

Election sparks global interest

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results is bizarre and hard to understand, she said.

"Lots of it has gone over my head," Ward said.

The complicated U.S. system has not stopped her fellow Britons from watching her new home's election coverage, though, she said.

Ward said people in England are far from condemning the United States. But, she said, the political wrangling has decreased her faith in the United States to act effectively because it can't even elect its own president.

Jason Duarte, a agricultural economics graduate student from Brazil, is not as gentle about American election woes.

He said the United States is deeply involved in an embarrassing political mess.

People in Brazil are laughing and joking about America's politicians and its political system, he said.

"The United States' behavior is more close to the behavior of the Banana Republic," Duarte said.

This tidal wave of cynicism is

directed more toward Al Gore than George W. Bush, Duarte said.

People believe Gore is playing with the system to get the outcome that he wants, Duarte said.

But Bush, he said, is definitely not innocent of tinkering with the system to further his own needs.

Beyond the humor, Duarte said, people in his country are disappointed in the entire event.

People in Brazil simply didn't expect such a spectacle to happen in the United States, he said.

Ahmed Mahdy, a computer science graduate student from Egypt, agrees with Duarte.

Such political debacles can happen almost anywhere else in the world, but they are not supposed to pop up in the United States, Mahdy said.

"The United States is the mother of the world," Mahdy said.

The United States has to recognize that something went awol and remedy the problem to avoid similar ones, he said.

Mahdy said he isn't sure how people in Egypt are reacting to the problem, but he is sure they are watching the events along with the rest of the world.

George Onyeaghala, an electrical engineering major from Nigeria, isn't ready to give such a harsh critique of the United States.

He said the United States needs to patch up its electoral process before it hurts the citizens.

But, he said, election mistakes are not the end of the world.

Mistakes plague countries across the globe, and it is only natural for the problem to strike the United States occasionally, Onyeaghala said.

"No one's perfect," he said.

The global community is surprised that the United States, a country that many believed was a perfect democracy, could stumble during its presidential elections, he said.

Nevertheless, people in Nigeria are not condemning America, he said.

Other countries will still look to the United States as an example of a good democracy, Onyeaghala said.

Now, the countries will simply realize that every nation runs into trouble, Onyeaghala said.

"The big guy can also cry."

Some tiring of election coverage

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Anderson, a Gore supporter, said he's still keeping up on the election even with the overwhelming amount of media coverage.

"I'm following it for the sheer entertainment of following it," he said.

Sophomore architecture major Matt Clause said he thought news organizations called the election too early, adding to the confusion.

Besides the Florida recounts, Bush and Gore could continue to contest vote counts in other states, which would drag out the election even longer, he said.

And with each new development, Clause said, he thought there were even more things going on that the public doesn't know about.

"I think it's telling us our government is going down the tubes," he said.

Andrew Carr, sophomore political science, international studies and economics major and president of the College Republicans, said he was confident Bush would come out with a victory.

But like many others, Carr said he was ready to see the end of all the controversy.

"I'm a pretty patient guy, and this is getting old," he said.

In Carr's eyes, Gore shouldn't concede until Friday, when all absentee ballots are counted, he

said.

"I'm just anxious to get Bush in there," he said.

But Bush should not be ushered into the White House until it's certain he won the race, said Heath Mello, senior political science major and secretary of UNL's Young Democrats.

Mello said he was willing to wait as long as it takes to ensure the election results are fair.

Even though Bush still holds on to his lead in Florida, Mello said he thought Gore had a chance at winning the presidency.

And while some students may tire of reading Bush and Gore's names in the headlines every day, it's important to follow along, he said.

"It's a great civics lesson for a lot of people," Mello said. "It shows how important voting really is."

Karen Brown, Green Party campaign volunteer and UNL senior English and film studies major, said she was tired of hearing people blame Nader for Gore's loss.

"I don't think (Nader) is to blame," she said. "If he doesn't run now, when is he going to run?"

Brown said she thought the election should depend on the popular vote, which now tilts toward Gore.

"All I cared about was Ralph Nader getting 5 percent (of the popular vote)," she said. "He didn't, and for me, it's over."

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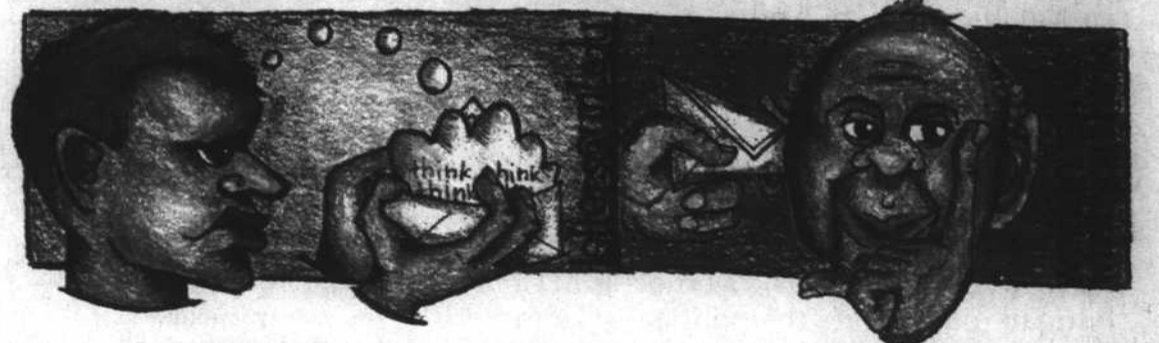
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