

Eco 4:
the city

The ecology of the city of Lincoln is in bad shape. Currently, the air and water levels in the city are unacceptable, although some steps have been taken to correct these problems.

Under governmental air quality guidelines, Lincoln's atmosphere is substandard. While not containing excessive amounts of four major pollutants: sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, oxidants and hydrocarbons; the air that the 20,000 UNL students breathe each day is loaded with another major pollutant called Suspended Particulate Matter.

This pollution, which consists of dust from grain, soil, coal smoke and so forth, currently registers 70 micrograms per cubic met of air, while the quality standard is 60.

Also below standard are the Lincoln waterways, basically because of the appalling state of Salt Creek, a major dumping place for pollutants. To correct the

creek's sorry state would be expensive, if possible. So, little is being done to improve the state of the city's water.

In the same line, the city's sewage treatment plant doesn't meet state criteria at present. This is basically because the plant is running well over capacity, which may be corrected in the near future, by the construction of a new double-capacity plant.

In the legislative category, Lincoln has within the past three years enacted ordinances limiting amounts of sewage, chemical pollutants and air pollutants legally emissable by industry. Because of these ordinances, many of the most serious polluters have cleaned up their operations. But not all.

In zoning for new business, the Lincoln City Council has made consistent inspection of the pollution potential of new businesses coming into Lincoln. But established industries don't always fall under such strict scrutiny.

Enforcement of existing statutes have forced many big polluters into line. The Lincon-Lancaster Air Pollution Agency has made some progress in forcing two asphalt plants to install filters, three grain elevators to install dust collectors and persuading a coal-burning power plant to switch to less-polluting oil. But many polluters remain undetected and, of course, uncorrected.

The main problem in Lincoln, as in other areas of the environment, is that people just don't seem to give a damn. This eco-apathy simply makes the problem worse. The lack of pressure on city officials and, more effectively, consumer pressure on offending industries makes the ecology efforts mere echoes in a vacuum.

Currently several city-based agencies exist to spread ecological concern in Lincoln: Citizens for Environmental Improvement, Zero Population Growth, Green Power and Sierra Club, to mention a few. All can play a major role in correcting our environment's disastrous state.

But only if public response increases. And the students at the University are every bit as much involved in the problem as Mayor Schwartzkopf.

And 20,000 voices could not be ignored.

Jim Gray



Sex and the
single-term
president

Everyone's conceded Nixon the election. Yet there is an all-powerful force at work on the minds of the voters that has never been probed, polled or even discussed. It could easily cost him the presidency.

This all-powerful force is, of course, sex.

With incredible foresight, McGovern recognized the problem early. Before announcing his candidacy he carefully grew sideburns, purchased a mod wardrobe and, rumor has it, got his teeth capped.

In an incredible blunder, the usually astute Nixon ignored the challenge and blindly plodded on with the same short haircut, narrow ties and stuffy, if dignified mien.

Now that the problem's at last been bared, it's probably too late for Nixon to grow sideburns. The problem was bared by a reporter named Betty Garrett.

When comes to choosing candidates, Garrett admits in a New York Times article, "I'm sure sex does influence my judgment, and that doesn't strike me as terribly wrong. After all, I wouldn't go to bed with someone I didn't like and respect, and the same holds true when voting for a man."

Garrett undoubtedly reflects the secret feelings of millions of Americans. And it's certainly as good a way to choose a candidate as any. But when it comes to Nixon, she adds:

"What I can't visualize is Nixon in an intimate situation of any sort. I confess I bought *The Making of the President* in the frail hope that someone had. He'd seem infinitely more human."

Garrett's difficulty envisioning Nixon in such a situation is shared by many. I know. I tried.

Scene: The bedroom of the Nixons' San Clemente home. Ms. Nixon in a quilted bathrobe is standing by the window. Nixon, wearing a grey suit and tie, enters, humming, "Hail to The Chief."

Nixon: Good evening, my fellow American. Let me say at the outset what a deep personal pleasure it is for me to be with you here on this glorious occasion.

Ms. Nixon: Thank you, dear. Come look at the moon. Isn't it beautiful? (shyly) Does it make you think of anything?

Nixon: Yes. I say to you with great sincerity that it makes me think of the greatest day since creation when a brave American astronaut, during my administration, first set foot on its surface, thus assuring we would never be No. 2 to the Russians in outer space.

Ms. Nixon: But the way it shimmers on the water. Doesn't that thrill you?

