

## SOME PEOPLE WANT TO ELIMINATE THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE BUT CONSIDER THIS:

Neither Hillary Clinton, 47.84%, nor Donald Trump, 47.23 %, won a majority of the popular vote in our last election because anything less than 50 percent is a plurality. That would mean the last election cycle might have continued for months without resolution. I doubt that even liberal voters want this. And what if the conservative candidate wins the majority vote, will Liberals accept defeat? I don't think so!

## THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE BALANCES VOTING POWER

The Electoral College has been on life support since a chad—specifically a “hanging” chad—tipped the White House to George W. Bush in 2000. The painful reality of how our Constitution works was never more apparent. The Gore/Lieberman ticket won the popular vote 50,994,086 to 50,461,092 but lost the electoral vote 266 to 271.

There was a lot more to it, but the punchline is that the U.S. Supreme Court ruled Bush the winner because he won the electoral vote. It's a tribute to the American national character that we weathered that cataclysm without civil war, but it left a bad taste in the electorate's mouth.

During the 2016 Republican primary, when it looked as if Donald Trump would win the popular vote but still not reach the delegate threshold for nomination, that bad taste turned sour. Riding high on populism and “throw the bums out,” Trump complained that the election was rigged because the people wanted him, and whomever the people wanted, they should get. Fortunately for the country, Trump reached the delegate threshold, and we were spared a debacle that would have made 2000's cataclysm look like a lemonade stand.

Cue the national election. No controversy, scandal, “info dump,” lie, corruption, defection, or dirty trick has been left unturned. Chances aren't looking good for the Electoral College.

## **Trust History: You Don't Want Mob Rule**

The sad lot of the Electoral College is that what you see isn't what you get. Like the counter-intuitive fact that a tire blowout on the right requires a steering wheel correction to the left, the EC works backwards. What appears to deprive the populace of its power to decide a president is the very mechanism that preserves its power. It works that way because this isn't a democracy; not a pure one.

“Pure democracy” is just another phrase for “mob rule.” Dictatorship of the majority means 51 percent of the citizenry rule the other 49 percent. That minority has no rights except those the condescending majority grants. It works well for those in the 51 percent, not so much for those in the 49. Plato knew it, and James Madison, who knew his Plato, did too. Plato and Madison both recognized that justice and liberty for the minority is possible only when power is shared between groups in society.

Plato's “Republic” heavily influenced Madison and the other framers to devise a Constitution that protected the minority. Plato held that the ideal, i.e., just, form of government was one in which power was shared correctly between workers, warriors, and rulers. Madison held that the ideal, i.e., American, form of government was one in which power was shared correctly between

judges, lawmakers, and rulers.

Inspired as it is, our Constitution protects the minority while preserving the best of democracy: we the people elect representatives to run the government (republic) and we do so by majority vote (democracy). Ergo, this is a democratic republic. Ergo, an Electoral College.

### **The Electoral College Balances Voting Power**

The purpose of the Electoral College is to balance voting power across states so no one region of the country can gain too much control. If a president is elected by a simple majority of votes, a candidate who is wildly popular in one region (e.g., Ted Cruz in Texas, Mitt Romney in Utah) can ignore smaller regions and campaign only where large majorities are possible. Or a candidate who kills it in California and New York can write off “flyover country” completely.

If, however, the Electoral College elects a president, a candidate who is wildly popular in one region must also prevail in a number of sub-elections to win. The Electoral College ensures a better result for the country as a whole than the democratic power play wherein 51 percent of us matter and 49 percent of us don't.

So, the poor Electoral College sits condemned before its last meal because its power is misunderstood. How ironic—and tragic if no stay-of-execution arrives—that those who clamor for “one person-one vote” are seeking more power at the expense of power they already have.