

MICHAEL C. COVERT

(He is, he says, a new father living in Astoria.)

I have always voted Republican since I came of age, but curiously in the 2000 election I could not bring myself to vote for George Bush. I voted for Ralph Nader because as we enter the 3rd Millennium it is obvious that the environment is the most important issue facing us — that is, if we wish to breathe clear air or drink and bathe in clean water.

As a Republican I believe in self-determination, personal responsibility and free will; but as the election drew near I felt the only person who has worked tirelessly for the interests of the country and its inhabitants was clearly Ralph Nader. His politics are more closely related to socialism but it was time that I made a statement to myself if nobody else.

When the election was over and the debacle that was Florida ensued, I was drawn down to the political show like one who witnesses a car wreck. There were so many accusations and so much partisan brokering it was almost too much to bear, but clearly I found myself in George W.'s corner. Yes, there were votes not counted in Dade and other heavily Democratic counties, but a vote to be counted in any county or state in this country in the first place must pass certain pre-approved standards. Voters are expected to study the ballot and know the issues! No one else can perform the task for you.

Changes need to be made in type, construction and mechanics of the ballot card system in this country — but in the next election! The idea that we can go back and recount the ballots with different standards for different counties is ludicrous. If the recount were to happen manually then all counties in Florida must be considered with the exact standards for all. This is where the Florida State Supreme Court failed in its measure and the U.S. Supreme Court recognized that fact.

There are many legal scholars and concerned citizens who believe the U.S. Supreme Court stole the election, but I truly believe they made a decision that was tough to make at best if not impossible.

George W. Bush is our legitimate President. Whether he is a good one remains to be seen.

This country desperately needs new direction, especially where energy is concerned. If President Bush continues his cozy bedroom relationship with Big Oil and the energy status-quo, we all lose.

Let's hope there is more to this man than we have seen, but it is in our interest to stand united and look to the future. Four years will come and go rather quickly and the people will have their say again.

For all the cynics out there, remember that both George Bush and Al Gore received 48% of the vote. Clinton was elected on only 42%.

Armageddon has not arrived, the sun will rise tomorrow. I just hope we see it through the haze.

KAREN BAIN

(She is theatrical director of Clatsop Community College, known also as Harvard on the Hill, and an artist.)

I think the 2000 election was utterly absurd. We as a country would be self-righteous and appalled if it happened somewhere else.

George Bush's rightwing Christian agenda is exclusive and frightening. He is starting the Cold War all over again.

It is ridiculous that in a country as wealthy as we are the insane appetites and addictions for things keep us from what's most important, such as funding education and health care.

I think the results of the election are taking us farther into a vapid soulless direction. It is more important now than ever to be kind to our neighbors.

My only hope is the 'sleeping giant' will awake.

DEAC GUIDI

(He is a speech teacher at Harvard on the Hill)

I think the result of the 2000 election is pushing us towards an irrational society rather than an open world society. That's what Habermas says.



We're letting our economy and politics dictate who we are rather than our relationships with one another. The current regime is perpetuating this idea.

JACK SCHARBACH

(He is a freelance photographer who lives in Naselle, Washington. He often characterizes his acute sensitivity to ecocide as "eating my liver.")

The outcome of the 2000 election was less significant than the fact it was so close. My thinking is that it's quite like global warming — it's not certain if any one particular storm is related to global warming. It's the same with an election, whether it has anything to do with democracy because we're so bamboozled by public relations experts and advertisers that it's not clear what we're voting about anymore.

After World War 2 people identified with candidates and the country's history and future. I don't see that people make those identifications anymore.

BOB ASTLE

(He lives in Naselle.)

What continues to bother me is that George Bush wouldn't allow a recount and why he even wants to be President without it.

Why would someone want to be President if after a recount it turns out to be illegitimate?

TERRY ERICKSON

(He does just about everything. "Life is good," he says to everybody.)

I think the results of the election aren't as important to history and won't bring about as much change as the circumstance that occurred — the controversy around the swinging chads, etc., is going to make people question the way we elect Presidents.

The electoral college system is antiquated. I don't know if I trust E-voting as much as I trust the people who count votes in the counties, but I know we have to come up with a new method for a more faithful and more accurate count to reflect people's wishes.

Let's just hope the powers that be don't wipe out the Alaska wilderness.

JIM WILKINS

(He is a contractor, restaurateur, musician and former Astoria City Councilman.)

To me it is clear Al Gore won the 2000 Presidential election. Consequently the majority of the American people have opted for a 'kinder, gentler' government.

Instead George Bush is actively removing all ecological safeguards. He made certain promises during his campaign to be President, but now he is breaking those promises. He is taking money away from his promise that "no child will be left behind" when it comes to education. He has broken his promises about reducing carbon dioxide emissions and global warming.

But his approach to tax cuts is the worst — there should be no tax cuts. Compared to most developed countries we are under taxed. I don't think people appreciate the things government does for us. We are the government. There is no Us or Them. The government is Us.

Bush's damage might be short-term, but he has set back longer term abilities to deal with the future.

R. LOUIS RICHARDS

(He claims to be an inept hermit; he is a solitary thinker of many ideas who lives "on the Columbia River North Shore.")

Everybody says the same thing: "I never thought I'd see this in my lifetime." An election so obviously stolen. And the press getting so quickly behind it.

They stole the election and carry on like they have mandate.

Every day it's a new surprise — arsenic in the water, the global warming accords; CO².

My old Wobbly friend Will Slayton used to say: "There's nothing wrong with the Republican Party that couldn't be cured with funerals."

I voted for Ralph Nader. I was voting against the two party system.

DAN ARMSTRONG

(He is an expatriate Astorian, once removed.)

The sad truth is America got just what it owes. An oil man for a nation of car freaks.

Two things, however, were lost: Our faith in the election process and our faith in the Supreme Court.

How sad. Like another little banana republic an election was stolen by the kin of the CIA.

And now we know also that the Supreme Court is just another political instrument.

ROBERT ADAMS

(He is a photographer with several books of his work published.)

I am beginning to think there are two types of Democrats: Yellow Dog and Yellow Stain — the latter being the type who don't fight to the limit to stop George Bush.

(*Yellow Stain' is from *The Caine Mutiny*, the name the crew gave to cowardly Captain Queeg.)

I don't know what's in the future. But I met with some Reed College students the other day, and one of them gave me this quote from Pablo Neruda:

"It is not incumbent on you to finish the task. Neither are you free to give it up."



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One day while we were all having
out someone asked me what I
thought.

Hey! What'd I say

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