

Gallup: 60% of Americans Want a New Political Party. But, Why? A Crisis of Legitimacy

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A Gallup poll issued on September 25th is headlined [“Majority in U.S. Maintain Need for Third Major Party,”](#) and it opens: “A majority of Americans, 60%, say a third major political party is needed because the Republican and Democratic parties ‘do such a poor job’ of representing the American people.”

When Gallup started polling on this matter in 2003, only 40% wanted a different major party from the two existing major parties.

The only other time when as high as 60% wanted a new major party was in October 2013, when the government shut down — something that now threatens to repeat. No other period had a percentage this high.

78% of independents want there to be another “major” party; 47% of Democrats do; 45% of Republicans do.

The way the question has been phrased is: “In your view, do the Republican and Democratic parties do an adequate job of representing the American people, or do they do such a poor job that a third major party is needed?”

Consequently, for example, these findings have nothing to do with a desire of Americans for another Ralph Nader or Ross Perot; this would instead need to be “a third major party.” It would, in other words, need to be a party not of mere protest, but instead, one that has a real chance to win the White House, and Congress: i.e., a real and serious political contender.

A substantial majority of Americans think that each of the two existing major parties does “a poor job,” “of representing the American people.”

Americans do not feel that “the American people” are represented by *either* of the existing parties.

When this polling started in 2003, it was not yet clear to most Americans that President George W. Bush’s repeated statements that he had seen conclusive proof that Saddam Hussein was stockpiling weapons of mass destruction (WMD) were mere lies; it was not yet clear that Bush had not actually seen *any* such proof as he claimed existed; but, gradually the American public came to recognize that their government had, in fact, [lied them into invading](#) a country which actually posed no national security threat to the United States; and, so, gradually, this 40% rose to 48% in 2006, and then to 58% in 2007, as the realization that their government had lied finally sank in, gradually, among the American electorate.

By way of contrast, the 2008 economic crash seems to have had little, if any, impact upon this (in effect) repudiation of the U.S. Government, by the American people. That economic crash was, perhaps, widely viewed as having been a problem for the private economy, not primarily a governmental problem — as having been basically an “economic” instead of a “political” problem. (Whether it actually was that is another matter.) By contrast, clearly and incontrovertibly, the invasion of a foreign country on the basis of [false pretenses](#) was strictly a governmental (not at all a merely economic) problem; and, since both of the two major Parties had supported it, both of them had been responsible for this international war-crime: invasion on the basis of false pretenses.

Never before in American history had the people been so clearly abused by their Government. Even [the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident which precipitated the U.S. invasion of North Vietnam](#) had been based upon an authentic existing geostrategic threat, of communists taking South Vietnam. By contrast, the invasion of Iraq was entirely unjustified, by any real geostrategic or ideological issue. And [the President, Bush, had simply lied through his teeth about it](#). This started the U.S. down the road to its current massive public disillusionment, that the government, which is supposedly “representing the American people,” is instead actually fraudulent — on a war-and-peace issue, no less. Both of the existing political parties participate in, rather than expose, this fraud, at the highest levels.

And, so, the American people are at a political turning-point, of seriously questioning whether they live in an actual democracy — a country in which the possibility, that the government represents the public instead of some controlling individual or group of individuals, exists. 60% now think that that possibility doesn’t exist — neither party represents it. They think that America, at the very highest governmental level, is no longer an authentic democracy. There actually exists [strong evidence](#) that it’s not an authentic democracy.

Another Gallup poll, issued on September 19th, was headlined [“75% in U.S. See Widespread Government Corruption.”](#) 75% answered “Yes” to: “Is corruption widespread throughout the government in this country?” This could offer yet another explanation as to why 60% of Americans answer no to the question of “do the Republican and Democratic parties do an adequate job of representing the American people?” However, unlike the proposed Iraq War explanation, that one doesn’t possess any clear relationship to 2003. Gallup reported, in their poll of perceived corruption, that, “the percentage of U.S. adults who see corruption as pervasive has never been less than a majority in the past decade.” Gallup provided no further details, except that, when Obama came into office, the percentage was 66%. So, a decade back, in 2005, the percentage was somewhere above 50%, and then it was 66% when Obama entered the White House in 2009, and it’s 75% today.

Regardless of what the explanation is, the American people are feeling increasingly alienated from the government that supposedly represents them. If the U.S. Government is a democracy at all, it’s one whose legitimacy is increasingly being doubted by its public.

The U.S. Government thus now faces a crisis of legitimacy.

Investigative historian Eric Zuesse is the author, most recently, of [They’re Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST’S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#).

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