

Von Hoffman

Nixon's the One

Washington

PRESIDENT NIXON will be going into his campaign for re-election with the loss of at least one worker.

Probably Nixon doesn't care, although in 1960 when Lloyd Jay Kantor was 12 years old, he licked envelopes for him. In 1967 he spent his own money having Nixon campaign buttons made up. "He was my idol," Kantor says. "I had pictures of him in my bedroom. I admired him as a humble man who'd worked his way up."



Nicholas Von Hoffman

Kantor has lost both feet, both hands, one eye and part of his hearing, and, although he's done very well mastering the prosthetic devices on the remnants of his limbs, he might spoil the campaign image.

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IN SEPTEMBER, while he was still in the VA hospital, Kantor wrote the President a letter, wrote it on his old "Nixon for President — '68" stationery, stationery that has Kantor's name on it, too. He sent the letter by certified mail to the White House, but he never got an answer. When you read it you'll

"Dear Mr. President:

"As I write this letter I think back to September, 1967. At that time I organized one of the first Students for Nixon clubs in the country, the Hunter College Students for Nixon in New York City. I was filled with idealism about your plans for a better America. I was convinced that you would end the terrible war in Vietnam and reunite the people of America.

"We campaigned throughout the New York area and became one of the largest clubs on the Hunter campus. We constantly faced hostility and harassment. We were called warmongers and fascists. We were told that Nixon wouldn't and couldn't bring about an early end to the Vietnam war. After the convention we continued to work hard and were elated when the results were in. That was the first election I was able to vote in, and I considered it an honor to cast my vote for a man who had a plan to end the war and bring about a better life for us.

"After the inauguration, students on the campus would come up to me and ask 'When is Nixon going to end the war?' My answer was always the same: 'Give him a chance.' The war continued. You announced that Vietnamization was working well. A year after your inauguration, I received my draft notice, was inducted into the Army, and less than five months later I was fighting in the jungles of Vietnam after only a two-week leave.

". . . In the fall of 1970 I read in my hometown newspaper that the President and Vice President felt that the war was no longer an issue. It was at this point that I realized how insensitive you really were. As long as one American was risking death in Vietnam, the war was certainly an issue. My opinion of your actions was representative of every soldier I came in contact with. I even had guilt feelings because I had worked for your election so vigorously.

"In November, 1970, I was badly wounded and suffered the loss of parts of all four limbs and an eye. This was the better life I had worked so hard for. This was what Nixon's America was all about.

"The war still goes on, Mr. President. I would like to know if you feel that American lives are worth so little that they should be sacrificed for the corrupt, undemocratic dictatorship ruling South Vietnam. Think about it when you go to sleep tonight."

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THIS WAS not an easy letter for Lloyd Jay Kantor, or what's left of him to write. When you talk to him on the phone, he immediately impresses you as a straight, serious young man, not given to big outpourings. As he himself says, "I believed in the principles of the Republican party," so that the letter was profoundly out of character.

These days the political experts are predicting that young people aren't going to be important in this campaign. They may well be right. Lloyd Jay Kantor says there's not a one of 'em he'd work for this time. He lost his hands and his feet and his enthusiasm, too.

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