

What to expect

issues, however superficially, but the focus is on careful marketing of personalities. Bush, therefore, thoughtfully proclaimed himself an environmentalist as he stood before Lake Erie or Boston Harbor, as well as in the debates.

What is significant is the way in which image marketing on television, fed by money from special interest political action committees over the last fifteen years, has further weakened an already undisciplined party system; if anything, politicians in the United States now are even more dependent on such powerful interests. Even federal funding of presidential candidates has weakened the party structures by focusing on aid to particular candidates, not to the parties. (These developments, ironically, grew out of reforms designed to combat the corruption surrounding large individual contributions to politicians that pervaded the Nixon administration.)

For Canadians this development means that we must realize that, even more than in the past, the intentions of any presidential candidate, however forcefully stated or meant, can easily be ambushed by Senators and Representatives dependent on Political Action Committee money and influence. Acid rain and trade protectionism are outstanding examples of issues where such

groups can do much to shape policy.

What, then, can Canadians expect from the Bush administration over the next four years? On foreign policy issues it is a good bet that Bush will continue the confrontational, military-based policies of his predecessor in Central America. With respect to the Soviet Union, he may be even more skeptical than Reagan about the possibility of making deals. The Bush administration may put a little pressure on the European NATO allies to step up their military expenditures, and it will be pleased if the Canadian government pursues its military build-up. On trade the crucial event for Canada was the return of the Conservative government. The Bush administration would have been appalled by a defeat for the free trade agreement here.

Finally, on the environment most Canadians will probably be unhappy over Bush's vague statements on acid rain reductions and his role in the Reagan administration in weakening environmental regulations. It is true, however, that in carrying out these policies Bush must contend with a Democratic Congress; But many of those Democrats are conservative on some issues, reflecting the party's general move in that direction in the last fifteen years. □

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