

Our Opinion

Canadian politics: the next generation

Watching election night USA, as President-elect Bill Clinton rolled over a tired incumbent named George Bush, I must admit I felt a little envious of the choice Americans had in choosing their president.

If they wanted to "stay the course", as Bush's famous saying goes, they could've stayed with him. Whether you like George Bush or not, you know he's not going to do anything really crazy. He may not have had the "vision thing" (another Bushism), and he probably wasn't capable of leading the US where it needs to go. But still, he was a safe choice.

If they wanted government to be run on the same principles as IBM or McDonald's, there was Ross Perot. He would've done just what he'd said he'd do: drastically cut spending, raise taxes, stand firm and take the heat. Problem is, the government isn't a business, and people don't want it run that way. That's not to say it should run as inefficiently as it is now, but the goal of government shouldn't be to turn a profit. It should serve the people at as little cost as humanly possible.

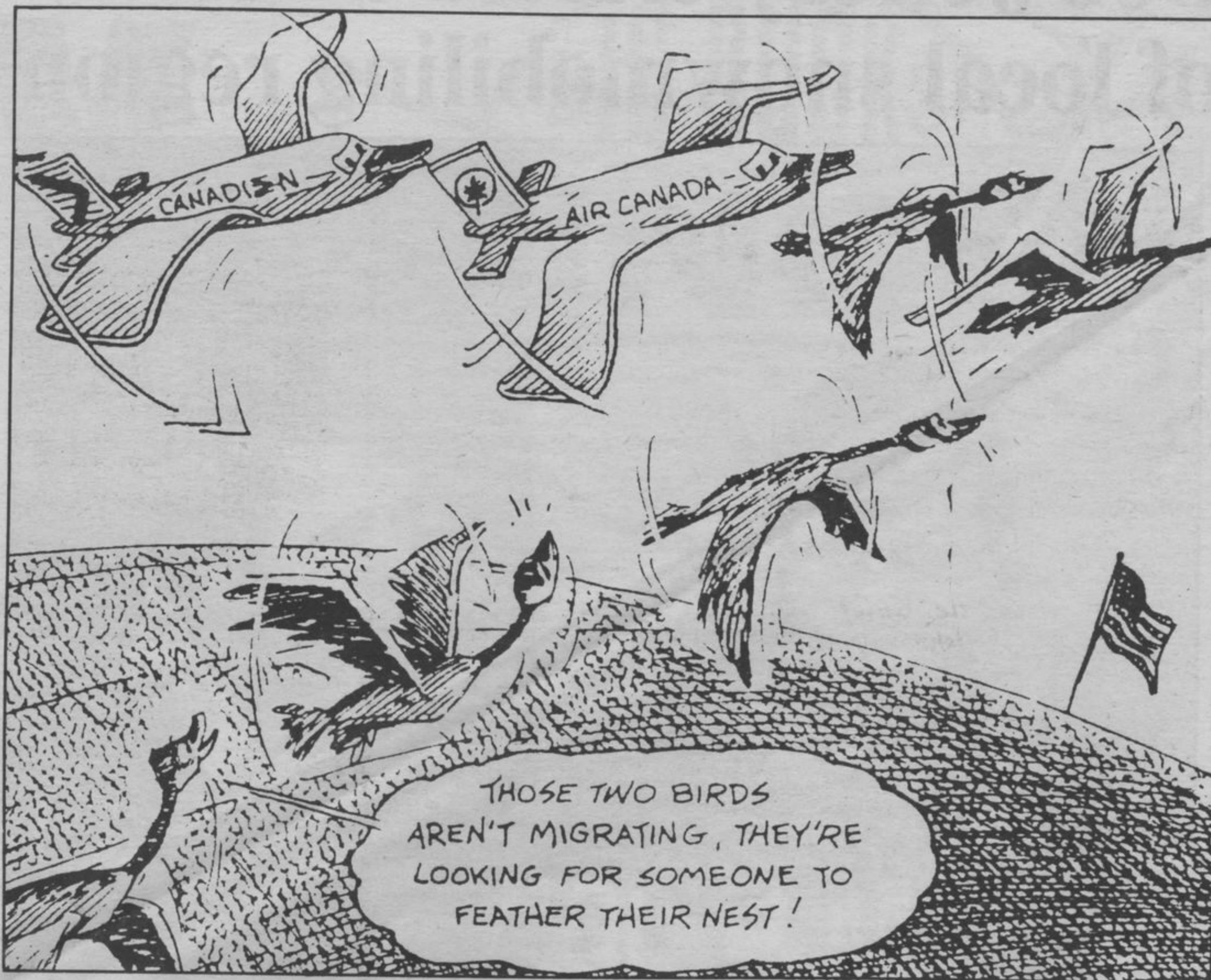
Canada already has politicians like Bush and Perot: Brian Mulroney, Jean Chretien, Audrey McLaughlin and Preston Manning to name just a few. But regardless of your political stripe, can you really foresee a majority of Canadians supporting any one of these people? I can see pockets of support for each among different groups, but the chances of any of them gaining consensus support are pretty remote.

