



Florida Supreme Court Ruling Was Great, But U.S. Supreme Court Made a Damaging Partisan Move In Lockstep, Reporters Flay Supreme Court Stay

On Friday, the Florida Supreme Court created an entirely new set of recount procedures and ordered another recount to begin. On Saturday, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a stay. Over the weekend, journalists found only one set of partisan judges and only one way of settling the election fairly:

■ **NPR legal reporter Nina Totenberg on Saturday's *Inside Washington*:** "There is something unseemly about the desire not to have a statewide recount. That was true a month ago when Gore made, I thought, a reasonable offer to have everything recounted statewide and it's probably true now. And I think it will taint whoever ends up as President if there is not something on the order of a statewide recount."

■ ***Newsweek's* Evan Thomas on Saturday's *Inside Washington*:** "It seems to me arbitrarily, talk about arbitrary, just stopping the count when you have a lot of uncounted and undercounted votes is pretty darn arbitrary too. So we're struggling for the least bad solution here and it seems the least bad solution is, I think, what would have been a good faith effort, not uniform, but good faith effort to count votes in many, if not all, of these counties."

■ ***Wall Street Journal* Executive Washington Editor Al Hunt on Saturday's *CNN Capital Gang*:** "If the High Court had decided to review the deeply divided Florida Supreme Court decision after the recount was finished that would be understandable. Indeed, it would be necessary. But for the Supreme Court, the five-person majority, to argue that a mere count or recount would do irreparable harm is simply a cover, if you will, a disingenuous cover for the real agenda, which is desperately to prevent any count...The fix is in. The Supreme Court is going to go for Bush."

■ ***Time* reporter/columnist Margaret Carlson on Saturday's *Capital Gang*:** "What the Florida Supreme Court did was to cure the mistakes, the mistake that the United States Supreme Court said it made in the decision it issued

yesterday....what the Supreme Court seemed to say — and you know people were watching this, and they saw that, hey you could count these votes in a day. It looked fairly orderly, they were going to get done. It was judges, it was on videotape — was that they stopped the count right in front of us. Anything not to know who won."

Friday Was Paradise, Saturday Was Hell

"Perhaps no decision has sparked more anger and more division than Saturday's Supreme Court stay of the recounts that were in progress in Florida." — ABC's Charles Gibson on today's *Good Morning America*.

■ **ABC's George Stephanopoulos on Sunday's *This Week*:** "It probably is over for Al Gore. But what does this say about the Supreme Court? I mean, this Supreme Court which has said, you know, we

believe in federalism, we believe in state sovereignty, we believe in judicial restraint, has overturned a state law, a state court interpreting state law, and it's jumped right into the middle of a political dispute in a way that will hand the election to the party of the person that appointed them."

■ ***U.S. News & World Report's* Steve Roberts on CNN's *Late Edition*:** "I think they've made a big mistake. Scalia said that, in his comment, that one of the reasons for staying the count was to avoid creating a cloud over the Bush campaign. I think he's done exactly the opposite. I think staying the count has created the cloud. We saw all those pictures of the voters, of the counting yesterday, those votes are not counted. The Supreme Court is creating a cloud over a Bush presidency because those votes were not counted....they appeared to be acting along partisan lines, they appeared to be acting for partisan motives to protect George Bush from those votes being counted. I think they've done themselves a lot of damage." — *Brent Baker and Tim Graham*

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