

The Regents primary

In May, the state of Nebraska will have the first opportunity in decades to alter the composition of the Board of Regents drastically. In the May primary, two Regents will face re-election as their staggered terms expire and two seats will be open in newly created districts. Thus it is possible that in November there will be four new Regents.

This is a golden opportunity for students to seek out talented candidates and campaign for them. The regents are elected to six-year terms staggered each two years. The chance to change the Board doesn't really ever come along and the state seldom takes the trouble to elect new Regents as often as they could.

Obviously, instability is not a goal, and two new Regents every two years is not necessarily desirable. However, neither are Regents who get virtual life appointments. Dr. Ben Greenberg of York is 66 years old and has been a regent for 17 years. He comes up for re-election. John Elliott of Scottsbluff is 75 years old and has been a regent for 17 years. Richard Adkins of Osmond has been a Regent for 12 years. He, too, comes up for re-election.

An objection cannot be raised so much with the age of the Regents except for Greenberg and Elliott. (Adkins is 50, Robert Raun, 41, R. L. Herman, 49, and Edward Schwartzkopf, 50). Objection can be raised to the length of the term and the difficulty in getting new people on the Board of Regents or the people there to adapt to student needs and opinions. It is hard to knock a Board of Regents who attract Durward Varner to the University. It is easy to do so when the Regents refuse to listen to rational arguments for graduate student visitation.

University students and other citizens in the state should realize the uniqueness of this year's election. If students don't have a Regent directly chosen from the student body, at least they can work for Kim Lauridsen of South Sioux City, a student, who is running. If students don't feel attuned to the age group represented by the current board, they can work for Robert J. Prokop of Wilber, a 30-year-old Regent candidate.

The opportunity is here. If you want to see any of the following candidates get elected, help them: Third District: Richard E. Adkins, Osmond; Kermit Wagner, Schuyler; Kim Lauridsen, South Sioux City; Francis A. Hanson, Decatur. Fourth District: Dr. Ben Greenberg, York; Philip C. Anderson, Crete; Robert J. Prokop, Wilber; William R. Brown, York.

Sixth District: Robert R. Koefoot, Grand Island; Wayne E. Barber, Columbus; Dana E. Trowbridge, David City; Roger L. Fandman, Wood River; William H. Norton, Osceola; M. J. Gustafson, Aurora. Eighth District: Ross C. Horning, Omaha; G. P. Spence, Omaha; James H. Moylan, Omaha; Sydney L. Cate, Omaha.

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News Item: Hundreds of slain Vietnamese found floating down Mekong River from Cambodia.

Against the Wall

by CHUCK FAULKNER

The lead article in Thursday's rag headlined 'Sorority fights national officers' emphasizes a problem that fraternal locals are having on campuses all over the nation. It's really nothing new.

In fact, it's just a continuation of a power struggle that has been occurring since fraternities and sororities got so large they needed national offices to, in some sense, direct their activities. The racial issue has, in most cases, been faced not very differently from that of finance, governing structure, expansion, or community service activities. The underlying question to this particularly volatile issue is once again, does the national office-establishment exist for service to the local or vice versa.

HISTORICALLY, the fraternity movement has not been particularly close-knit. Most nationals began as a loose confederation of regional chapters whose main common bond was a name and some attached high-minded principles for living.

WHAT HAPPENED? To a point natural organizational evolution can explain the development of often autocratic national offices. These "fraternities within fraternities" controlled by "interested" alumni and a whole new class of status quo bureaucrats make day-to-day decisions that control the image the national organization projects to its locals and to the general public. As a result chapters are often hamstrung on local issues by what amounts to a national edict.

For example, in the question of membership, locals at Nebraska are tied to a variety of rules governing selection. Most still rely on the "one ball" system in which one member can exclude any candidate.

Some nationals have recently changed back to the former system of local chapter autonomy in membership selection. No wonder IFC and Panhel are so reticent to really handle the racism question. They are merely a conglomeration of organizations with many different rules and pro-

blems. As a result, even Council on Student Life's ultimatum will accomplish little except to foster phoney programs of education on racism within the houses.

CONTRARY to popular Greek misconceptions something can be done. A few suggestions:

—Examine the power structure of your national organization. Find out who really controls the national office. Invite these officers to come and speak. Then let them know which way the wind is blowing.

—Read your national constitution. Fraternity members often find they have considerable sources of legitimate power in dealing with national officers.

—Prepare for national conventions. Get in contact with other chapters directly. Most often undergraduate chapters have the majority of votes at any convention, but they just can't seem to get organized enough to enact legislation and select officers in their own interest. In some cases it may even be necessary to propose constitutional amendments aimed at reducing the amount of decision-making authority at the national office-level.

—Don't be afraid to stand up for your rights. Fraternities and sororities are for the benefit of undergraduates not old people. Their rules should be made to facilitate that objective which should include changing with the times.

National organizations can be valuable aids to the development of local chapters. They can serve as needed watchdogs on financial and scholastic problems within chapters. They can be points of communication and centers of information. They can even be valuable allies in local problems within the university. In order to make them these valuable servants instead of masters, however, undergraduate members must be willing to fight an often odds-against fight.

So, that leaves it up to the undergraduate to provide the impetus. If they don't, there will be no question of blame when fraternities and sororities finally stifle in their own inability to change and adapt.