



## Debating the U.S. Presidential Election

### Why I'm a Raider

by Nathanael J. Blake

**O**n November 7, Ralph Nader will receive my vote for president of the United States of America. Depending on your definition, I'm a member of Generation Y or X. Whichever category I fall into, stereotypically I should be apathetic and/or apolitical. Perhaps my vote for a candidate who has not a snowball's chance in a Texas summer is an extension of some sort of random antiestablishmentarianism. This is not the case. I've been active (proactive) in politics for years . . . before I could vote. I've lobbied, researched, interned, and protested. I truly believe Ralph Nader would do the best job leading our country.

Of course, at age twenty I can still afford to be an idealist. Nader represents my best choice (not the less-worse choice) and Gore has no chance in my state (Nebraska) already. In the electoral college, it's winner-take-all. Bush will get our five votes. But I believe that Ralph Nader is the best true hope for the 100 million eligible voters who chose not to vote in the last election. If 5 percent of the nationwide popular vote goes to Nader, the Green Party will be able to provide a truly viable progressive alternative in 2004.



Why Ralph?

Maybe it's because my Seventh-day Adventist Christian roots provide such a strong regard for human life. The practice of capital punishment is in direct conflict with my beliefs. Nader is against the death penalty. Also concerned with our quality of life, he is an outspoken proponent of a living wage (making sure people can provide for their family on the hourly wage they earn) and universal health care (scary "socialist" words for some, but basically assuring that everyone—every child, too—in the country has health insurance, including the 46 million Americans who don't have it now).

Nader even cares about people who live outside our nation. He is opposed to free trade agreements that don't take into account the human rights of workers. Instead of building a Defense Department primarily on the basis of preparing for war, Ralph is intent on steering our military toward peace as a priority.

The Bible informs us that we must choose between God and money. I'm voting against continuing corporate corruption of our political process and modern culture. Only Nader will truly work to reform

the de facto plutocracy our nation now suffers under.

In short, Ralph Nader has the needs of the neediest at the forefront of his campaign. His priorities are similar to my Master's. Christ enabled the poor and hurting, giving them hope and life. In the eleventh commandment he asks us to do the same: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22:39, NRSV).

In Micah 6:8, God gives us pretty clear directions on how we should live: "do justice . . . love kindness, and . . . walk humbly with your God." God's instructions to take care of the poor and needy carry over to the ballot box. How could I vote for carbon copy gush-and-bore politicians who oppose justice and kindness? I will not leave my Christianity at the polling booth door.

What would Jesus do? Would Jesus vote for Ralph? Only if Jesus at his age could afford to be an idealist.

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## What's God Got to Do with It?

*by David A. Pendleton*

I've been asked by fellow Adventists whether I'm "voting my faith" this fall. Because I'm an attorney, the answer is, as one might anticipate, "It depends on what one means by 'voting my faith.'"

If one means that our Adventist Christian faith somehow informs us whether the Democrat or the Republican nominee is more godly or whether the Bible tells us anything about the efficiency of free markets versus command and control economies, or if there is a biblical answer to solving the Medicare problem, then the answer is "no." I will not be voting what I think is the Adventist Christian (party) line. That's because there is no such thing. The Bible is God's word, not God's policy briefing.