

Register, vote

The deadline for qualified citizens to register to vote in the May 1 Lincoln City General Election is this Friday, April 20. There are nearly 20,000 potentially qualified citizens on the UNL campus who, if they choose to participate, could have a major effect on the results of this election and on Lincoln politics for a long time to come.

Perhaps not all students realize that they are permitted to register to vote in their college towns. Recent voter registration drives aimed at Lincoln's university students have met with less than total success. The student community either has been unwilling to recognize that it has a stake in city government or it has resigned itself to political impotence. Both of those positions are unrealistic. Students have both an interest in the May 1 election and the voting power to make their concerns heard.

Several issues have been raised during the current election campaign, the outcome of which can have a direct effect on students' lives as long as they remain residents of Lincoln. Two of the City Charter amendments on the May 1 ballot incorporate issues which cannot properly be resolved

unless students provide some electoral input.

One of these is a proposal providing for the election of Lincoln City Councilmen by district. Councilmen currently are elected at-large from the entire city. In recent years, this practice has resulted in some areas of Lincoln being represented more heavily than other areas. Election by district would help make city government more truly representative. The further possibility exists that the proposed council districts would be heavily student-populated. It would then be conceivable that the councilman with direct student ties (or a candidate who is also a student) might be elected in a future contest and give Lincoln's student community an unrestricted voice on the City Council.

Student voters also have a stake in another charter amendment to be voted on May 1. On the ballot as a result of a petition campaign by opponents of the Northeast Radial, the proposed change would place limitations on the implementation of any Lincoln street project costing more than \$15 million. Because the path of the Northeast Radial and its right-of-way would cut through hundreds of low-income housing units, this charter amendment is a concern of Lincoln's students. The possibility of such a cut from a market already suffering from a shortage of housing affordable for both families and students living on limited incomes should be enough impetus to make students realize that

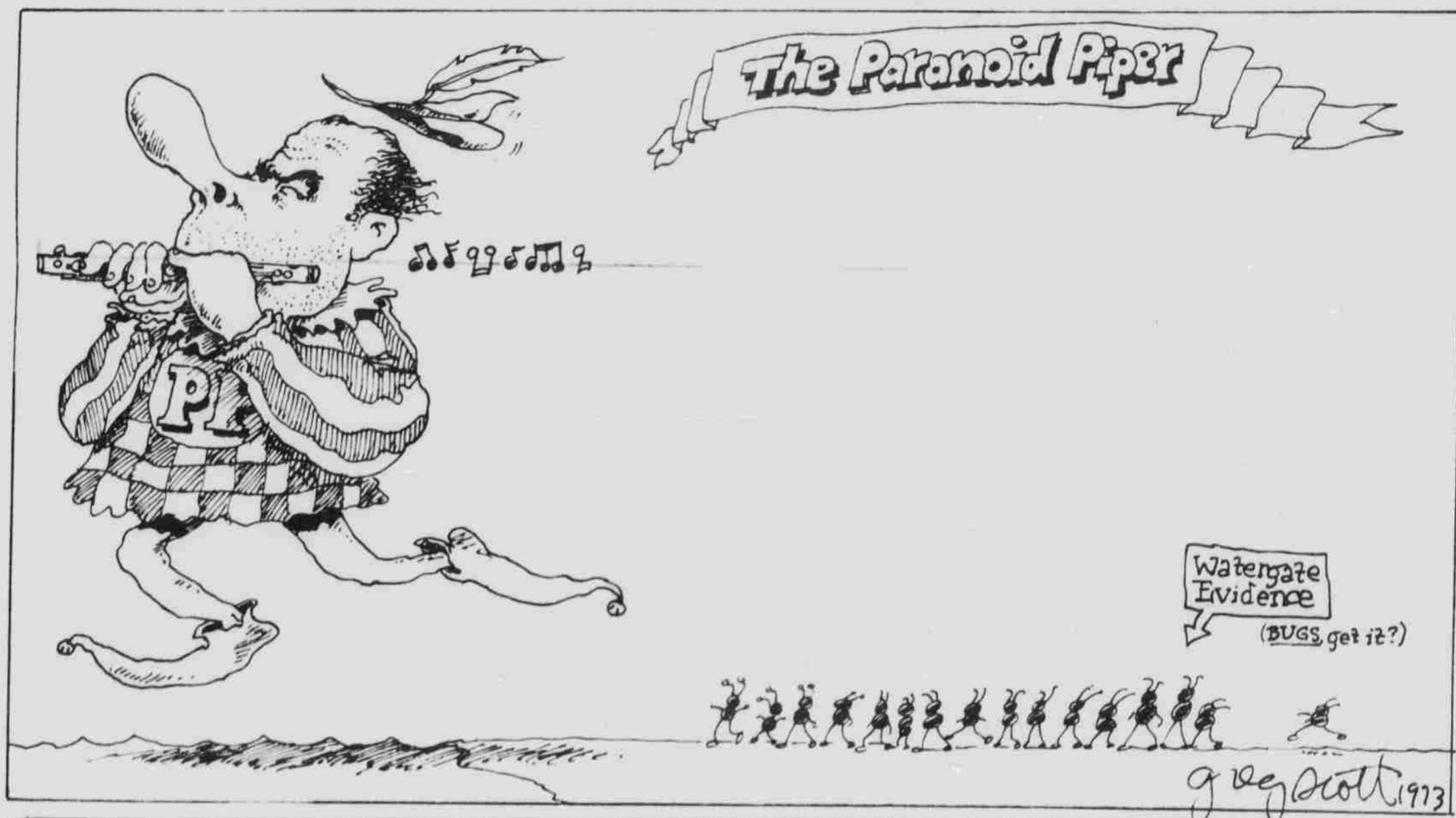
the Radial amendment deserves approval and that the chances of such approval rest, in part, with student voters.

