

He believes the U.S. is second to no-one.

Many had thought Elvis was dead too.

Clinton — the anti-Bush vote

"While I have wobbled somewhat in my political affiliation in Canadian politics over the last generation, in American politics I have never wobbled. Ever since 1936 I have been voting the straight Democratic ticket."

Thus wrote the late historian Frank Underhill, as astute an observer of North American politics as this country has ever produced. Since 1970, when he wrote these lines, Canada has moved to the right.

Nevertheless I expect most Canadians still favor the Democratic party, whose nominee is one of the strongest candidates they have put forward in many years.

Critics cite Bill Clinton's lack of experience in foreign policy as a weakness. To me it seems axiomatic Clinton is the only candidate capable of giving some meaning to the New World Order that is supposed to have emerged following the end of the Cold War. Bush and the Republicans are still beating their chests and boasting of their victory over communism.

Without denying the great contribution Americans made to defending Europe since the end of World War II, how refreshing it is

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to hear Clinton and Gore recognize in the final analysis it was the people of East Germany, Poland and ultimately Russia who rose up and deposed their leaders. It will take many years of lucid leadership before this point sinks in to the average American voter. But if and when it does, we may really see the start of a new era in international relations. In any event, American elections are not usually decided on foreign policy matters.

Character is another issue in the peculiar world of American presidential politics where many think Bush has an advantage. Again I think the issue can be viewed in Clinton's favor.

Why not vote for a President whose problems (and character) are closer to those of the average American than has been the case with recent incumbents? I particularly like the idea of a President

from one of the nation's poorest states. Surely he will have greater insight into the social and economic problems facing Americans.

The election will be won or lost over domestic policy and here I have some sympathy for Clinton's critics. They claim his numbers do not add up. If you increase taxes only on those with incomes over \$200,000, can you then implement the social programs he has promised and still reduce the deficit?

But before rejecting Clinton on these grounds, what is the alternative? Here we must remember one of the oldest cliches in politics — the opposition usually does not win an election; the government loses it.

The Bush administration is perceived to be responsible for the present economic recession. It is viewed as representing the interests of the wealthy against the middle and lower income groups. It has failed to build a kinder, gentler society.

When Americans go to the ballot box, many will be voting against George Bush. The most likely beneficiary is Bill Clinton and that ultimately is how and why he will be elected.