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Poll: over 40% of Canadian teens think America is "evil"

by Arthur Weinreb, Associate Editor, *Canada Free Press*

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Can West News Services, owners of several Canadian newspapers including the *National Post* as well as the *Global Television Network* commissioned a series of polls to determine how young people feel about the issues that were facing the country's voters. Dubbed "Youth Vote 2004", the polls, sponsored by the Dominion Institute and Navigator Ltd. were taken with a view to getting more young people involved in the political process.

In one telephone poll of teens between the ages of 14 and 18, over 40 per cent of the respondents described the United States as being "evil". That number rose to 64 per cent for French Canadian youth.

This being Canada, the amount of anti-Americanism that was found is not surprising. What is significant is the high number of teens who used the word "evil" to describe our southern neighbour. As Misty Harris pointed out in her column in the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, evil is usually associated with serial killers and "kids who tear the legs off baby spiders." These teens appear to equate George W. Bush and Americans with Osama bin Laden and Hitler, although it is unknown if the teens polled would describe the latter two as being evil. Whether someone who orders planes to be flown into heavily populated buildings would fit that description would make a good subject for a future poll.

The Liberal government came into power in 1993 gushing anti-Americanism. Former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien's communications director, Francoise Ducros, made headlines when she referred to President Bush as a moron. Liberal MP Carolyn Parrish was picked up on a boom microphone saying, "Damn Americans — I hate those bastards". Not only did Parrish not apologize for her remarks, but she later appeared on a television show hosted by alleged comedian Mike Bullard and laughed about the incident. Parrish played to the anti-Americanism of the youthful studio audience by saying that she couldn't guarantee that she wouldn't do it again.

Not only did then Prime Minister Jean Chrétien not take any action against his staff or caucus members, he himself engaged in America-bashing. The depth of his anti-Americanism surfaced shortly after the 9/11 attacks when he blamed the arrogance and greed of the West (read the United States) for those attacks.

When Paul Martin assumed office last December, the childish cheap shots ended but, if anything, anti-Americanism became stronger.

Anti-Americanism played a prominent role in the election strategy of the Liberals. Paul Martin portrayed himself as the saviour of Canadian medicare while saying that if Stephen Harper and the Conservative Party of Canada came to power they would introduce "American-style" health care. Martin was happy to take credit for cutting taxes and eliminating the deficit during the 1990s when he was Minister of Finance, but he referred to tax cuts included in the Conservative Party platform as being "American-style tax cuts". Canadians who favour lower taxes or the private delivery of health care services or smaller governments or anything similar to what is found in the United States were called "un-Canadian" by Paul Martin.

It is therefore not surprising that a high percentage of Canadian youth think that the United States is evil. Nor is it surprising that this feeling is more pronounced in Quebec where Bloc Quebecois leader Gilles Duceppe said

that he would rather live under the United Nations than the Stars and Stripes. The left wing Canadian political parties, aided by their supporters in the elite media don't seem to be able to say anything positive about Canada without denigrating the United States in the process.

The poll results reflect that anti-Americanism will be solidly entrenched in future generations of Canadians. As well as listening to the propaganda espoused by their political leaders and the media, these kids have no experience with what constitutes real evil. They live in a country that much like pre-9/11 America, thinks that terrorist attacks are something that happens in other countries. And as the World War II veterans slowly die off, they have no conviction of the evil that the allies risked their lives to defeat.

With anti-Americanism playing such a prominent role in this past election campaign, it is no wonder that the United States was viewed in such a negative light.

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