



PBS Anchor Stacked the Deck for Gore With Eight Questions from the Left, and Two from the Right

Lehrer Picks Pile of Liberal Questioners

Some network stars loved last night's citizen questioners in the third presidential debate. (See box.) PBS anchor and moderator Jim Lehrer reported the questioners were "voters who were identified as being uncommitted by the Gallup organization." Lehrer chose which of the more than 100 people would ask questions. He did not note these voters might be undecided between Al Gore and Ralph Nader. Out of 15 questions from the "uncommitted," eight leaned to the left.

ONE: "How do you feel about HMOs and insurance companies making the critical decisions that affect people's lives instead of the medical professionals? And why are the HMOs and insurance companies not held accountable for their decisions?"

TWO: "Are either of you concerned with finding some feasible way to lower the price of pharmaceutical drugs, such as education on minimizing intake, a revamp of the FDA process or streamline the drug companies' procedures instead of just finding more money to pay for them."

THREE: "Would you be open to the ideal of a national health care plan for everybody? And if not, why? If so, is it something you would try to implement if you're elected into office? And what would you do implement this plan?"

FOUR: "In the school district in which I work and in countless others across the nation, we face crumbling school buildings, increased school violence, student apathy, overcrowding, lack of funding, law suits, the list goes on. I could mention low teacher pay, but I won't. What can you tell me and my fellow American teachers today about your plans for our immediate future?"

FIVE: "We'd like to know why you object to the Brady

handgun bill, if you do object to it. Because in a recent TV ad, it showed that the National Rifle Association says if you are elected that they will be working out of your office.... actually that kind of bothers me, you know, when I see that ad like that. I wonder if you could explain that ad to me?"

SIX: "The family farms are disappearing and having a hard time, even in the current positive economic environment. What steps would you or your administration take on agricultural policy developments to protect the

family farms for this multi-functional service they perform?"

SEVEN: "How will your administration address diversity, inclusive ness? And what role will affirmative action play in your overall plan?"

EIGHT: "In one of the last debates held, the subject of capital punishment came up. And in your response to the question you seemed to overly enjoy, as a matter of fact proud

that Texas leads the, led the nation in execution of prisoners. Sir, did I misread your response, and are you really, really proud of the fact that Texas is number one in executions?" (Unlike questioners five and eight here, no questioner hit Gore in this personal way.)

The only two questions that might be designated as coming from the right concerned a question about an overcommitted military, and one about parents struggling with Hollywood entertainment. — *Tim Graham*

Three Cheers for Pro-Gore Questions

"I think three cheers for the citizen questions, Diane. These real people last night produced the most revealing debate of the series." —

ABC's George Stephanopoulos on today's *Good Morning America*.

Matt Lauer: **"So last night was the chance for undecided voters to ask the questions..."**

Chris Matthews: **"Did you think those people in the room last night were undecided? I thought they were all pro-Gore."** — *NBC's Today*.

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