Nixon: Yes. It thrills me to realize that because I have determinedly brought our boys home across that water, I have prevented the power-mad Communists—not our Communist friends in China, but our Communist enemies in Vietnam—from invading our beloved California.

Ms. Nixon: (near tears) Oh, please, dear, to save our marriage, couldn't you just once perform an act of, forgive me, intimacy?

Nixon: (frowning) I am for saving the free world. I am for saving the country. I am for saving our marriage. Close your

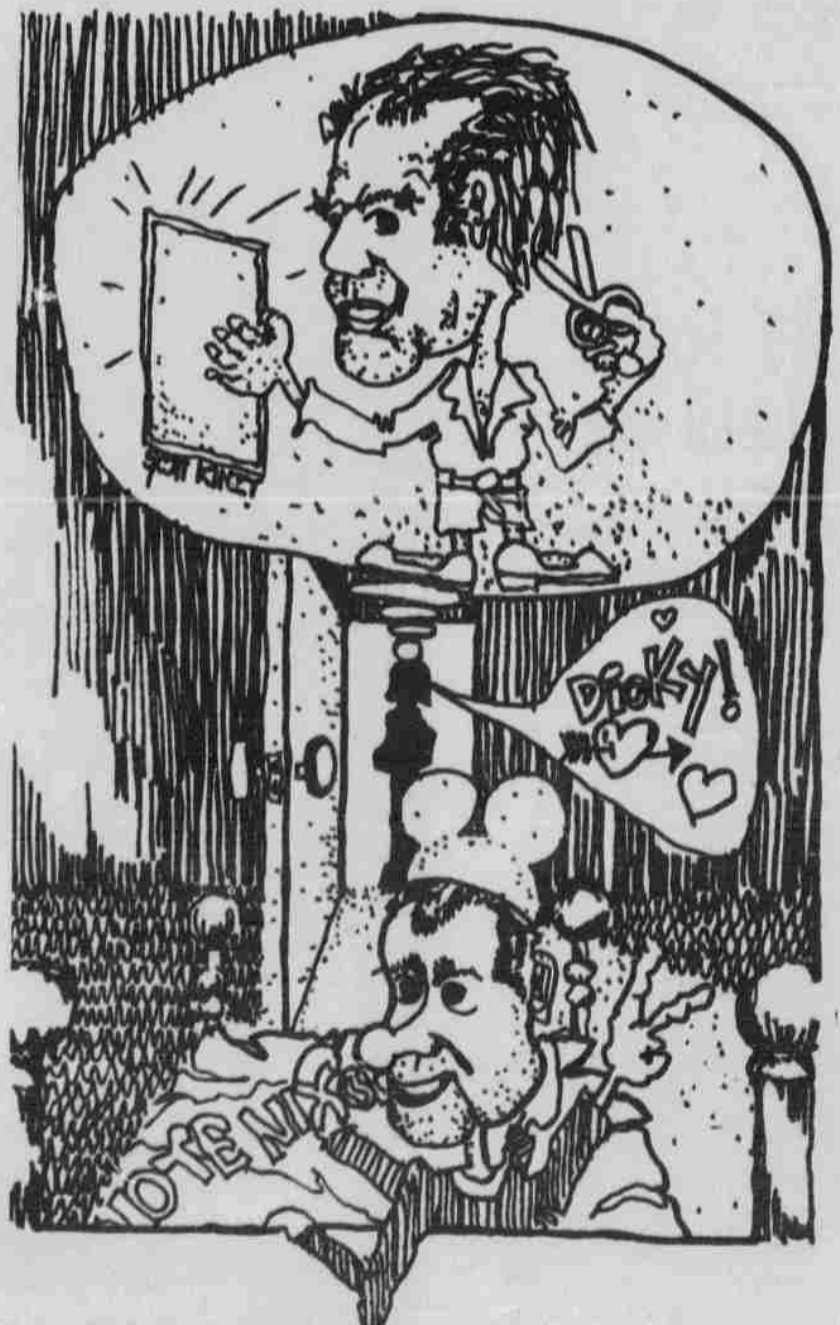
eyes. All right. There!

Ms. Nixon: Oh, this is the happiest day of my life! Just think, I've never seen you without your necktie on before. (hesitantly) Would you consider going all the way and unbuttoning your collar?

For the life of me, that's as far as I can envision. It isn't just Nixon's image. It's that he's our President.

We Americans just can't believe our President, even as you and I, puts his trousers on one leg at a time. After all, first he'd have to take them off.

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arthur
hoppe
innocent
bystander