
'If Electoral College votes against Trump, US will get worst constitutional crisis in its history'

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The system of the Electoral College is corky, but it is not going away anytime soon. Each party thinks they can work the system to their advantage. The losers complain about it. The winners are happy with it, says political cartoonist Ted Rall.

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Donald Trump may have won the US presidential election, but he faces one last hurdle - the Electoral College which convenes on Monday to vote for America's 45th leader.

Technically, it has the power to block him and electors are facing immense pressure from those hoping to scupper a Trump presidency.

RT: *How can you explain all the pressure about the vote of the Electoral College members to usher in Donald Trump as President of the United States?*

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TR: Every time there is a situation as in 2000 when George W. Bush technically won the Electoral College vote over Al Gore, who won the popular vote - and there have been other examples in the history - the losers always look to the Electoral College as sort of a *“maybe we can get these guys to change their minds after the fact”*. But the fact is that historically, although technically it is legally allowed for members of the Electoral College to change their vote, there isn't much precedent for it. The fact is that they are expected to vote in accordance with the way that their states ordered them to vote. They are appointed by their respective political parties and 99 percent of the

time, they always have cast their votes exactly the way that they are supposed to. It does seem a little bit churlish at this point for Democrats to be complaining about the Electoral College. If the election had gone the other way and Hillary Clinton had won with the minority of the popular vote but had won the Electoral College, you could probably guess that the complaints would be coming from the Republican side. As they say *"Hypocrisy, thy name is politics."*

RT: *What can you tell about the history of the Electoral College? Is there any chance that pledged electors will change their votes over to Hillary Clinton?*

TR: The Electoral College does have a long and strange history. The US is the only country that I know of that has a system like this. And it is balanced in order to benefit more rural states. The way it works is basically the number of Electoral College votes per population tends to benefit small states like Rhode Island and Vermont over large states like California, Texas and Florida. So, it is a system that is quirky. But I think it is not going away anytime soon. And the reason is that each party thinks that they can work the system to their advantage. The losers always complain about it. The winners are always quite happy with it. You would need a bipartisan effort on the part of both Democrats and Republicans to get rid of it. And while there are certainly grounds to complain about it. It is not direct democracy; it is not purely one man, one vote or one person, one vote. But nevertheless it also does serve to give a more equal vote to people who live in parts of the country that might not otherwise get that much attention. The Democrats are kind of looking foolish by not only trying to look anti-democratic by trying to defy the system that they tried to work and lost fair and square. This is just not going to work. And the last thing you want to do in politics is to try to get involved in a battle that you don't have any chance of winning. There is just literally no way that you are going to get forty or more of this pledged electors to change their votes over to Hillary Clinton.

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RT: *What could be the consequences if members of the Electoral College really decide to change their mind?*

TR: If you remember during the campaign Democrats really thought they are going to win and not by a little bit, they thought that Hillary Clinton really thought she was going to win by a landslide. And many of the polls said the same thing. And at that time there was a lot of pressure on Donald Trump to agree, pledge and promise that he was going to honor the results of the election when he lost. Well, he didn't lose. Now, you have the Democrats

doing the same thing that they didn't want Donald Trump to do, which is an attempt to delegitimize the winner. Trump won the election fair and square. No matter what any Democrats say, there is just no allegation that there were millions of votes were changed somehow by magical means... I don't think they are thinking this through very carefully. If by some miracle they were able to get the Electoral College to change its mind and install Hillary Clinton, this would create a constitutional crisis which would be unprecedented in American history. And nobody knows where that would lead. You'd have the odd situation, and you'd be doing it at a time when the Supreme Court – which could be called upon to settle it – isn't in any position to do so due to the death of Antonin Scalia. You now have a 4-4 balance between Democrats and Republicans on the Court. So literally the system couldn't cure the problem they're creating. They really need to stop this... the country is already terribly divided in the aftermath of this very difficult and divisive election. If they want to take on Donald Trump there are better ways to do so.

The statements, views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of RT.
