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## CAPITOL ANALYSTS NETWORK, INC.

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### **2000 WILL NOT BE THE YEAR OF THE UNDERDOG**

The Iowa caucuses are two and one half weeks away. It's time for an overview of the political calendar – starting with CAN's reasoning why Vice President Gore will defeat Bradley for the Democratic President nomination. On the surface, Bradley has accomplished a lot. He has raised about the same amount of money as the Vice President, and has more cash on hand when free cash is most valuable. In the pivotal state of New Hampshire, he is out polling Gore, 48% to 45%. Despite 18 years in the Senate, he is viewed as a fresh face amid growing signs of "Clinton fatigue." The media, anxious to create excitement, is treating him more favorably than his opponent. It's easy to see why some see an even contest. However, they are wrong.

Imagine if the rules of basketball had been altered to require that one player, Bill Bradley, must always shoot the ball from center court. It's doubtful that "Dollar Bill" would have entered many record books for offensive statistics. On May 9, 1998, under the watchful eye of the Clinton White House, the Democratic National Committee (DNC) adopted its "Delegate Selection Rules" for the 2000 Democratic National Convention. The Administration, eager to give Al Gore the best chance to become the 2000 nominee, successfully pushed for rules that hampered anyone who took the court against their man in the primaries.

#### **Democratic Party Delegate Rules Stack the Deck in Gore's Favor**

Here are the essential rules for Democratic convention delegate selection. There are three different ways someone becomes one of the 4,366 delegates. Under "rule 8," the Secretary of the DNC shall officially announce who will be "superdelegates" by March 1. This will fill 799 delegate slots, or 18% of the total. Democratic Governors, Senators, and Congressmen will take 276 seats; Jimmy Carter, Walter Mondale, George Mitchell, and Jim Wright will take another four. The balance of the superdelegates will be members of the DNC, apportioned from the individual states. Under "rule 7C," 61.5%, or 2,675 delegates, will be chosen locally – at the Congressional district level or at an even smaller political division. Some districts will be granted only four locally appointed seats, but most will have six delegates. The remaining 20.5%, or 892, will be chosen as "at large" state delegates, which are awarded by population size. "Rule 12" says that district level and "at large" delegates must be awarded proportionally, among all contenders earning at least 15% of the vote.

Here is how the rules impede Bradley. Years before Bradley announced, Gore started wooing likely superdelegates, one on one. Many of the members of the DNC owe their positions to the Clinton Administration and are at risk of losing them if Bradley takes over the Party. These DNC members, with their jobs on the line, will vote to protect themselves. Members of Congress, and the Governors, who have more freedom of maneuver, nevertheless, have also come out overwhelmingly Gore. Bradley hasn't succeeded even in getting the endorsement of any Democratic Congressmen or Senators of his own home state, New Jersey! An accurate

apportionment of the superdelegates awards 700 to Gore and only 99 to Bradley. This advantage in superdelegates will prove decisive, barring a spectacular Gore collapse.

The “proportionality rule” is actually a device for devaluing the role of Democratic party voters in choosing their nominee. According to *Washington Post* reporter Thomas Edsall, in Congressional districts awarded 4 delegates, Bradley and Gore will split them two apiece unless someone wins by a margin of 62% to 38% or higher! In 6 delegate districts, Edsall reports someone must win by more than 58% to 42% to avoid splitting them three apiece. Even if he lost 45%-55% everywhere, Gore will gain 1,337 or half the district delegates. He also will earn another 401 “at large” delegates, for getting 45% of the states votes. Adding 700 superdelegates, plus 1,337 district delegates, plus 401 at large votes produces a total of 2,438 --with only 2,169 needed for nomination. Unless Democratic voters choose Bradley or Gore by more than 16% in many Congressional districts, it's clear that the superdelegates are the real decision makers. It will take a lot to convince these power brokers to abandon Gore. The fix is in.

Bradley's opportunity for an upset hinges on doing well in New Hampshire. An *ABC News* poll taken on December 15 found Bradley with a narrow lead, 48% to 45%, over the VP. Bradley has two major chances to prevail if he survives New Hampshire. He has to consistently win in the numerous following contests and break the superdelegate lock. Alternatively, he has to routinely win by 16% and make the superdelegates irrelevant. The first possibility, while unlikely, is more plausible. If a Bradley win in New Hampshire generates sufficient momentum, he might surprise on March 7<sup>th</sup>, piercing the aura of inevitability surrounding Gore. If Bradley starts winning more states than he loses, then the media eventually will point out the all powerful role of the superdelegates, pressuring them to go with the people's choice and to shun a backroom deal. *ABC News* also found Gore with a 64% to 31% national lead over the former Senator on December 15. Gore has a 70% chance of being the Democrat nominee.

