numbers matched in only 8 of 67 counties.”

Democrats carried a slim majority in Orange County.

Orange County reported 966 under-votes.

This tally decreased to 639 when the Miami Herald consortium recounted the votes.

Mazelis finishes the article as follows:

“The issues relating to under-votes and over-votes are only half of the story of Florida and the 2000 election.

The vote recounts do not consider the variety of other ways in which citizens were denied the right to vote.

Black voters made numerous complaints of intimidation and harassment on Election Day itself.

Tens of thousands of qualified voters, many of them black, were unlawfully purged from the rolls on the false grounds that they were felons.

(Twenty-four percent of Florida's black men of voting age are, under state law, permanently denied the right to vote because they are felons, even though many have completed their sentences and are no longer on parole).

The network exit polls on Election Day were not mysteriously wrong in Florida, while correct everywhere else.

They accurately forecast that Gore would carry the state, because they did not—and could not—take into account the enormous number of ballots that would be invalidated.”

On July 13, 2001 Paul Lukasiak

Makes his case in an article entitled Evidence suggests ballot tampering in Florida's Escambia County.

The following article was based on a study performed by the Miami Herald:

The Herald's data shows that out of 21,500 absentee ballots cast in Escambia County, not one voter over-voted on any of the ballots by placing marks next to the names of two presidential candidates.

According to the data, 296 absentee voters did place three or more marks on their presidential ballot.

The article makes the following point:

The odds against this occurring naturally are so high that the word “astronomical” is an understatement.

The Escambia County canvassing Board duplicated more than 2,400 absentee ballots that were originally read by machine as over-votes and under-votes.

Lukasiak makes the following observation:

The only rational conclusion is that the duplicate ballots that Escambia created did not reflect what was on the absentee ballots themselves.

The Orlando Sentinel reported that over 10,000 ballots were duplicated in 26 Florida Counties because they were “damaged or defective.”

This included ballots with under-votes and over-votes where “voter intent” could be determined.

Nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ of these duplicated ballots came from Escambia County.

Those duplicated ballots represented more than 11 percent of the absentee ballots cast in Escambia.

The Sentinel reported that “Escambia’s duplicating team of more than a dozen poll workers went to great lengths- working until 2 a.m.-to make sure their absentee voters got a second or third look to have a mistaken ballot corrected and duplicated.”

The Sentinel reported that the duplication was done “with no outside scrutiny.”

The laws concerning duplicated ballots require that when ballots are duplicated it must be done “in the presence of witnesses.”

An optically scanned ballot with marks for two different candidates is not uncommon.

They do occur less frequently on absentee ballots than on ballots cast at the polls when there is no “voter protection” at the polls.

Various factors can influence the rate at which such ballots are cast.

The make up of the absentee pool of voters and ballot design are two such factors.

Even allowing for these factors, the complete lack of “double marked” over-votes is highly suspicious and warrants an investigation.

In most counties there are more “double marked” over-votes than over-votes with three or more marks.

Over-voted ballots in Escambia were exclusively marked three or more times.

Other Florida counties show results that warrant investigations, but Escambia County is unique in that its absentee over-votes were exclusively from ballots that were marked three or more times.

Escambia County spent more than \$500,000 on precinct based optical scanning equipment that had the ability to provide voters with over-vote and under-vote protection.

They did not turn on voter protection at the polls.
They said they did not turn on the protection because they wanted to save money on replacement ballots, which cost .23 each.
That explains why over-vote protection was turned off, but does not explain why under-vote protection was turned off.
There is no cost for new ballots with under-voted ballots.
The ballot would have been handed back to the voter and they could mark the ballot in a way that the machine could read it.
It would have cost less than \$750 for replacement ballots for the 3,201 people that over-voted in the presidential race.
They spent over \$550 on duplicating more than 2,400 absentee ballots.
That does not include associated labor costs.
24.1 percent of Escambia's citizens are African American.
16.6 percent of Escambia's registered voters were black.
Blacks make up 30 percent of the registered Democrats in Escambia and 2 percent of the Republicans.
86 percent of the black voters in Escambia are registered Democrats and 6 percent are registered as Republicans.
During election 2000 there was more than a 10- point difference in the Bush/Gore margin between poll cast and absentee votes.
This is an indication that there were a significantly lower percentage of blacks among absentee voters than among those who cast their votes at the poll.
The Escambia County Canvassing Board knew this.

Lukasiak ends the article with the following argument:

The decision by Escambia County to turn off voter protection at the polls while duplicating over-voted and under-voted ballots must be recognized as a conscious effort to disenfranchise a disproportionate number of black voters.

Charts from the Lukasiak article can be viewed at the back of this primer.

On July 14, 2001 Reuters released an article entitled, "Florida Counted Flawed Absentee Ballots-Newspaper."

The article is based on the New York Times study of Florida's absentee ballots. Following are some excerpts from that article:

The article tells us that the New York Times reported that Florida election officials were pressured by Republicans after election 2000 to accept hundreds of overseas absentee ballots that did not comply with Florida's election laws.

The Times studied 2,490 overseas ballots.

680 of the ballots the Times studied were questionable.

The flawed ballots included ballots without postmarks, or postmarked after the election.

Some lacked witness signatures.

Some were mailed from the USA.

Some of the flawed ballots were received from voters who voted twice.

The article points out that the Times investigation gathered copies of most of the overseas ballot-envelopes that arrived after Nov. 7, 2000.

They stored the information in a database for analysis.

The article explains that “thousands of pages of election documents and canvassing board meeting transcripts were examined.

More than 300 voters in 43 countries were interviewed, the report said.”

The article continues as follows:

“SIMILAR DEFECTS TREATED DIFFERENTLY”

The Times report stated as follows:

“Bush counties were four times as likely as Gore counties to count ballots lacking witness signatures and addresses.”

The Reuters article continues as follows:

“Of the 680 flawed ballots, 344 were found to lack evidence they were cast on or before Election Day and instead had late, illegible or missing postmarks, while 183 ballots carried US postmarks.

There were 96 ballots that lacked the required signature or address of a witness, while 169 ballots were cast by unregistered voters, were unsigned or had not been requested, as required by federal law. Five ballots were received after the Nov. 17 Florida State deadline and 19 voters cast two ballots, both of which were counted.”

Many of the ballots had multiple flaws.

“GOP FOCUS ON COUNTIES WITH MILITARY VOTERS”

The article explains that according to the study, the GOP’s aim “was to count the maximum number of overseas ballots in counties won by Bush, particularly those with a high concentration of military voters, while seeking to disqualify overseas ballots in counties won by Gore.”

Judge Ann Kaylor is the chairwoman of the Polk County canvassing board.

The article writes as follows:

(Kaylor) “Told the Times the combination of GOP pressure and court rulings caused it (Polk County) to count some ballots that would probably have been considered illegal in past years.”

Kaylor makes the following remarks:

“I think the rules were bent.” ‘Technically, they were not supposed to be accepted. Any canvassing board that says they weren’t under pressure is being less than candid.”

On July 15, 2001 the Los Angeles Times ran an article that had been published in The Nation entitled "Absentee Vote Did it for Bush."

Richard A. Serrano, Times Staff Writer

Following are excerpts from that article:

"Election: Gov. Jeb Bush's letter helped provide the edge. But critics cry foul over its 'comfort' message and an image of the Florida State seal."

Florida's Governor Bush wrote a letter to Republicans, urging them to "vote from the comfort of your home."

The article tells us that the letter "was superimposed over what appeared to be an image of the state seal."

The article points out that a study showed that about 700,000 Floridian's voted absentee.

The article explains that George Bush received about 125,000 more absentee votes than Al Gore.

The Democrats say the letter "took unfair advantage of both the governor's office and the absentee voting process," the article says.

Florida law specifies that the only time voters can vote absentee is if they can't get to the polls.

The governor's letter did not mention that but the absentee ballot application that came with it did.

Florida's law forbids using the state seal for partisan purposes.

The article continues as follows:

"Two civil suits were filed challenging the Republican absentee voter drive. Both were dismissed, and one of the judges suggested that criminal prosecution might have been more appropriate. Local prosecutors took no such action."

