

BELLY LETTRES

The hidden issues of our time

Dear Openers,

Last year's elections brought us new faces, defaced lamp-posts and a severe earache. Regrettably, little attention was given to the *real* issues, whose explication may well chart the course of the 1976 Presidential election, the future of all mankind and control of the Iowa state senate. Here, based on a scientific poll conducted at Eva's Discount Massage Parlour and Drive-In Periodontal Clinique in Plainfield, New Jersey, is a rundown of these crucial issues:

1. *Aid to Soviet Jewelry*: Right now, thousands of rhinestones, garnets and zircons are trapped behind the Iron Curtain. The tyrannical Soviet regime refuses to heed conscience calls from Harry Winston's and Cartier's. A giant rally in Antwerp this summer may help focus attention on this plight.

2. *Abolition of the Deaf Penalty*: Seventeen states still permit this primitive form of punishment, in which noise-code violators have their ears stopped up with wads of cotton and ear muffs. The A.D.L.U. (American Decibel Liberties Union) is bringing test cases to abolish this torture for everyone except jackhammer operators, early-morning sanitation workers and cabdrivers.

3. *Low-Income Housing for the Pure*: With the sex-discrimination laws barring segregation based on sex, America's dwindling virgin population cannot find apartments and homes suitable for their needs. "We regard the need for such housing as one of the most solid tissues of our time," declared Miss Alicia Hymen, official spokesperson for the unspoken-for.

4. *The Highway Truss Fund*: Today, countless American motorists risk disabling, painful injuries while attempting to fix flat tires along our Interstate Highway System. Legislation now before Congress would mandate Federal monies to help these victims. But internal disagreement threatens to rupture this fragile coalition.

5. *An End to Violins in the Street*: From Sunset Strip to North Michigan Avenue to Fifth Avenue, pedestrians are in constant danger from itinerant street musicians who demand spare change and stomp on the graves of dead composers. Funds are urgently needed to enable police to sweep these offenders off the streets once and for all.

With meaningful discussion of these great concerns, we can be confident that 1976 will produce a President ready to assume the burden of leadership. As Gerald Ford has often said, "Any job what pays two hundred big ones a year plus you get a free house and food and cars when everybody else is eating Tender Vittles can't be all bad."

Sincerely,



JEFF GREENFIELD