### **Expect the Expected in the GOP Primary Race**

Unlike the Democrats, 80% of the GOP's 2,065 convention delegates are selected under “winner take all” methods. They rely on proportional representation to select the remainder, mostly in the last states to vote. In “winner take all” states, all delegates are awarded for winning a plurality on election day at the Congressional district level. Candidates gain additional delegates by winning also at the state level. For the GOP, victory is everything. An *ABC News/Washington Post* national poll on December 15<sup>th</sup> found the following support levels among GOP voters: Bush 72%, McCain 13%, Forbes 7%, all others, 6%. Right now, it looks like Bush will win just about everywhere, and run up a landslide.

The most likely alternative GOP scenario has McCain upend Bush in New Hampshire on February 1, follow up his victory there with wins in Delaware on February 8, South Carolina on February 19, and in his home state, Arizona, on February 22. This will put him in position to win other state primaries on March 7, when 29% of all the delegates will be selected and on March 14, when another 15% are chosen. Currently, McCain has just over a 50% of winning in New Hampshire. He was ahead by 9% last month, but the *New Hampshire Poll* reported this week the lead had slipped to a statistical tie, 36% for McCain and 33% for Bush. After New Hampshire,

Delaware and South Carolina currently look hopeless. Given his lead national lead, and factoring in his overwhelming financial advantage, George W. has a 90% chance of being the nominee.

The 2000 primary schedule, beginning January 24 and concluding June 6, follows.

		<b>Democrats</b>		<b>GOP</b>	
<b>January</b>	24	Iowa	Proportional	Iowa	
<b>February</b>	1	New Hampshire	Proportional	New Hampshire	Proportional
	8			Delaware	Winner Take All
	19			South Carolina	Winner Take All
	22			Arizona	Winner Take All
				Michigan	Winner Take All
<b>March</b>	7	California	Proportional	California	Winner Take All
		Connecticut	Proportional	Connecticut	Winner Take All
		Georgia	Proportional	Georgia	Winner Take All
		Hawaii	Proportional		
		Maine	Proportional	Maine	Proportional
		Maryland	Proportional	Maryland	Winner Take All
		Massachusetts	Proportional	Massachusetts	Winner Take All
		Missouri	Proportional	Missouri	Proportional
		New York	Proportional	New York	Winner Take All
		North Dakota	Proportional		
		Ohio	Proportional	Ohio	Winner Take All
		Rhode Island	Proportional	Rhode Island	Winner Take All
		Vermont	Proportional	Vermont	Winner Take All
		Washington	Proportional	Washington	Proportional
	9	South Carolina	Proportional		
	10	Colorado	Proportional	Colorado	Proportional
		Utah	Proportional	Utah	Winner Take All
				Wyoming	Other*
	11	Arizona	Proportional		
		Michigan	Proportional		
	11-12	Minnesota	Proportional		
		Nevada	Proportional		
	14	Florida	Proportional	Florida	Winner Take All
		Louisiana	Proportional	Louisiana	Winner Take All
		Mississippi	Proportional	Mississippi	Winner Take All
		Oklahoma	Proportional	Oklahoma	Winner Take All
		Tennessee	Proportional	Tennessee	Proportional
		Texas	Proportional	Texas	Proportional
	21	Illinois	Proportional	Illinois	Winner Take All
	25	Wyoming	Proportional	Minnesota	Other*
	27	Delaware	Proportional		
<b>April</b>	4	Kansas	Proportional	Kansas	Winner Take All
		Pennsylvania	Proportional	Pennsylvania	Winner Take All
		Wisconsin	Proportional	Wisconsin	Winner Take All
	15	Virginia	Proportional		
	22	Alaska	Proportional		