"Florida's GOP spent \$500,000 producing the letter and mass mailing it to Republican voters. The envelopes urged voters 'Please open immediately....Important message from Governor Jeb Bush enclosed.' Next to that was the headline 'Vote by Mail'; next to that, a picture of a mail box.

The letter over Jeb Bush's signature was titled: 'From the Desk of Governor Jeb Bush; Vote From the Comfort of Your [Home](#).'"

Statements made by Governor Bush in his letter as follows:

"Dear Fellow Republican."

"It has been an exciting year in the state of Florida."

"You may vote early by requesting a mail-in ballot by using the request card attached."

The card informed the voter that the undersigned could not go to the polls on Election Day.

“Simply sign the card, provide the last four digits of your Social Security number, as required by law and mail it in today.”

“Within a few weeks you will receive your ballot material. You may then vote from the comfort of your own home.”

On Oct 20, 2000 The Democrats filed suit.

They said the governor misused the state seal.

They wanted the governor to apologize.

On Nov. 3, 2000 a Leon County judge dismissed the suit.

The judge said that citizens did not have a right to disenfranchise other voters.

The judge suggested that a criminal law might have been broken because of the illegalities of using the state seal for political purposes.

Bush aides said that Bush did not know that the state seal would be used.

An attorney defending Governor Bush (who later defended George Bush during the recount) said it was not the real state seal.

A Florida citizen filed suit on Nov. 22, 2000.

The citizen stated as follows:

“It made me mad on a hundred levels.”

“When I got the governor’s little brochure, with the gold tint on the seal, I was just kind of turning in circles.”

The plaintiff wanted all absentee votes in county in Bay County thrown out.

Another Leon County judge dismissed that case too.

That judge also suggested that a criminal complaint be better pursued.

The judge made the following remarks:

“That violation can be prosecuted by the proper public officials of this state.”

“And if there was any violation of the law for misstating the Florida law regarding absentee voting, that violation can also be prosecuted by public officials.”

The citizen appealed to the state Supreme Court.

The state Supreme Court called the case moot after the U.S. Supreme Court ended the recount.

Governor Bush’s attorney said that if either lawsuit had succeeded The GOP would not have been able to take their case to federal court because the cases would have been considered state matters.

The GOP figured that many overseas ballots were still outstanding as the election neared.

They figured that many of those overseas votes were military votes that would benefit Bush.

GOP operatives called each election supervisor in Florida’s 67 counties for information on counting how many ballots had been sent out, who had requested them and how many had been returned.

The GOP tracked the ballots daily.

The article tells us that “Republican members of Congress lobbied the Defense Department to do everything it could to make sure the mail was delivered in time for Florida’s Nov. 17 deadline for military ballots.”

The article discusses the New York Times study, which has been covered in depth on these pages.

The article ends with some interesting highlights as follows:

GOP operatives knew on election night that absentee voters had not participated in the exit polls that television networks were using to determine which presidential candidate won Florida.

A bush consultant made the following remark:

“That was a large part of the reason I didn’t think the election was over on election night.”

On July 17, 2001 The Washington Post ran an article entitled “Dirty Pool in Florida” by E.J. Dionne Jr.

The article is based on the study from the New York Times.

The article states as follows: Please note that the words in single quotation marks are from the Florida’s Supreme Court decision ordering recounts:

“The Times story provides yet more evidence that the presidential election was decided not by ‘a careful examination of the votes of Florida’s citizens,’ but ‘by strategies extraneous to the voting process.’”

The U.S. Supreme Court quickly overturned the Florida Supreme Court’s decision by a vote of 5-4.

The article points out that America “allowed an election outcome to be determined by clever lawyering. Bush’s lieutenants were willing to use one argument one day and exactly the opposite argument the next, depending on what served their candidate’s interests.”

The article continues as follows:

Gore’s lawyers figured that military ballots “would be cast disproportionately for Bush.”

Gore’s lawyers tried to throw out “all overseas votes that did not meet the basic requirements of state law.”

Gore was accused of not living up to his motto “count every vote.”

The Bush campaign called Democrats unpatriotic and said they were not fit to lead the country.

Ironically, it was Gore who served in Vietnam, not Bush.

Karen Hughes said “no one who aspires to be commander in chief should seek to unfairly deny the votes of the men and women he would seek to command.”

Mark Racicot said “I am very sorry to say, but the vice president’s lawyers have gone to war, in my judgement, against the men and women who serve in our armed forces.”

The article tells us that we now know “that the Bush campaign was not defending all military ballots. It was defending them selectively, depending on whether they were cast in Republican or Democratic counties.”

The Times reported that on one day, “in three South Florida counties, Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach, boards rejected as illegal 362 of 572 overseas ballots.”

The Times added: “Most – including many military ballots – were thrown out without a word of protest from Mr. Bush’s lawyers.”

The article states we now know that “Bush wasn’t defending military voters. He was defending Republican voters.”

The law requires that all overseas ballots must have either postmarks or dated signatures that prove they were mailed on or before Election Day.

62 percent of the ballots with no postmarks or dated signatures were counted in counties carried by Bush.

18 percent of these ballots were counted in counties carried by Gore.

The article further reveals that “while the Bush campaign was complaining about an ‘equal protection’ in the recount of regular votes, it was busy creating one with the overseas ballots.”

The article continues as follows:

The article tells us that the Times has uncovered more evidence that Harris used her office as “an outpost for the Bush campaign and altered her statements and rulings on the overseas ballots to fit every new twist in the Bush strategy.”

The article ends by stating that: “If Bush wanted to avoid four years of questions about how he ‘won’ Florida, he never should have pursued such scorched earth strategy.”

On August 18, 2001 Eric Alterman wrote a piece that was published on the msnbc.com web site.

Alterman’s article is based on the study of the New York Times.

The article is entitled “Fundamentally Corrupt?”

“Evidence mounts that GOP used every trick in the book.”

Following are some highlights of the article:

“In the tense weeks after Election Day, lawyers for each candidate argued over how to count votes, as GOP attorney Fred Bartlit did over military ballots.

Evidence is mounting that GOP operatives used aggressive pressure tactics--in court and out--to boost the Bush vote and depress the Gore vote.”

The times conducted a six-month investigation.

24 reporters interviewed more than 300 voters in 43 countries.

They examined thousands of pages of documentation.

The Times discovered evidence of unequal treatment of overseas ballots in Florida on behalf of Bush.

Alterman writes as follows:

“The Republicans dominated the public relations battle, the behind the scenes political struggle, and ultimately the fateful Supreme Court decision that handed them tarnished victory.”

Following is a statement from Fleischer
Regarding the revelations from the Times:

“This election was decided by the voters of Florida a long time ago. And the nation, the president and all but the most partisan Americans have moved on.”

Alterman writes as follows:

“The Times has uncovered yet another example of the Bush team’s efforts to undermine the integrity of the Florida count, as they fought, successfully in many instances to include illegal military ballots for their man on the one hand and to exclude fully legal Gore ballots on the other, making precisely contradictory accusations in each case.”

Alterman points out that pundits were quick to undermine the Times report. Alterman refers to conservative Republican partisan Paul Gigot of the Wall Street Journal as an example.

Alterman explains that Paul Gigot mocked the New York Times.

Alterman writes as follows:

Paul Gigot of the Wall Street Journal mocked the Times “for devoting so much attention to a report that, by itself failed to prove that Gore would have won the election with a proper vote count.”

Alterman responds as follows:

“But the fact that the Times failed to prove that the overseas ballots alone might not have tipped the balance is secondary when placed in the larger context of what we know about the election.

That Al Gore won the national vote by a considerable margin--more than either Kennedy in 1960 or Nixon in 1968—is indisputable.

That he won the votes of Floridians using the ‘voter intent’ standard outlined in the state’s election laws is also indisputable.”

Alterman points out that GOP lawyers fought against the use of this standard except in cases that would have disqualified overseas military ballots in favor of Bush.

Alterman explains as follows:

“Illegally excluded ‘over-votes’ also would likely have given Gore a substantial margin of victory.”

