OPINION

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There is No Shame in Bush's Game

Major corporations win and average Americans lose

BY JUDGE GREG MATHIS As we approach the end of George W. Bush's presidential term, a close look at his record will been the primary beneficiaries of his policies. On the other hand, average Americans are being left

behind to scramble for jobs, tive think tank that usually sup- most profits from the Iraq invasion. passed but not fully funded for

repeatedly championed causes that has spent more than \$90 billion a primarily benefit corporate America. year on grants, subsidies, and loan His immigration plan to permit ille- guarantees and other forms of corgal immigrants to work in America porate welfare. Perhaps the biggest was designed to provide corpora- corporate boon of all has come from tions with a steady supply of cheap the invasion of Iraq. There, war labor. Last year, on the advice and contractors and energy companies prodding of corporate leaders, Bush pushed a \$383 billion corporate tax reveal that major corporations have cut through Congress - reducing taxes on corporate dividends and pany where Vice President Cheney stock sales

healthcare and quality education. ports Republican policies, com-The Bush administration has plains that the Bush administration have made tens of billons of dollars in profits in less than 18 months.

Halliburton, the energy comserved as chairman immediately The Cato institute, a conserva- prior to taking office, has made the

Currently there is a bill pending that success. would provide \$31 billion in tax breaks and subsidies to energy companies. There is obviously no shame in their game.

three years of the Bush administration our Federal budget went from a \$250 billion surplus to a half a trillion-dollar deficit, nearly three million people lost their jobs, and

Even when Americans citizens have a chance to do something about our healthcare crisis by importing cheaper drugs from other When it comes to average Americountries, the Bush administration cans, I cannot think of one major has sided with the pharmaceutical Bush policy that has primarily ben- companies, ordering the Justice efited them. Indeed within the first Department to sue any state that that have sided with us. Otherwise, tries to sell its citizens cheaper prescription drugs purchased in

With these facts in hand, Amerithe No Child Left Behind Act was ber and side with the candidates



Judge Greg Mathis

we deserve what we get.

Judge Greg Mathis is chairman of the Rainbow PUSH-Excel Board and a national board member of cans must go to the polls in Novem- the Southern Christian Leadership

Voting Denied 'Déjà Vu'

BY MARC H. MORIAL

We haven't yet reached the final lap of the presidential campaign. But one can say with a gloomy confidence that America is on course to endure another scarring controversy over whether some

Americans are in danger of being wrongly denied their right to vote. The stunning aftermath of the 2000 election proved that voting concerns cannot be taken lightly.

A Harvard study found some 1.9 million Americans' ballots were discarded as spoiled, and other reports suggested non-whites cast half of those votes. Congress has enacted legislation and established a new federal agency, the Election Assistance Commission, to fix the flaws and ensure this year's voting goes smoothly.

the nation's history, November's ing-process in the state of Florida, pressure from a citizens' group, the list. Another was that just 61 of where four years ago the most Miami-Dade Election Reform Coa- the entire list were Hispanic. Thus,

serious doubt that its ber system has been cured voters' rights.

No American election for any office, especially the highest one in the land, can afford the suspicion of electoral skullduggery.

have called into question the technological capability of the new touch-screen machines installed in But at this most critical time in cials there knew a year ago the cover several egregious errors. machines had malfunctioned, but One was that the names of 2,100 election could, as the saying didn't publicly acknowledge the Floridians who had been granted goes, be déjà vu all over again. problems until two months ago - clemency, and thus were eligible Certainly, the news about the vot- after they were forced to do so by to vote, were on the banned-voter

widespread and egre- lition. These machines are the way gious voting break- that more than half the Florida elecdowns occurred, casts torate will have to vote this Novem-

An even more serious matter is of the potential for the state's process of purging its wholesale violations of lists of convicted felons. Florida doesn't allow those convicted of a Recent disclosures felony to vote without them petitioning to restore that right. In 2000, thousands of Floridians were turned away from the polls because they had been misidentified as being on the state's list of convicted felons; many of them were African Americans, who as a group overwhelmingly vote Democratic.

This year, Florida officials hired a private company to develop its felons list, but refused to make the document, which totaled some 47,000 names, available to the media until a judge ordered its release. Then, it didn't take jour-Miami-Dade County. Election offi- nalists and others long to dis-

the list would have led to the columnist Paul Krugman: "It esmany black voters-who as a group Florida, Hispanic voters tend to overwhelmingly vote Democratic-while allowing a significant number of Hispanics convicted office, especially the highest one in of a felony to vote.

a "methodological flaw" for the Commission on Civil Rights was glitch. Perhaps. But many critics right last month to ask the Justice subscribed to the view implicitly Department to investigate whether CEO of The National Urban

wrongful disenfranchisement of caped nobody's attention that in support Republicans."

No American election for any the land, can afford the suspicion Florida election officials blamed of electoral skullduggery. The U.S. expressed by "New York Times" Florida's process of purging its League.

voter rolls violated provisions of the Voting Rights Act.

Black America, and America, struggled mightily to expand the fundamental right of citizenshipaccess to the ballot. Everything possible must be done to prevent this November from being compared to November 2000.

Marc H. Morial is president and





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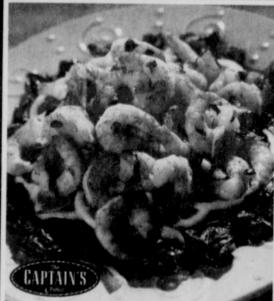


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