

OPINION & EDITORIAL

Editorial

President George W. Bush will befall us soon.

That's right, and for the second time in the history of the American Republic, a son will follow in his father's footsteps to the White House.

The delicious circumstance of George W. Bush taking over from Bill Clinton who so soundly defeated his father, George Bush Sr., can not be overlooked.

There is one single person to blame for this election result: Ralph Nader.

A man, for sure, who forced companies and governments to make products safer for everybody, but a man whose short-sightedness will cost all of us, even Canadians, a lot of sleep. While his ostensible aim: official status (and millions in public money for the 2004 Presidential election) for the Green Party failed.

The argument that Nader spoke to disaffected voters is partially true. A good chunk, as high as 30% some report, of Nader supporters would not have voted in the Presidential election otherwise. But, clearly, the majority of those who would have voted without Nader on the ballot, would have voted for Al Gore, and he would have carried the states of Florida, Oregon, Wisconsin, and several others.

With returns so close, the official results won't be truly known until every single absentee ballot from overseas is counted. Nonetheless, recriminations have already started within the Democratic Party.

Gore's embarrassing withdrawn offer of concession was just the latest.

The first mistake many will point to is the failure to allow Bill Clinton to campaign for Gore in Arkansas.

It is true that Bill Clinton is a polarizing influence Gore would like to keep away from those Clinton may alienate. But Gore genuinely failed to recognize the state-by-state dynamics. It's fine for Clinton to hustle Arkansas, but it would have counted against Gore in other states. Why not let that work for the Democrats?

All this armchair-quarterbacking aside, the result of Tuesday's election is one we're stuck with, and, in the end, the impact on Canada is probably not so bad as it may appear.

True, Bush is not the brightest light on the Christmas tree and, yes, he favours such policies as killing the United Nations Peacekeeping by withdrawing US troops, disengaging from Europe and pushing the limits of the anti-ballistic treaty with the anti-missile defense system which, if fully implemented (Bush's dream scenario) it could see nuclear missile installations within Canada!

In addition, Bush's stance on oil exploration in the Alaska National Arctic Wildlife Refuge (borders the Yukon) would essentially wipeout a Caribou migration path and the Gwich'in First Nation. Just because residents in the State of Alaska obviously support Bush is no excuse for eliminating a National wildlife refuge.

What remains as solace, however, is the lack of clarity in the results. While Bush wins the White House, he lost the popular vote. Not much of a Mandate from the People. This result robs him of a lot of political sway in the Congress and the Senate. And since both Houses are split nearly evenly between the parties, nothing particularly partisan will get passed very easily.

As a so-called Weak Governor (the State Texas has other officials with significantly more power than the governor), Bush has little experience with the power of the Presidency.

People of good conscience can only hope he remains stymied by his lack of experience and gridlock in the House and the Senate.

The truly worrisome downside of the Bush victory is simple: Hillary in 2004.

• Joseph W.J. FitzPatrick III

Letters to the Editor

Minister comments on CIBC Student Loans

To the Editor:

I would like to comment on articles published recently about the services offered by CIBC to New Brunswick students.

First of all, I would like to specify that we are definitely very committed to offering better quality service to all student loan holders in New Brunswick. That is why, when we negotiated an agreement with CIBC, we made sure that the service offered was as accessible as possible to all students in the province in both official languages.

The Student Financial Services Branch issues a loan certificate and sends it to the educational institution attended by the student. After the certificate is signed by the student and the institution, it is sent directly to CIBC in a prepaid envelope. Students are not required to go to a CIBC branch to receive their loans.

Students may inform CIBC of their intention to have the funds transferred to the banking institution of their choice, so they can continue to carry out their

regular transactions, such as paying for their rent, groceries, etc., at their own bank. If there are any problems, they can contact CIBC at a toll-free number.

The contract signed with CIBC guarantees the delivery of service in French and English.

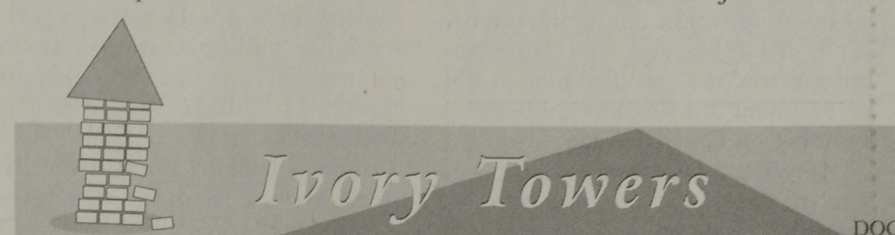
The Student Financial Services Branch conveyed its concerns to CIBC about service delivery in French. CIBC has assured us that it acknowledges its contractual obligations and is taking action to rectify the situation.

CIBC representatives have indicated

they are taking this matter very seriously. CIBC offers bilingual services across Canada through its National Student Centre and electronic banking services, and is not only taking steps to hire bilingual staff, but also to improve the bilingual capacity of existing staff.

CIBC will continue to look at its operations to identify any weaknesses and deal with them as required.

Elvy Robichaud
Education Minister
Province of New Brunswick



In the office of Bill Gateway, Head of Virtual Services



To the Editor:

To vote Liberal or to not vote Liberal, that is the question that hovers above us like vultures preparing to gnaw at the carcass of yet another electoral campaign. Questions come, waiting to be answered, by the oh, so difficult answers that we must endeavor to make.

Oh, Wilfrid, why have you forsaken us? Can the populace lick the wounds of two past terms of Liberal governance, allowing the auto-pilot to continue flying at the helm of Jean Chretien's great non-existent

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