Alterman explains Harris’ role as follows:

“Now throw in the fact that Katharine Harris arbitrarily excluded 215 votes from Palm Beach County because they arrived 2 hours late. Add to these factors the deliberate theft of many of his (Gore’s) legitimate overseas votes and the illegal inclusion of hundreds of Republican votes and, once again, it becomes harder and harder to conclude that the right man is sitting in the Oval Office, no matter what standard one chooses.”

The article explains as follows:

The GOP victoriously masked the fact that they were seeking to undermine the recount process behind the scenes as they convinced a complacent media to play along. The media said the votes had been counted and recounted and Bush had won every-time.

Alterman writes as follows:

“Few reporters were interested or able to penetrate into this fog of misleading rhetoric to determine just how this ‘counting and recounting’ was taking place.”

The article explains that the Times discovered the following:

Harris made numerous attempts to certify the election for Bush.
Harris co-chaired the Bush campaign.
Harris allowed GOP operatives to set up a “war room” in her office.
The operatives drafted her statements and influenced her strategy.
Harris played quietly along.

Alterman writes the following in regards to the Times discoveries:

“In Washington, Republicans on the House Armed Services Committee helped the campaign obtain private contact information for military voters, violating the tradition of impartiality of the military and directly involving Congress in a partisan hunt for pro-Bush votes.

The Supreme Court, in ruling on the necessity of ‘equal protection’ for all voters, deliberately ignored the fact that this standard was wholly ignored by those canvassing boards that the Republicans convinced to include illegal overseas ballots in favor of Bush, while excluding many legally cast votes in favor of Gore.”

Following are a few highlights from an article at www.wsws.org (world socialist web site):

“New York Times documents military role in theft of 2000 election”

By Barry Grey

19 July 2001

“In an extensive report published July 15, the New York Times shed new light on the methods employed by the Bush campaign to hijack the 2000 presidential election.

The report, entitled ‘How Bush Took Florida: Mining the Overseas Absentee Vote,’ was the product of a six-month investigation by the Times into Florida officials’ handling of ballots mailed from outside the US.

These overseas votes became a focal point in the struggle between Bush and Democratic candidate Al Gore over the disputed Florida election.”

Grey tells us that the Times study revealed how Florida officials handled their overseas absentee ballots.

The Times study revealed how the GOP used legal and propaganda offensives to pressure canvassing board officials in GOP districts to count illegal overseas ballots.

Bush lawyers pressured canvassing boards in Democratic counties to reject overseas ballots with identical flaws.

Grey explains as follows:

“This effort to illegally increase Bush’s vote centered on hundreds of ballots from military personnel stationed overseas.

The Republicans enlisted the aid of the military brass to increase the number of military ballots.

They also pressed local election boards to validate military ballots that lacked postmarks, bore postmarks later than the November 7 Election Day, or failed to meet other legal requirements.

As a result, 680 of the 2,490 overseas ballots that were counted as legal votes after Election Day—more than one out of every four such ballots—were defective.

Of these, 288 were ballots that canvassing boards initially rejected on November 17, the deadline for receiving overseas ballots, but subsequently accepted under pressure from the Bush campaign, the military and the media.”

Grey adds the following information:

“Bush’s official margin of victory in Florida was 537 votes.

Citing the Florida Department of State’s web site, the Times reports that without the overseas ballots counted after Election Day, Gore would have won Florida, and thus the White House, by 202 votes.”

Governor Bush and other Florida officials were able to engineer systematic violations of Florida's election laws for the Bush campaign.

The GOP did not treat all overseas ballots equally, which minimized the credibility of the GOP's argument that the lack of specific and uniform criteria for judging disputed ballots in different counties violated the equal protection clause of the US Constitution.

Grey reminds us that if consistently applied, this idea would invalidate elections at every level in the United States, where election laws differ from state to state and rules and procedures vary from county to county across the country.

The right-wing Republican majority on the US Supreme Court based its 5-4 ruling on

This supposed violation of the equal protection principle, which was concocted by GOP lawyers.

The US Supreme Court halted manual recounts and thereby handing the presidency to Bush.

Grey explains that the Times legitimized its account of fraud and criminality with the following statement:

Grey writes: "The article stated, without explanation, that the Times found 'no evidence of vote fraud by either party.'

It went on to say that its investigation 'found no support for the suspicions of Democrats that the Bush campaign had organized an effort to solicit late votes.' At a later point the article declared, 'There is no evidence that the Pentagon knowingly delivered ballots cast illegally after Election Day.'"

The article points out how the Times contradicts its own findings as follows:

Military regulations require all mail to be postmarked.

The Times study discovered that 17 percent of military overseas ballots from Florida voters arrived without postmarks.

In the rest of the nation, less than 1 percent of all military overseas mail arrived without postmarks during election 2000.

Grey tells us that "the Times reported that Pentagon officials it interviewed 'could not fully explain why so many ballots were arriving without postmarks.'

One obvious explanation, however, is that there was a concerted effort to solicit late votes from military personnel and ship them without postmarks so as to conceal the fact that they were illegal."

Grey explains as follows:

"The involvement of the military brass in the Florida impasse assumed a public form after Friday, November 17.

On that day two critical events occurred. County canvassing boards in Florida rejected nearly a third of the overseas ballots received after Election Day, including hundreds of ballots from military personnel.

The certified total of overseas ballots increased Bush's official margin by hundreds of votes.

Even with the numbers packed by military overseas ballots, the Bush campaign still lacked the cushion it deemed necessary to overcome the additional votes expected to go to the Gore camp if GOP attempts to halt hand recounts in south Florida failed."

The Florida Supreme Court stalled Harris' plan to preempt the manual recounts and declare Bush as the winner in Florida on Saturday, November 18.

The GOP responded by launching a witch-hunting attack on Gore.

The GOP accused Democrats of performing an anti-American attack on the military because Democrats were trying to eliminate illegal military ballots.

On November 18 GOP Governor Racicot called a press conference and declared, "the vice president's lawyers have gone to war, in my judgment, against the men and women who serve in the armed forces."

Norman Schwarzkopf denounced Gore for denying servicemen their right to vote. Schwarzkopf reminded military personnel that if Gore won in Florida, he would be their new commander in chief, a subtle statement that could lead to incitement to insubordination.

In order to force local election officials to validate military ballots they had rejected on November 17, the GOP filed suit against 14 canvassing boards in GOP counties.

They accused certain canvassing board members of violating federal law by rejecting military ballots without postmarks or other legal requirements.

These suits had no merit.

All of the suits were dismissed, but they intimidated canvassing boards into complying with their demands.

Grey explains a GOP propaganda tactic as follows:

"On the propaganda front, the GOP at both national and state levels obtained, through the good graces of the military brass, the names and e-mail addresses of military personnel stationed abroad whose ballots had been rejected.

They solicited statements from sailors and Navy pilots denouncing Gore and the Democrats, which were then fed to a compliant media."

Lieberman appeared on a television program on Sunday, November 19, in which he publicly stated that he would give "the benefit of the doubt" to military ballots, and suggested that Florida election officials "go back and take another look" at ballots that had been rejected.

The article continues as follows:

Gore rejected the advice of campaign strategists who urged him to challenge the illegal ballots.

The Times quotes Joe Sandler, who was the Democratic National Committee's general counsel.

Sandler remembers how Gore explained his position.

“I can give you his exact words. ‘If I won this thing by a handful of military ballots, I would be hounded by Republicans and the press every day of my presidency and it wouldn’t be worth having.’”

Another Gore aide is quoted as saying, “Gore got very stuck on the notion that if he became president it was not in the national interest that he have a relationship characterized by his mistrust of the military.”

Grey makes the following observations:

“These are extraordinary statements.

They amount to the acceptance of a military veto over the outcome of a national election and the occupant of the White House.

The subordination of the military to civilian rule is a cardinal principle of the US Constitution.

The fact that this cornerstone of democracy has become so eroded is a stark indication of the decay of bourgeois democratic institutions in the US.

The Times report confirms the analysis of the 2000 election made by the World Socialist Web Site: it was a watershed event, marking a decisive break with the traditional forms of rule of American capitalism.

