

## Of pranks and politics

The monstrous rigmarole caused by a harmless prank performed on the card section at Saturday's game makes one wonder if there isn't actually more to the Big City Press' coverage of the incident than appears on the surface.

The activities involved seem innocuous enough. Agreed, the switching of card flashes may have left the University administration, the band and the spirit organizations with reddened faces.

And perhaps the "Screw Mizzou" flash was not in the best of taste, considering that Missouri was being trounced 21-0 at halftime.

But the charge that the card section flashes were obscene is completely ridiculous. Worse things can be read on the front page of any of the state's daily newspapers.

When the press coverage of the incident appeared Monday morning, several questions became immediately apparent. Why should a harmless prank be given front page coverage in the Big City? And why should that coverage overshadow important local governmental stories? Could the Big City Press be trying to get back at the University? Or is the media using the incident as a source of political pressure by blowing it all out of proportion?

Having been exploited as such, the story is

suddenly of major concern—not only to students, but to the whole state.

Panicking when the state and its press hopped on the issue, the administration began a witch hunt to find the persons responsible for the prank. After all, when the Big City Press says there is a story, there is a story.

But the administration didn't stop to think about the individuals involved. Or to question need for such private eye tactics.

And so, true to form, the Big City Press has managed to make hay with the image of the radical University. And the University bought it.

Trying to avoid the political pressures of an election year, the administration naturally will attempt to find a scapegoat on which to place the blame. If it finds one, God help him.

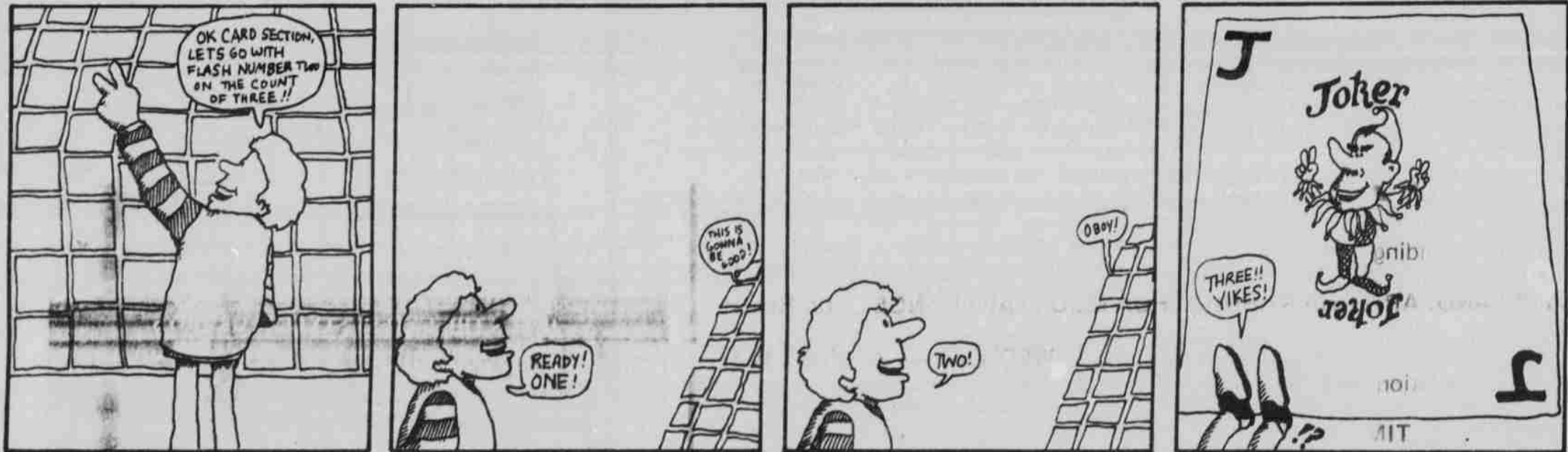
If not, God help us. For the administration will most likely crack down on other innocuous freedoms of expression and put us another step back into the dark ages. And once again politics will triumph over individual rights.

So, here's a great big raspberry to the Big City Press. And to the administration, a snort of indignation.

Jim Gray

# CARD SECTION CAPERS

The Artists Name of this Comic Must Not Be Revealed!



## Carpenter's comical quest to can Curtis

Terrence McGovern Carpenter (named after Terrence McGovern, the boxer and not George Stanley, the would-be President), who once told a television audience that he had "had a belly full" of young people (*Lincoln Journal*, 11-2-68), today seeks the votes of these same young people in his comical quest for the United States Senate seat currently held by incumbent Senator Carl T. Curtis.