That's what makes Clinton's victory so remarkable. He managed to gain support from virtually all ages, incomes, races and from both genders. The religious right and pro-life voters are about the only groups where Clinton did poorly. He was a candidate with a number of ideas that appealed to left and right wing voters alike. His proposals for welfare reform is a good example. Rather than threatening to make it less or more generous, as politicians usually do, Clinton has a plan for retraining recipients for a period of time, after which they must work if they are able. Words aren't deeds, but at least his words are impressive, and that's a start.

But welfare reform is just one example. What Clinton represents is a break from the left wing/right wing political straight-jacket most politicians on both sides of the border find themselves in. He is taking what he sees as the best elements of both and incorporating them into his platform.

While there are no Canadian federal leaders that fit that mold, there are some on the horizon. One of them is Federal Justice Minister Kim Campbell. She has had to deal with a number of tough issues in her post—gun control and abortion come to mind—and has gained almost universal praise for the way she handled them. And her status as both a strong advocate of women's issues and a political conservative gives her a potentially large constituency.

Another next-generation politician is New Brunswick Premier **continued on page 15**



Causes of our lousy summer clear as mud

I'm no Oracle of Delphi (are you kidding? I bet on Ross Perot and the Braves in five), but I am prepared to make one fearless forecast.

I can state without fear of contradiction that if you spent July and August in this country, you have one weird summer to look back on.

Actually, that's more of an aftercast, I suppose, but safe as a Robbie Alomar slide, no matter how you call it. The summer of '92 was a strange one, whether you weathered it in Bella Coola, Brockville or Bonavista Bay.

For Canucks west of the Rockies, it was Death Valley Days—hot and dry followed by lots more hot another truckload of dry. Rivers parched up to a trickle and lawns simply curled up and died. Homeowners in Vancouver actually underwent water restrictions. Water restrictions?

In Vancouver? That's like rationing sand in Addis Ababa.

As for TROCIQ (stands for The Rest of Canada Including Quebec) it was a great summer.

For newts and mallards.

For us, it rained and rained and rained some more.

Waterskiing became immensely popular. Especially on the Trans Canada. Regina became the marine Mecca for sports tuna fishing. Across the nation, golf pros issued complementary snorkels with every rented cart.

As a progressive, forward-thinking citizen, I was not personally surprised this summer to discover wild rice germinating with abandon in deepest southern Ontario.

But on the hood of my car????

It was a revoltingly damp summer for TROCIQ, but at least we had the satisfaction of knowing WHY we were going through it.

Mount Pinatubo, right? That uppity, geological zit on the Cheek of the Philippines? The one that erupted last year, spewing noxious plumes of smoke and other airborne pollutants all over

the heavens, blotting out the sun and causing all manner of meteorological upsets, including our lousy summer.

Right? Well... perhaps.

Some experts finger Mount Pinatubo as the source of our summer miseries, but others blame it on El Niño—a kind of rogue ocean current that's been playing havoc with the fisheries in the South Pacific for the past few years. Still other experts attribute our bizarre weather to fluctuations in the Jet Stream overhead.

Meanwhile, diehard traditionalists in the scientific community harrumph "Nonsense!" They're convinced that the blame for our strange summer can be laid at the doorstep of the famous Global Warming Phenomenon—specifically the Greenhouse Effect that they've been warning us of for the past couple of decades.

The unvarnished truth is somewhat simpler.

No one really knows why we had such a lousy summer!