The details revealed in the Times exposé underscore the enormous dangers facing the working class.

Its basic rights are threatened by a political system moving inexorably in the direction of authoritarian rule.

The absence of any serious opposition within the political establishment to the right-wing attack on democratic rights is reflected in the media response to the Times’ report.

Consistent with their complicity in both the impeachment conspiracy and the theft of the 2000 election, the major networks have given virtually no coverage to the Times articles and the issues they raise.

The Democrats have remained similarly silent.

The last thing they want is a public airing of the criminality that underlies the Bush administration.

Nevertheless, the very fact that this story has appeared in a leading publication of the establishment has far-reaching objective significance.

The Times report is only one example of a growing genre of political post mortems on the stolen election of 2000.

In recent weeks numerous reports have appeared documenting the widespread disenfranchisement of working class and minority voters in Florida.

Books have begun to appear indicting the Supreme Court for its role in flouting democratic rights and handing the election to Bush.

These publications reflect a deep-going crisis of political rule in the US, a crisis that has been exacerbated by the installation of a government by anti-democratic means. Seven months after Bush’s inauguration, the political establishment is unable to put to rest questions about the legitimacy of his administration.

Within the ruling elite there is a gnawing fear that the breach with democratic methods is discrediting the entire political system and paving the way for the radicalization of broad layers of the working population.”

In the following article, the New York Times explains how the overseas absentee ballots in Florida were examined:

July 15, 2001, Sunday

“EXAMINING THE VOTE;”

“How the Ballots Were Examined”

By JOSH BARBANEL (NYT)

“To analyze the treatment of overseas absentee ballots, The New York Times obtained photocopies photo-copies of 3,704 overseas absentee ballot envelopes that were received by Florida’s 67 election supervisors after Election Day 2000.” The article explains that in order “to guarantee privacy,” the canvassing board staff examined postmarks and printed information on the envelopes so they could determine whether these overseas absentee ballots met legal requirements, then the overseas absentee ballots were separated from their envelopes.

The Times writes as follows:

“From November 17 to November 26 the canvassing boards accepted and counted 2,490 ballots.”

“All information contained on each ballot envelope was entered into a database by a firm hired by the Times, Quality Data Systems Inc. of Crofton Md.

The ballots were then matched against voter registration records to verify eligibility and add information about individual voters to the database.

Each ballot was then checked against a list of specific flaws as detailed in Florida election law.

Anyone flaw would have been sufficient to invalidated a ballot.”

The Times explains more as follows:

The Times explains that when the copies were illegible, Times reporters or county election officials re-examined the original.

The Times was unable to obtain 35 overseas absentee ballots that were cast in four counties because officials could not find them.

Most such ballots were cast in Broward County.

Gary King is a non-partisan professor of government who was hired by the Times.

King wrote a book entitled “A Solution to the Ecological Inference Problem.”

King developed a statistical method to analyze individual voting behavior based on group voting patterns.

The article ends by explaining King’s participation in the study.

On the next day, the Times tells us more about their study in the following article:

July 16, 2001, Monday
Florida's Flawed Ballots

The Times writes as follows:

“Overseas ballots were judged by vastly different standards, depending on where they were counted.”

“The Republicans pursued these votes with aggressive precision, tailoring their legal arguments to suit the different political leanings of various counties, while the Democrats were hobbled by indecision and contradictory strategies.”

The New York Times conducted a six- month investigation of Florida’s overseas ballots.

The Times discovered that Florida’s ballot laws were applied unevenly.

The Times study emphasizes the importance of uniform standards in all states.

Out of 2,409 overseas ballots that were counted as legal after Election Day, the Times found 680 that were questionable.

Among the questionable ballots were ballots without postmarks or ballots without witness signatures.

The Times writes as follows:

“Had the state laws been strictly enforced, all of these ballots would have been thrown out.”

The Times discovered that counties that were carried by the GOP were more apt to count flawed overseas ballots than counties that were carried by the Democrats.

These differences were partly because of GOP aggression.

When they knew that overseas ballots could be the deciding factor as to which candidate would be the winner, Bush lawyers scurried to Florida’s 67 canvassing boards to get as many ballots counted possible in GOP counties.

Bush lawyers used another set of standards in order to challenge Democratic counties.

Assuming that Bush had more flawed overseas ballots than Gore, the Democrats tried to challenge all questionable overseas ballots.

A memo that revealed the Democratic strategy was discovered.

The GOP accused the Democrats of trying to disenfranchise overseas military voters.

Senator Lieberman announced on television that election officials should give military ballots “the benefit of a doubt,” thus the Democrats abandoned their strategy concerning overseas ballots.

The Times article ends as follows:

Lieberman’s announcement “was a responsible gesture, but the same standards should have been applied to all absentee ballots from abroad, not just those in Republican-dominated counties.”

On April 24, 2001 the Washington Post ran an article entitled “Bush Recount Fund Violates New Law, Democrats Charge”
“DNC Chairman Asks IRS to Probe Unreported Spending”
by George Lardner Jr.

Following are highlights from that article:

“The Democratic National Committee yesterday accused the Bush/Cheney-vote recount fund of evading a new law aimed at unreported political spending and called for an IRS investigation of the fund’s failure to publicly disclose its contributions and expenditures.”

The post tells us that DNC Chairman Terry McAuliffe wrote a letter to the IRS Commissioner.

In his letter regarding the Bush/Cheney recount operation, McAuliffe wrote the recount fund amounted to “the biggest ‘stealth PAC’” ever created.

In his letter, McAuliffe pointed out that according to a new law passed in 2000 (which requires secretive tax exempt groups to reveal their finances) the Bush/Cheney recount fund was supposed to register with the IRS.

Recount fund officials said they were exempt from the law because it was an arm of the Bush/Cheney campaign that was exempt from reporting its finances.

The Post tells us that the new law covers secretive nonprofit political groups organized under section 527 of the Internal Revenue Code.

The law requires these groups to disclose their political activities and who pays for them in order to maintain their tax-exempt status.

A counsel to Bush’s recount fund said the Bush recount fund was exempt from disclosure because they were “an FEC recount committee.”

A DNC legal counsel said the recount committee is not required to report to the FEC, but under the new law, they are required to report to the IRS.

The article tells us more about McAuliffe’s letter.

McAuliffe wrote as follows:

“It is difficult to understand how the millions of dollars received for the recount are exempt from tax at all...Either the Bush Cheney committee is guilty of violating the new law or it is engaging in a massive scheme of tax evasion.”

The Post tells us that he Bush/Cheney recount fund posted a voluntary web site, but it listed individual contributions only.

On July 26, 2002 Public Citizen ran an article on their web site entitled “Bush-Cheney Campaign Violated Soft Money Disclosure Law, Soft Money Fund for Recount Narrowly Escapes \$7 Million Fine by Filing Disclosure Statements Hours Before Deadline; Forms Still Not Publicly Available”

The whole article reads as follows:

“WASHINGTON, D.C. – The recount fund created by the Bush-Cheney 2000 presidential campaign evaded a soft money campaign finance disclosure law for 18 months and did not file required forms until the last day of an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) ‘amnesty’ program for out-of-compliance groups, Public Citizen has discovered.

The Bush-Cheney 2000, Inc-Recount Fund, a 527 political group created shortly after the November 2000 election to pay for the legal and political activities in Florida and other contested areas, apparently did not file at least four – and perhaps as many as six – required disclosure forms until 3:25 p.m. on July 15, 2002 – meeting the deadline to avoid millions of dollars in potential fines by less than nine hours.

‘On its contribution form, the Bush-Cheney recount fund promised full disclosure, but trustees have evaded the soft money law for 18 months and just narrowly escaped nearly \$7 million in fines,’ said Joan Claybrook, president of Public Citizen. ‘The 527 disclosure law was designed to shed light on this type of ‘stealth PAC’ but the recount fund trustees flouted that law and didn’t begin to comply until the last possible moment.’

