

I got my own way to go  
 and now I want  
 To take your minds  
 I believe you could see  
 The blood between the lines  
 I believe that you could be  
 A better kind  
 Please lead the way so the unborn  
 can play  
 On some greener hill  
 Laugh as the flames eat their  
 burning remains  
 Fools die laughing still

~Deep Purple



## Tenant troubles

As an enormous university in a moderate-sized city, UNL is both the source and recipient of troubles in a good many areas. Those troubles, in addition to being a source of irritation for the community as a whole, may cause resentment against the University community and especially its students.

Currently, this situation can be seen in tensions created by Lincoln's housing situation and its relation to students. In recent months, low-income groups and tenants' organizations have complained that UNL students have put a severe strain on the housing market, driving up prices and making space scarce—probably fair charges, on the whole.

In the past few years, rather than live in more institutionalized habitats, an increasing number of students have opted for more personal, less confining apartment life. So, while enrollment has skyrocketed, so has the demand for apartment dwellings—while demand for on-campus housing has remained fairly steady.

All this, of course, makes the rent value of off-campus housing much greater. With the high demand for housing, some Lincoln landlords have found that they have a sellers' market and that they can have their way with student trade.

Oddly enough, it seems those who have been ill-used by the landlord system are precisely those who seem to be perpetuating the system. According to UNL Ombudsman James Suter, problems in housing often exist because students refuse to complain or become involved with legal action against those taking advantage of them.

A recent case in point was that of a nebulous corporate structure which wrongfully deprived students of their damage deposits. When checking into the corporation, Suter found that all four men listed on the board of directors had fictitious addresses and the corporation operated from a Post Office box. Yet, after asking for complaints against the corporation in the *Daily Nebraskan* and receiving 13 replies, only one or two students could be persuaded to attend meetings to plan a class action suit against the corporation.

Despite apparent lack of student concern, some efforts have been made to improve the situation. ASUN's Legal Rights Committee distributes a legal rights handbook published in past years, is in the process of conducting a landlord survey, and is attempting to devise a standard lease contract for students. Suter and a small number of students have attempted reforms in many areas. Even the court system has been made more responsive, with a small claims court to open Jan. 1, 1973.

So the mechanisms for change do exist. But change can come about only if those involved work for it. And unless people who have been slighted by unscrupulous landlords in a sellers market do something about it, the situation could get a whole lot worse.

Jim Gray

## University environmental commitment

### guest opinion

*Bill Freudenburg is a junior integrated studies major in communications.*

by Bill Freudenburg

Nebraska's environment may not seem to be anything to worry about, but the next few years are going to be critical in determining the state's ecological future, and the University is likely to play a fairly important role in deciding the route that will be taken.

Universities traditionally have shown a commitment to the improvement of the world, and it only makes sense to include the improvement of the environment as a part of that concern.

A concern for the environment is especially important for the University of Nebraska, partly because Nebraska still has a relatively healthy atmosphere, but also because the University is the only institution in the state with enough resources to tackle some of the problems that must be faced in order to protect "the good life." The University's attention is especially needed in these areas:

1. Research. It's pretty obvious that the University's research and expertise can be of tremendous benefit to the state, particularly for agriculture, Nebraska's biggest industry. The farmers of the state need help in meeting pollution control standards and in developing creative, ecologically sound alternatives to present practices.

2. No matter how much research is done, the University will have failed

miserably if the students graduating from it don't have an environmental awareness and an understanding of the ways in which their actions affect other human beings.

3. Leadership. This University can't afford to be an exception to the general university tradition of leading the way toward a better world. This institution must set an example that deserves to be followed.

It's not that the University has ignored its obligations. A majority of the members on the Steering Committee of the Environmental Task Force are faculty or administrative staff, and they have given considerable help to the Task Force this year. Howard Ottoson, Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture, has just completed an extensive, year-long study, *The Environment and the University of Nebraska* at the request of President Varner.

The report goes into considerable detail, and includes a recommendation that an Environmental Resource Center be established on the UNL campus. This center would coordinate a large variety of environmental activities, and would be an important, needed improvement.

The Physical Plant Administration and the University Grounds Department have proved that the University's environmental commitment is more than just words. They have cooperated extensively with the Environmental Task Force in re-establishing recycling barrels

around the campus, and they have done a stellar job of maintaining the barrels, considering the problems involved.

Even though the University is not asleep, much remains to be done. A proposal for an Environmental Resource Center isn't nearly as important as the establishment of that Center. Newsprint recycling barrels can serve as an excellent example to the rest of the state, but they don't eliminate the fact that the University still causes considerable harm to the environment.

The University's overall example is not a very shiny one. The newsprint barrels are a major step in the right direction, but they represent only a stop-gap measure; a more extensive, long-range commitment is needed.

It takes between one and two thousand trees each year just to supply UNL with mimeograph paper. Tons upon tons of paper, glass, metal and plastic are used each year and end up permanently filed at the Lincoln landfill dump. There are too many things to list here that are not what one would include in a "good example."

The University is doing many good things, and it is aware of many of its problems. But there's still a long way to go before this institution stops creating more harm than good for the environment, and a longer way still before it becomes the sort of example it really must be. If the University doesn't lead the way, who will?