Carpenter made this comment in announcing that he was opposed to a then-pending constitutional amendment to lower the voting age, an amendment that he had previously favored.

The 72-year-old state senator from Scottsbluff is probably the most inconsistent and unprincipled politician in Nebraska's history. In April, 1965, he urged NU students to demonstrate on the steps of the capitol against proposed tuition increases, magnanimously offering to lead the protest himself; in April, 1968, he asserted that students went to the University "to learn, not to run the University" (*Journal*, 4-28-68).

His alterations in party allegiance are due not to conviction or ideology, but to shifts in the prevailing political winds, coupled with an instinct for selfish opportunism. In 1930, he was defeated for mayor of Scottsbluff as a Republican. Sensing that 1932 would be a Democratic year, he switched his registration and was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives as a member of President Roosevelt's party. In 1950, when Republican strength was increasing both nationally and in Nebraska, Terry became a Republican again.

After the Johnson landslide of 1964, our local vicar of vacillation switched to the Democrats. But, as LBJ and the Vietnam War became unpopular, Terry thought better of things and came back to the GOP three years later.

In 1971, Terry once again became a Democrat, declaring that since he probably could not defeat Curtis in the GOP primary (he tried and failed dismally back in 1954), he had better shoot for the general election. Rumor has it that after his probable defeat this year he will rush back to the Republicans. The man has been rejected by Nebraska's voters

for statewide office eight times previously. Terry ran unsuccessfully for lieutenant governor in 1938, and for the governorship four times, being defeated twice in the Democratic primary (1934 and 1950), once in the Republican primary (1960), and once in the general election (1940). This is his fourth try for the Senate, having run as a Democrat in 1936 and 1948, and as a Republican in 1954.

Terry was born in Iowa on March 28, 1900. The child of a broken home, he received only an eighth-grade education. He claims this is why he so vigorously champions higher education in the legislature.



His political career began when he landed a job with the city auditor in Long Beach, Calif. When Carpenter took it upon himself to sign some bonds to finance a new harbor while the boss was out of town, he was fired in short order. As soon as the auditor returned she sent the sheriff out after Terry, and Carpenter skedaddled back to Nebraska. Back in the Cornhusker state in the late 1920's, he began building a multi-million dollar family enterprise out in the panhandle, most of which is located in his very own village of Terrytown (pop. 749), sandwiched between Scottsbluff and Gering. His store sells everything from rubber baby pants to liquor, and the family has interest in such diverse items as dog racing and gasoline.

To continue with Carpenter's inconsistencies, he considers himself a crusader for tax reform, yet paid not a dime in state or federal income taxes in 1968. When asked to defend himself, he explained that he was living off of his late mother's estate, and was sorry that everyone did not have a mother who was so well off. He attacks the affluent while living in a mansion filled with rare and costly art objects and a bomb shelter complete with its own power supply.

He has introduced bills in the unicameral and then voted against them.

In 1952 he supported Eisenhower, in 1956, still a Republican, he told voters to go for Stevenson. To the embarrassment of one and a half million Nebraskans, he nominated a fictional character, one Joe Smith, for Vice President against Richard Nixon at the 1956 Republican National Convention. In 1967 Carpenter was sure that Nobby Tiemann would wind up as the greatest governor Nebraska would ever have. Two years later Tiemann was labeled a "lousy" governor, and a "slap-happy hippie" (*Lincoln Journal*, 12-17-69).

He endorsed Clifton Batchelder for governor in 1970, "even though we are politically about as far apart as the North and South Poles" (*Lincoln Journal*, 3-20-70). As soon as Batch lost the GOP primary to the Governor, Terrible Terry threw his support to J.J. Exon, whom he previously said would be a "worse governor than the one we've got," back in 1969 (*Lincoln Journal*, 12-17-69).

Although a self-proclaimed "spender" in the legislature, Terry is not sure that our educational dollar is always well spent. He once told a group of students, "The people of this state spend millions of dollars to send you students to this university, and you concern yourself with immaterial things like civil rights and personal liberties" (*Lincoln Journal*, 11-21-67).

And the final irony: Terry Carpenter strongly endorsed Carl Curtis for the Senate in 1966. Today, he runs against him.

This is a glimpse at the man who wants to represent us in Washington. And these are some of the reasons why we will not let him.