Republican National Committee (RNC) official Jim Dyke confirmed to Public Citizen that the recount fund is a 527 group that first filed its statement of organization and contribution and expenditure reports with the IRS just before the amnesty program ended. However, the information has not yet appeared on the IRS Web site, and the IRS has not confirmed to Public Citizen that that the Bush-Cheney recount fund’s contribution and expenditure forms have been filed. IRS spokesman Tim Harms told Public Citizen that if the group submitted its forms by July 15, as the recount fund claims, it would be ‘in compliance’ and would not be subject to fines.

Public Citizen’s investigation found that:

- The recount fund was required by law to submit a statement of organization to the IRS within 24 hours of the group’s formation (believed to be Nov. 10, 2000) and file at least four – and perhaps as many as six – periodic reports detailing contributors and expenditures under a ‘527 group disclosure’ law passed in July 2000 (PL 106-230). The recount fund’s statement of organization was filed on July 15, 2002 – 18 months late. The RNC official said contributions and expenditures forms were also filed around this time.
- The IRS announced a 527 group amnesty and compliance program on May 2, 2002, and said that failure to file by July 15 could result in ‘the assessment of taxes, penalties and interest.’ The financial penalties for 527 groups that do not comply with the disclosure law can total 35 percent of a group’s total contributions and expenditures. Based on that percentage, fines of \$6.92 million could have been levied against the recount fund had it not submitted its reports in time.

- While the recount fund did voluntarily make a list of contributors to the recount fund available online, the information is incomplete and possibly misleading. Recount fund trustees failed to provide information that is required from 527 groups such as expenditures, the employer and occupation of contributors who gave more than \$200, the full address of contributors, summary data on total contributions and expenditures, and the fund's address, connected committees and directors.

Public Citizen has been stymied in its attempts to obtain the contribution and expenditure disclosure reports. The law requires that disclosure forms be made available for public inspection during normal business hours, but the fund has not complied with Public Citizen's request to review the documents.

'For several days, the Bush-Cheney campaign and administration figures have stonewalled our requests to review the disclosure forms they claim to have filed,' said Frank Clemente, director of Public Citizen's Congress Watch. 'This is unacceptable. From Harken Energy and the attempt to hide Reagan-Bush presidential records to the Cheney energy policy consultations and the Bush-Cheney recount fund, there appears to be a pattern of failing to disclose what the law requires.'

www.citizen.org

Public citizen gives us more on their findings as follows:

"Review of the Bush-Cheney 2000 Recount Fund and 527 Disclosure Law"

As of July 26, 2002

[Click Here for the Press Release](#)

"The Bush-Cheney 2000, Inc-Recount Fund, created shortly after the November 2000 election to pay for the campaign's legal and political activities in Florida and other contested areas, evaded a soft money campaign finance disclosure law for 18 months. The recount fund's trustees did not file required disclosure forms until 3:25 p.m. on July 15, 2002 – meeting the deadline for an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) 'amnesty' program to avoid millions of dollars in potential fines by less than nine hours.

The [recount fund](#) was required by law to file a statement of organization (known as an 8871 form) and make at least four and perhaps as many as six periodic filings detailing contributions and expenditures (8872 forms) under a '527 group disclosure' law passed in July 2000 (PL 106-230). 527 groups, named after the section of the Internal Revenue Code that governs them, can raise unlimited amounts of soft money and primarily exist to influence elections.

As of July 25, 2002, a statement of organization was available on the [IRS disclosure website](#) but no 8872 forms were online, as it can take the agency a month or more to post reports. IRS spokesman Tim Harms told Public Citizen that if the recount fund disclosed all its forms by July 15, as the Bush-Cheney group claims, they would be 'in compliance' and would not be subject to fines. As of July 25, Harms could neither confirm nor deny that the Bush-Cheney recount fund had submitted all the necessary disclosure reports before the amnesty deadline.

IRS Law Requires Recount Fund to File Disclosure Reports

- Republican National Committee (RNC) official Jim Dyke confirmed to Public Citizen on July 24, 2002 that the Bush-Cheney recount fund is a 527 group and has filed its 8871 and 8872 forms with the IRS. "They are a 527 ... just like the Democrats [[Gore-Lieberman Recount Committee](#)] were a 527," Dyke told Public Citizen.
- According to press reports, the Bush-Cheney recount fund was created around November 10, 2000. The IRS requires groups to submit a statement of organization (form 8871) within 24 hours of a group's formation, but the recount fund failed to file a statement of organization until July 15, 2002 at 3:25 p.m. – 18 months later.
- The recount fund also failed to file at least four different periodic disclosure reports, and perhaps as many as six, detailing contributions and expenditures. The 2000 and 2001 reports and due dates are: post-election 2000 due 30 days after the general election; year-end 2000 due January 31, 2001; mid-year 2001 due July 31, 2001; and year-end 2001 due January 31, 2002. Two additional reports may have been required if the recount fund continued operations in 2002; they are the first quarterly 2002 report due April 15, 2002 and the second quarterly 2002 report due July 15, 2002.
- The Gore-Lieberman Recount Committee filed a statement of organization with the IRS on November 11, 2000. Subsequently, it filed six disclosure reports with the IRS during the last year-and-a-half, which detail \$3.7 million in contributions and \$3.2 million in expenditures.

Amnesty Program Saves Recount Fund Large Potential Fines

- The IRS announced the amnesty and compliance program on May 2, 2002. In a [news release describing the program](#) the IRS said that failure to file by July 15 could result in 'the assessment of taxes, penalties and interest.'
- Financial penalties for 527 groups that do not comply with the disclosure law can equal 35 percent of a group's total contributions and expenditures. According to IRS guidance documents ([Instructions for Form 8872](#)), 'A penalty will be imposed if the organization is required to file Form 8872 and it fails to file the form by the due date or files the form but fails to report all the information required ... The penalty is 35 percent of the total amount of contributions and expenditures to which a failure relates.'
- On the Bush campaign website, the fund disclosed \$9.9 million in contributions and according to press reports it spent all but \$270,000 on recount activities and gave the remaining money to the RNC. Because the Bush-Cheney recount fund failed to meet the reporting deadlines, it could have been fined 35 percent of the \$9.9 million in contributions, which is \$3.46 million. Fines could also have been levied on the expenditures – another \$3.46 million – bringing the total possible penalties to \$6.92 million.

Flaunting Law, Recount Fund Does not Provide Disclosure Reports

- As of July 26, 2002, no Bush-Cheney recount fund 8872 forms detailing contributions and expenditures were available online. But the 527-disclosure law requires groups to make all disclosure forms available for public inspection during normal business hours 'at the organization's principle office and at each of its regional or district offices having at least three paid employees.'
- The fund's principle office is in Austin, Texas. Four attempts to contact David Herndon, the fund's contact person, by phone on July 24 and 25 and two attempts to contact him in person on July 25, to obtain copies of the 8872 reports were unsuccessful. Herndon's secretary Lisa Couvillon said Herndon was not available and that we should leave a voice mail message. Later, on July 26, Couvillon told Public Citizen that Herndon was on his way to Europe and that we should contact attorney Ben Ginsberg in Washington for further information. Couvillon also told Public Citizen that the office, which is located at 515 Congress Avenue Suite 2300, did not have the forms. When informed by Public Citizen on July 24, 2002 that the recount fund was required by law [26 USC 6104(d)] to have the forms and make them available for public inspection, Couvillon said she would look into the matter.
- RNC official Dyke said the reports could be retrieved by contacting the fund's custodian, Michael Koroluk, but because his only available contact information is a Washington, D.C. post office box (with an incorrect zip code on the disclosure form), the documents could only be received in writing and not for immediate public inspection – delaying the request by as much as a month. (The law provides groups with 30 days to respond to written requests for disclosure reports.) Dyke further said that the RNC has nothing to do with the Bush-Cheney recount fund, but he said the fund would respond to a written request within a month.
- The IRS can levy fines on groups that do not comply with requirements to make forms accessible. 'Responsible persons of a tax-exempt organization who fail to provide the documents as required may be subject to a penalty of \$20 per day for as long as the failure continues,' states IRS guidance documents. 'There is a maximum penalty of \$10,000 for each failure to provide a copy of an annual information return.'