	25			Minnesota	Winner Take All
<b>May</b>	2	D.C.	Proportional	D.C.	Unknown
		Indiana	Proportional	Indiana	Winner Take All
		North Carolina	Proportional	North Carolina	Proportional
	9	Nebraska	Proportional	Nebraska	Proportional
		West Virginia	Proportional	West Virginia	Proportional
	16	Oregon	Proportional	Oregon	Proportional
	19			Alaska	Unknown
				Hawaii	Proportional
	20			Kentucky	Proportional
	23	Arkansas	Proportional	Arkansas	Proportional
				Idaho	Proportional
		Kentucky	Proportional		
	25			Nevada	Winner Take All
<b>June</b>	6	Alabama	Proportional	Alabama	Proportional
		Montana	Proportional	Montana	Proportional
		New Jersey	Proportional	New Jersey	Proportional
		New Mexico	Proportional	New Mexico	Proportional
		South Dakota	Proportional	South Dakota	Proportional

\*Delegates run as individuals and may or may not declare who they support

### **Bush Still Leads in the Polls and the Money Race for the General Election**

Assuming the party frontrunners survive their primary contests, current polling predicts a lopsided win in the electoral college for Governor Bush. An *ABC News* national poll of December 15 found Bush ahead of Gore, 55% to 39%. An earlier *CNN/Gallup* poll found a Bush advantage 56% to 40%. Polls this far out have value; they establish the baseline advantage for the leading candidate, and they generate additional opportunities.. If the candidates have equal resources and run equally skillful campaigns, then December polls will predict November results.

However, the candidates will not have equal resources. Bush already has raised more money than any candidate in history, and unencumbered by the legal limitations that come with accepting federal matching funds, he plans to raise even more. The sales effort is made easier by the large lead in the polls. Governor Bush probably will not have to part with much of his existing treasure in dispatching Forbes and McCain, and he'll have even more later. He should have a record hoard to deploy between April and the GOP Convention which starts on July 31.

Expect a media Bush blitz nationwide, with especially heavy coverage in pivotal states like California, New Jersey, and Michigan. The goals of this campaign will be to define in positive terms who is this unknown Texan and to establish what he stands for. Two signs the media program is working will be an increase in Bush's favorable/unfavorable ratio and a growing percentage of people who have made up their minds firmly they plan to vote for him. Don't expect a much larger lead in the national polls. It's rare for any Presidential candidate to enjoy a lead greater than the one Bush already has.

By comparison, the Gore campaign may have to rely on the kindness of Bill Bradley to avoid being broke for months. If Bradley stays within 16% of Gore, then the race could extend

well into April when the roll of the superdelegates proves decisive. Such a long contest will exhaust Gore's modest treasury. Under the campaign finance laws, he isn't eligible for general election financing until he is formally nominated in mid-August. Gore may have to use publicized "official events" as the Vice President to generate TV images that reach our family rooms. Bradley can help his party if he leaves the race quickly once its clear that his jump shots front center court aren't going in.

In 1996, President Clinton ran for renomination unopposed, allowing him to conserve his resources. He used his money wisely, firming up his support in strategic states. Bob Dole, however, had to fight deep into the primaries before prevailing over Forbes and Buchanan. He also made the tactical mistake of resigning from the Senate which eliminated press coverage of "official events." The unequal allocation of media resources doomed the Dole effort. It would be ironic if Clinton's Vice President suffered the same fate.

Below please find the most recent two-way Bush/Gore polls for 32 states. For now, there's little reason to introduce a Reform Party candidate into the analysis. The Reform Party candidate will play a role only if the race narrows considerably. Bush is ahead in 28 states, Gore in 2, and they are tied in 2. Electoral votes are awarded on a winner take all basis, state by state, to the candidate who wins at least a plurality. If you wish to look for bell weather states, follow Delaware. It votes with the Presidential winner more often than any other state.

State	Bush	Gore	Lead	State	Bush	Gore	Lead
Texas	68	19	49	Nevada	47	35	12
Idaho	61	20	41	New Hampshire	52	40	12
Montana	62	23	39	Iowa	52	40	12
Arizona	59	31	28	Oregon	49	37	12
Mississippi	58	31	27	Pennsylvania	49	37	12
Nebraska	58	33	25	<b>Delaware</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>11</b>
Oklahoma	60	35	25	New Jersey	48	40	8
Colorado	46	23	23	Massachusetts	46	38	8
Virginia	55	33	22	Michigan	47	41	6
Ohio	56	37	19	Minnesota	44	39	5
Louisiana	53	35	18	Hawaii	39	37	2
New Mexico	52	34	18	Maryland	43	41	2
South Carolina	54	37	17	Vermont	41	41	0
Washington	50	34	16	California	45	45	0
Connecticut	52	36	16	New York	42	44	-2
Florida	49	34	15	Tennessee	42	49	-7

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