Alan Robock, who specializes in volcanic eruptions,

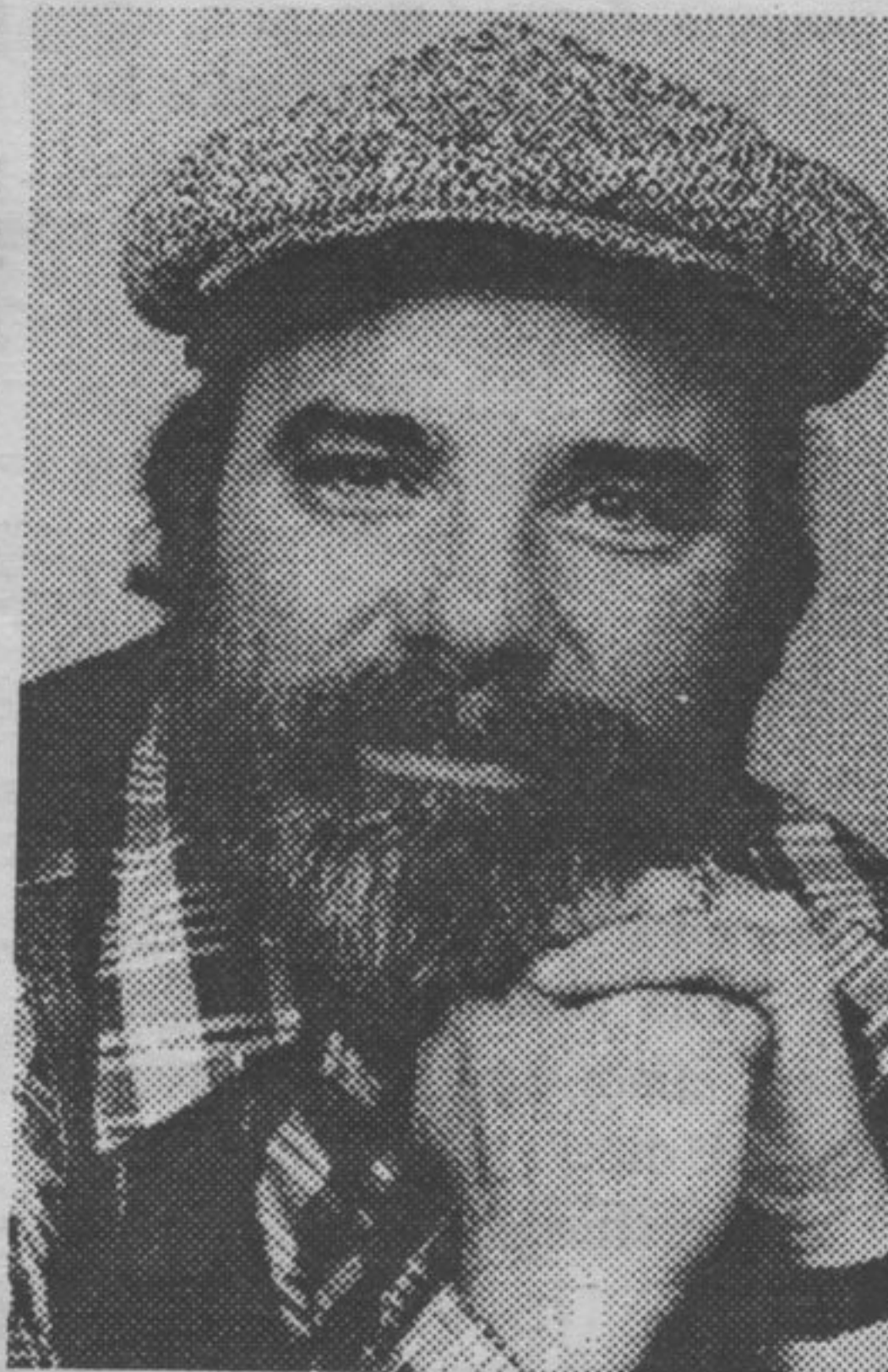
explains "we don't know all the possible effects volcanic eruptions may have, which is not the case... or if it is, somehow, there's no theory to say how it would do that."

To which an informed layman can only reply: "Huh?"

Doctor Gerry Bell, a meteorologist who specializes in the effects of El Niño, was a little more helpful. "It was anybody's guess," says Dr. Bell. "Meteorologists have no idea how long the effects will linger."

And this year? Well, many experts are predicting a long hard winter for all. Hudson's Bay stayed frozen all summer, they point out. Squirrels are laying in larger than usual nut stashes. Woolly caterpillars are, well, woolier than usual. All of which, the experts predict, means a tough winter ahead.

Maybe. But I wouldn't bet my thermal underwear on it.



Arthur Black

The Nipigon-Red Rock Gazette and the Terrace Bay-Schreiber News are members of Laurentian Newspapers Limited 158 Elgin Street, Sudbury, Ontario P7E 3N5 (705) 673-5667

John Thompson, Vice President



Members of the Canadian Community Newspapers Association and the Ontario Community Newspapers Association

EDITORS

Cindy Laundry
Darren MacDonald

**OFFICE / ADMIN.
& Circulation**

Clara Dupuis

ADVERTISING

Ad. Manager
Linda Harbinson

Ad. Consultant
Cheryl Kosteci

PRODUCTION

& Quality Control
Supervisor
Heather Michon

PUBLISHER...A. Sandy Harbinson

Local offices are located at 145 Railway Street, Nipigon, Ontario P0T 2J0 (807) 887-3583 fax 887-3720 and Highway 17 & Mill Road, Terrace Bay, Ontario P0T 2W0 (807) 825-3747 fax 825-9233
2nd. class mailing permit 0867

One year subscriptions are available by contacting your local newspaper at one of the addresses listed above. Rates are: Local Seniors \$12 Other local \$18 Outside 40 mile radius \$29 USA \$38 GST must be added to all subscription purchases.