Incomplete Voluntary Disclosure Is No Substitute

- While the recount fund did voluntarily make a list of its contributors available online, the information is incomplete and possibly misleading. For instance, the recount fund failed to provide required information such as expenditures, the employer and occupation of contributors who gave more than \$200, the full address of contributors, summary data on total contributions and expenditures and organization information about the fund's address, connected committees and directors. Also, the IRS could not review the fund's activities as part of its enforcement and compliance

mission because the agency had no record of the group's existence prior to July 15, 2002.

Recount Fund Skirts Self-Imposed Limits Along with Soft Money Law

- 527 groups are not bound by contribution limits and can accept contributions directly from corporations and unions, but the Bush-Cheney recount fund set a self-imposed limit of \$5,000 per person and also said it would not accept PAC or corporate contributions. Nonetheless, a database of contributions provided by the Bush-Cheney campaign show 10 donors who gave more than \$5,000 and two contributors who gave \$10,000. Also, the American Coal Co. PAC gave \$5,000, Ohio Valley Coal Co. PAC contributed \$5,000 and the Independent Oil Producers PAC gave \$750.

The Recount Fund's Staff

The recount fund's form 8871 statement of organization lists the following directors and staff:

- Michael Koroluk, custodian of records, who is listed at a post office box in Washington, D.C. We have no other information about him.
- David Herndon, the fund's treasurer and contact person, is of counsel to the law firm Graves, Dougherty, Hearon & Moody in Austin, Texas. Herndon contributed \$15,500 to Bush's gubernatorial campaigns, according to Texans for Public Justice.
- Alan 'Bud' Shivers, Jr., a director of the fund, is president of Texans for Quality Health Care and has been called a "Pioneer" by George W. Bush – a title given to those who raised at least \$100,000 for Bush's presidential campaign.
- C. Patrick Oles is a director of the fund.
- Tim Beall is the fund's assistant treasurer.”

<http://www.citizen.org/congress/campaign/legislation/section527/articles.cfm?ID=8077>

Public Citizen released the following report on August 1, 2002:

Public Citizen press release
August 1, 2002

“Thousands of Errors and Omissions Plague Bush-Cheney Recount Fund Disclosure Forms”

“Recount Fund May Face \$850,000 in Fines”

“WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Bush-Cheney recount fund, which evaded soft money disclosure laws for 18 months, filed disclosure reports with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) containing thousands of errors and omissions and could be fined \$850,000, Public Citizen has determined.

The Bush-Cheney 2000, Inc.-Recount Fund, a 527 political group created after the November 2000 election, filed disclosure reports with the IRS on July 15, 2002. The reports were submitted at 3:25 p.m. on the last day of an IRS amnesty program that allowed out-of-compliance groups to turn in reports and avoid millions of dollars in potential fines.

But the Bush-Cheney recount fund disclosure reports are incomplete, and the group could be subject to IRS fines in the thousands of cases where it did not disclose the employer and occupation of individual contributors and recipients of expenditures. Also, the recount fund apparently did not disclose to the IRS more than 600 donors that it listed on the Bush campaign's Web site. In a letter to IRS Commissioner Charles O. Rossotti, Public Citizen urged the IRS to 'use the Bush-Cheney recount fund as an example to send a strong signal to other 527 groups that violations of the law will not be tolerated.' [Click here](#) to view the letter, which was sent today.

'It is unacceptable for the Bush-Cheney recount fund to dodge disclosure for 18 months and then arrogantly suggest, as did the fund's lawyer when speaking recently to reporters, that the law does not apply to them,' said Joan Claybrook, president of Public Citizen. 'They must take responsibility for the tardy filings and they owe the public an apology, not lame excuses.'

Findings from Public Citizen's examination of the disclosure reports include:

- The Bush-Cheney recount fund did not list the employer and occupation for 2,456 contributors who gave more than \$200, as required by law. This information is critical to understanding which special interests were attempting to influence the election process and curry favor with Bush. These omissions totaled \$2 million; the IRS can fine the fund 35 percent of these disclosure failures. Potential IRS fines for these omissions total \$711,000.
- The fund's disclosure reports filed with the IRS show 6,806 contributors who gave more than \$200. But a database of contributors provided on the Bush-Cheney campaign Web site lists 7,421 contributors who gave more than \$200. If the Web site is accurate, this leaves a disparity of 615 contributors that the fund apparently did not report to the IRS. The IRS can assess fines of 35 percent for these undisclosed contributors; this fine could reach \$43,000 if each contributor gave the \$200 minimum.
- The Bush-Cheney recount fund did not list the employer and occupation for individual recipients of 143 expenditures greater than \$500 and totaling \$272,050 – as required by the IRS. The IRS can levy fines of 35 percent on these disclosure omissions, which could total \$95,000.
- The Bush-Cheney recount fund failed to file five disclosure reports during the 18-month period. Ultimately, the fund reported \$10.2 million in contributions and \$13.8 million in expenditures. Fines for 527 groups that do not comply with the disclosure law can total 35 percent of a group's total contributions and expenditures. Based on that percentage, fines of \$8.47 million could have been assessed against the group had it not filed with the IRS on the last day of the amnesty program.
- The public can see how the recount fund spent \$13.8 million in the battle over Florida's 25 electoral votes ([clickhere](#)). These expenditures include money to Enron (\$28,281), Halliburton (\$2,407) and Reliant Energy (\$1,724) for use of their private jets. All three companies are under investigation by the Securities and Exchange Commission for cooking their books.

The fund continues to brazenly dismiss the disclosure rules. Benjamin Ginsberg, a lawyer for the fund, told The Washington Post on July 27, 2002, 'We don't think we have an obligation to file this. We still think we are exempt, but the truth is: Why not take the issue off the table.'

In fact, the 527 group disclosure rules are clear: The Bush-Cheney recount fund was required to file disclosure reports with the IRS. The law clearly states that a 527 political organization must file if it was created 'primarily for the purpose of directly or indirectly accepting contributions or making expenditures . . . to influence the selection, nomination, election, or appointment of any individual to any Federal, State, or local public office . . . or the election of Presidential or Vice-Presidential electors' [26 U.S.C. 527(e)(1) & (2)].

Despite more than a thousand disclosure errors, it is possible the IRS will not penalize the Bush-Cheney recount fund for the compliance failures. The IRS has yet to create a compliance program for 527 groups and may not be equipped to investigate or fine any 527s, including those affiliated with a presidential campaign.

'The Bush-Cheney campaign had 18 months to comply with the law, and the IRS has had two years to create a compliance program,' said Frank Clemente, director of Public Citizen's Congress Watch. 'Neither has met its obligation to the law and the public.'

www.citizen.org for more info go to:

http://eforms.irs.gov/pac_list.asp?irs_pac_key=742966394

On July 30, 2002 The Daily Enron published the following story entitled "Florida Recount Funded by Enron/Halliburton"

"Bush's Magical Mystery Tour"

The following is the article:

"JULY 30: If George W. Bush were cast as a TV sitcom character he would have to be modeled after ad man Darrin of Bewitched or Astronaut Roger of I Dream of Jeannie - a hapless fellow whose success hinges almost entirely on the extraordinary powers of others.

And so it was when the presidency hung by a thread in Florida during the last election. A contentious recount was underway and the genies that had gotten Bush so far assembled en masse to assure his victory over Al Gore.

Only now are those last-minute efforts fully becoming known. According to papers filed with the IRS on July 15, nearly \$14 million magically poured into the Bush/Cheney Florida recount effort - four times the amount raised by the Gore/Lieberman camp.

The money flowed in so fast, and in such enormous chunks, that Bush campaign officials - unaccustomed to Bush's perennial good fortune - were dumbfounded. 'I think we were a little bit stunned by the amount we received,' Benjamin Ginsberg, a Bush attorney for the recount, told USA Today.

According to IRS documents, the Bush campaign took in \$13.8 million, most in large contributions. Listed among those large contributors were Bush and Cheney's two most reliable genies - Enron and Halliburton.

While the Gore/Lieberman campaign filed its IRS disclosures of their Florida recount expenditures months ago, the Bush's recount fund filed the required forms at the very last moment allowed by law. July 15 was the final day of an IRS amnesty program for groups that hadn't already complied with the law.

'They obviously begrudgingly disclosed, and did it way after the fact,' said Larry Noble, executive director of the Center for Responsive Politics. 'It's better than nothing, but it would have been better to have disclosed it when the money was coming in.'

The filings show that as soon as a recount was announced, Bush forces moved quickly. Money was no object. They dispatched over 100 lawyers to Florida and Texas, booking hundreds of plane tickets, rental cars and hotel rooms.

Among the expenditures listed was a payment of \$13,000 to Enron Corp. and \$2,400 to Halliburton Co. for the use of their corporate jets and other unspecified services.

'Eighteen months after the election, we find that the (Bush) administration literally flew into office on the Enron corporate jet,' said Jennifer Palmieri, press secretary for the Democratic National Committee. 'The administration's close ties with unscrupulous corporations like Enron and Halliburton prevent it from showing real leadership on corporate reform.'

Former Enron CEO Kenneth Lay and his wife also donated \$5,000 apiece, according to the filings."

This story and more can be found at URL

<http://www.thedailyenron.com/documents/20020730085550-68379.asp>

The following article from bloomberg.com explained more on the subject:

"Bush Campaign Flew Enron, Halliburton Jets During 2000 Recount

By Laura Smitherman Aug.2, 2002"

The article can be purchased at www.bloomberg.com in their archives.

What about the Miami Dade mob and other bush operatives that were in Miami Dade during the election "recount"?

A July 14, 2002 article in The Miami Herald by Carol Rosenberg brings us up to date on some of them as follows:

"Bush recount troops land plum D.C. jobs,"

"Many of the president's appointees fought Gore's bid to take Florida, White House"

BY CAROL ROSENBERG

Following are some highlights from Rosenbergs' article regarding some of the Bush operatives:

Rosenberg tells us that John Bolton is now the undersecretary of state for arms control.

He attempted to stop the recount of Miami-Dade County ballots by bursting into a Tallahassee library.

Matt Schlapp is the White House special assistant to the president and deputy director of political affairs.

Rosenberg explains that during the 2000 recount, Schlapp “was part of the supposedly spontaneous window-pounding protest at Miami-Dade County Hall that brought to an end the first recount of Miami-Dade ballots.”

Sue Cobb is the U.S. ambassador to Jamaica.

The article tells us that she was not only a generous donor to the GOP, but she also “volunteered her legal skills to the Bush-Cheney campaign -- working as part of the legal team that contested recounts in Miami-Dade.”

Rosenberg states as follows:

“They are among more than 50 political appointees found by The Herald to have served as troops in the frantic Florida recount battle that followed the Nov. 7, 2000 election.”

Rosenberg describes The Herald's method of investigation as follows:

“To identify the appointees, The Herald conducted dozens of interviews and studied White House nominations and government staff directories -- then matched names to news accounts, photo captions and several books about the episode.

In addition, some appointees included their recount roles in news releases, or accounts in university and law journals.”

The full article can be read at

<http://www.miami.com/mld/miami/3656186.htm>

The plot thickens.

The following article can be found at consortiumnews.com

“Bush's Conspiracy to Riot”

August 5, 2002

“More than three decades apart, two political riots influenced the outcome of U.S. presidential elections. In 1968, protests at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago hurt Democrat Hubert Humphrey and helped Republican Richard Nixon eke out a victory. On Nov. 22, 2000, the so-called ‘Brooks Brothers Riot’ of Republican activists helped stop a vote recount in Miami -- and showed how far George W. Bush’s supporters were ready to go to put their man in the White House.

But the government reaction to the two events was dramatically different. The clashes between police and Vietnam War protesters in 1968 led the Nixon administration to charge seven anti-war radicals with 'conspiring to cross state lines with the intent to incite a riot.' The defendants, who became known as the Chicago Seven, were later acquitted of conspiracy charges, in part, because the protests were loosely organized and because solid documentary evidence was lacking.

After the Miami 'Brooks Brothers Riot' – named after the protesters' preppie clothing – no government action was taken beyond the police rescuing several Democrats who were surrounded and roughed up by the rioters. While no legal charges were filed against the Republicans, newly released documents show that at least a half dozen of the publicly identified rioters were paid by Bush's recount committee.

The payments to the Republican activists are documented in hundreds of pages of Bush committee records – released grudgingly to the Internal Revenue Service last month, 19 months after the 36-day recount battle ended. Overall, the records provide a road map of how the Bush recount team brought its operatives across state lines to stop then-Vice President Al Gore's recount efforts.

The records show that the Bush committee spent a total of \$13.8 million to frustrate the recount of Florida's votes and secure the state's crucial electoral votes for Bush. By contrast, the Gore recount operation spent \$3.2 million, about one quarter of the Bush total. Bush spent more just on lawyers – \$4.4 million – than Gore did on his entire effort."

"Extended Deadline"

The article explains that the Bush recount committee acquired an extended deadline for disclosures of soft-money spending by "527 committees."

527 committees are not directly related to a candidate's campaign.

The article tells us that according to their records, the Bush recount committee "spent about \$1.2 million to fly operatives to Florida and elsewhere, and paid for hotel bills adding up to about \$1 million. To add flexibility to the travel arrangements, a fleet of corporate jets was assembled, including planes owned by Enron Corp., then run by Bush backer Kenneth Lay, and Halliburton Co., where Dick Cheney had served as chairman and chief executive officer."

Some of the Brooks Brothers rioters were publicly identified.

The article explains that some of the rioters were in photographs that were published in the Washington Post.

The article gives us more information on the rioters as follows:

"Jake Tapper's book on the recount battle, *Down and Dirty*, provides a list of 12 Republican operatives who took part in the Miami riot. Half of those individuals received payments from the Bush recount committee, according to the IRS records."

The article reveals more about the Miami protesters who were paid by Bush's recount committee were as follows:

"Matt Schlapp, a Bush staffer who was based in Austin and received \$4,276.09; Thomas Pyle, a staff aide to House Majority Whip Tom DeLay, \$456; Michael Murphy, a DeLay fund-raiser, \$935.12; Garry Malphrus, House majority chief counsel to the House Judiciary subcommittee on criminal justice, \$330; Charles Royal, a legislative aide to Rep. Jim DeMint, R-S.C. \$391.80; and Kevin Smith, a former GOP House staffer, \$373.23."

The article tells us that the Miami Herald reported that three of the Miami protesters are now members of Bush's White House staff as follows:

Schlapp is a special assistant to the president.

Malphrus is deputy director of the president's Domestic Policy Council.

Joel Kaplan is another special assistant to the president. (See Miami Herald, July 14, 2002)

The article gives us insight into some of the perks that the rioters received, according to the documents.

After the Miami riot, Bush's recount committee footed the bill for the hotel. The GOP rioters enjoyed a Thanksgiving Day party at the Hyatt Regency Pier 66 in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Bush and Cheney phoned the party to thank the rioters.

Wayne Newton sang them a song, "Danke Schoen," German for thank-you very much.

The article refers the reader to (Wall Street Journal, Nov. 27, 2000; Consortiumnews.com's "W's Triumph of the Will")

The article reports that according to the documents, the Bush committee paid \$35,501.52 to the Hyatt Regency Pier 66 in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

The article explains that there were other expenses incurred as follows:

"The House of Masquerades"

"Garrett Sound and Lighting in Fort Lauderdale was paid \$5,902; Beach Sound Inc. in North Miami was paid \$3,500; and the House of Masquerades, a costume shop in Miami, had three payments totaling \$640.92, according to the Bush records."

The article explains that the riots changed the course of the recount as follows:

Before the riots occurred, Bush's lead was dwindling and Gore was pressing for recounts.

"The riot in Miami and the prospects of spreading violence were among the arguments later cited by defenders of the 5-to-4 U.S. Supreme Court ruling on

Dec. 12, 2000, that stopped a statewide Florida recount and handed Bush the presidency.”

The article reveals the Bush campaign position as follows:

“Backed by the \$13.8 million war chest, the Bush operation made clear in Miami and in other protests that it was ready to kick up plenty of political dust if it didn’t get its way.

A later unofficial recount by news organizations found that if all legally cast ballots in Florida had been counted – regardless of which kinds of chads were accepted, whether punched-through, hanging or dimpled – Gore would have won Florida and thus the presidency.”

“Across State Lines”

On Nov. 18, 2000 the Bush campaign appealed to activists to travel to Florida with an urgent message to Republicans as follows: “We now need to send reinforcements.”

The appeal was delivered with the following promise: “The campaign will pay airfare and hotel expenses for people willing to go.”

The article refers the reader to Tapper’s Down and Dirty.

The article explains the chaos created by the rioters as follows:

“These reinforcements--many of them were Republican staffers from Capitol Hill--added an angrier tone to the dueling street protests already underway between supporters of Bush and Gore. The new wave of Republican activists injected ‘venom and volatility into an already edgy situation,’ wrote Tapper.

‘This is the new Republican Party, sir!’ Brad Blakeman, Bush’s campaign director of advance travel logistics, bellowed into a bullhorn to disrupt a CNN correspondent interviewing a Democratic congressman. ‘We’re not going to take it anymore!’

Around the country, the conservative media apparatus, led by talk show host Rush Limbaugh and pro-Bush pundits, rallied the faithful with charges that a hand recount was fraudulent and amounted to ‘inventing’ votes.”

The article explains that Bush was complacent.

He did nothing to persuade the operatives “to respect the legally sanctioned vote counting.

Instead, Bush’s recount representative, James Baker, and Bush himself denounced the Florida Supreme Court, which had ordered that recount results be included in the official vote tallies.

Bush accused the court of abusing its powers in a bid to ‘usurp’ the authority of the legislature.”

The article continues with the following insight:

“The Battle of Miami”

“On Nov. 22, 2000, after learning that the Miami canvassing board was starting an examination of 10,750 disputed ballots that had previously not been counted, Rep. John Sweeney, a New York Republican, called on Republican troops to ‘shut it down,’ according to Down and Dirty.

Brendan Quinn, executive director of the New York GOP, told about two dozen Republican operatives to storm the room on the 19th floor where the canvassing board was meeting, Tapper reported.

‘Emotional and angry, they immediately make their way outside the larger room in which the tabulating room is contained,’ Tapper wrote. “‘The mass of ‘angry voters’ on the 19th floor swells to maybe 80 people,” including many of the Republican activists from outside Florida.

News cameras captured the chaotic scene outside the canvassing board's offices. The protesters shouted slogans.

They banged on the doors and walls.

The unruly protest kept official observers and members of the press from reaching the room.”

“‘Until the demonstration stops, nobody can do anything,’” said David Leahy, Miami’s supervisor of elections.

The canvassing board members later said that they were not intimidated into stopping the recount. (Down and Dirty)”

The article relays an interesting anecdote on a sample ballot as follows:

“A Sample Ballot”

“While the siege of the canvassing board office was underway, county Democratic chairman Joe Geller stopped at another office seeking a sample ballot.

Geller wanted to demonstrate his theory that some voters had intended to vote for Gore but instead marked an adjoining number that represented no candidate. As Geller took the ballot marked “sample,” one of the Republican activists began shouting ‘This guy’s got a ballot!’

In Down and Dirty, Tapper writes: “‘The masses swarm around him, yelling, getting in his face, pushing him, grabbing him. ‘Arrest him!’ they cry. ‘Arrest him!’ With the help of a DNC aide, Luis Rosero, and the political director of the Miami Gore campaign, Joe Fraga, Geller manages to wrench himself into the elevator.”

“‘The cops escort Geller back to the 19th floor, so the elections officials can see what’s going on, investigate the charges. Of course, it turns out that all Geller had was a sample ballot.

The crowd is pulling at the cops, pulling at Geller.

It’s insanity! Some even get in the face of 73-year-old Rep. Carrie Meek.

Democratic operatives decide to pull out of the area altogether.” “(Tapper’s Down and Dirty)”

The article reminds us that “Bush and his top aides remained publicly silent about these disruptive tactics.”

The article mentions the Wall Street Journal reported some of these incidents in an issue dated Nov. 27, 2000.

“Upper Hand”

The article tells us more about what Tapper writes on the subject as follows:

“On Nov. 25, the Bush campaign issued ‘talking points’ to justify the Miami protest, calling it ‘fitting and proper’ and blaming the canvassing board for the disruptions. ‘The board made a series of bad decisions and the reaction to it was inevitable and well justified,’ the Bush campaign said. (Down and Dirty).”

The article tells us that recounts in Broward County were minimizing Bush’s lead and Gore was gaining in Palm beach, “despite the constant challenges from Republican observers.”

The article explains GOP tactics to remedy the situation as follows:

“To boost Bush’s margin back up, Republican Secretary of State Harris allowed Nassau County to throw out its recounted figures that helped Gore. Then, excluding a partial recount in Palm Beach and with Miami shut down, Harris certified Bush the winner by 537 votes.”

“Soon afterwards, bush appeared on national television to announce himself the winner and to call on Gore to concede defeat.

‘Now,’ Bush said, ‘we must live up to our principles. We must show our commitment to the common good, which is bigger than any person or any party.’”

View the full article at URL <http://www.consortiumnews.com/>

When the democracy of any country is thwarted, it affects all people of every nation around the world.

I see it as the domino affect.

If a few powerful special interest groups can thwart democracy in a large nation, it would be so much easier to impose the same perverse action on a smaller nation.

It would only be a matter of time before all heads of states in all nations claimed their seats through some sort of illicit behavior.

That scenario would be disastrous for all people.

Election 2000 will never be forgotten in America or anywhere in the world that votes in a free democracy.

Following are a few paragraphs from an editorial written by CB Hanif of the Palm Beach Post:

“Get over it? Not this filmmaker”

By C.B. Hanif, Palm Beach Post Editorial Writer
Thursday, July 11, 2002

“Even with the presumption of inevitability that many news organizations deservedly were criticized for promoting, the record-breaking \$100 million that it took to buy the White House almost wasn't enough. ‘We have a president who owes his election more to a dynasty than to democracy,’ said Chairman Julian Bond at the NAACP's 93rd annual convention this week.

Presidential candidate George W. Bush had wooed that group before he lost the November 2000 popular election by more than a half-million votes nationwide. He would have lost Florida's popular vote -- and the presidency -- had all the ballots that voters cast been registered.

For Americans who consider it a patriotic duty to ensure that every citizen has an equal opportunity to vote and to have his or her vote counted, restoring confidence in the electoral process means looking first at Florida. That's what Faye Anderson has done as producer of Counting on Democracy. Her documentary about the Florida presidential election is to air soon on public television. Many South Florida residents will see it beginning Friday, however, when Ms. Anderson hosts free screenings arranged by state Rep. James ‘Hank’ Harper Jr., D-West Palm Beach.

Ms. Anderson, a New York-based writer and former national vice chairman of the Republican National Committee's New Majority Council, notes that while there is a clear racial gap in access to reliable voting systems, the problem of equal access to the polling place is an American problem. As she points out, a cross section of Americans, including seniors, students, the disabled and language minorities, encountered difficulties in exercising their right to vote or were discouraged from voting on Election Day 2000.”

Film and Speech Unprecedented: The 2000 Presidential Election shown in Tampa as follows:

FILM and SPEECH: UNPRECEDENTED: THE 2000 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Saturday, September 21st 7:00pm
Falk Theater, University of Tampa
\$10 advance, \$15 door

The Tampa premier of the new film, with the film's co-director Joan Sekler (co-founder of The Independent Media Center) and a speech by BBC investigative journalist Greg Palast, author of THE BEST DEMOCRACY MONEY CAN BUY. Palast's speeches on WMNF's Radioactivity programs have caused a torrent of interest from listeners. The film is the riveting story about the battle for the presidency in Florida during the 2000 election. It tells how Republican political operatives used their access to voting lists to undermine the black vote.