The Lincoln-Lancaster County Goals and Policies Report, completed last year and thus far not acted upon by the City Council, provides students with another good reason to register and vote in the city. The report examines and makes policy recommendations on a variety of problems of concern to students—everything from better bus service to an increase in the number of desirable housing units available to University students. The report might have a better chance of official City Council adoption if students help elect council candidates who have publicly stated their support of the document.

The economic power of University students has long been recognized by Lincoln's businessmen. Many business leaders freely acknowledge that the presence of UNL with its thousands of students is the main factor responsible for the current vitality of Lincoln's downtown area. And it is no secret that the merchants up the street cater to potential student customers.

It is completely realistic to assume that student participation in local politics could have a similar effect upon city government. That very thing has happened in other cities with large student populations. Register and vote May 1.

Tom Lansworth



to the editor

Letters appear in the *Daily Nebraskan* at the editor's discretion. A letter's appearance is based on its timeliness, originality, coherence and interest. All letters must be accompanied by the writer's true name, but may be submitted for publication under a pen name or initials. Use of such letters will be determined by the editor. Brevity is encouraged. All letters are subject to condensation and editing.

Dear editor:

Contrary to John Vihstadt's column (*Daily Nebraskan*, April 12), the United States is not the largest democracy in the world. An Asian country, 10,000 miles from here, is the largest democracy in the world. That country is India.

Difficult for you to be No. 2, eh?

An Indian

Dear editor:

You began an article on Schramm Residence Hall (*Friday* magazine, April 13) by saying, "On Saturday nights, Schramm, UNL's only coed dormitory, isn't. . . ." This statement is incorrect. The Centennial Education Program dormitories are, for all intents and purposes, coed. Men and women do not live on opposite floors but they live in separate halls (separated by one hallway) with a floor of lounge space, offices and classrooms that is open to both men and women 24 hours each day. The interaction provided by that close proximity and the available space for interaction makes this dormitory, in effect, coed. International House (also located in Women's Residence Hall, with Centennial) is another campus coeducational unit. You shouldn't overlook them.

Robin West

Dear editor:

First it was beads and trinkets, then guns and firewater, now the Great White Father (Gov. J.J. Exon) offers free

tuition in an attempt to rectify past injustices committed against the Red Man.

The perpetrators of this ridiculous political seduction have not only insulted the common working student who must labor under the handicap of spiraling tuition costs, but they also have offended the integrity of the American Indian by trying to bribe him back into his subordinate position while he strives for equal rights.

We feel that this act does not help the American Indian in his quest for equal education, employment and self-respect, but only serves to further strain the relationship between American Indians and the rest of society.

On behalf of those who are one quarter Polish, Bohemian, Mexican, German, Russian, etc.

Scott L. Brinkmeyer
Lee Stork

Dear editor:

The first time I saw this campus last August, I was amazed at its cleanliness. "So," I thought, "all the pictures I've seen of UNL are true." I'm quickly changing my mind.

The other day I looked out of my window, and got sick. Apple cores, orange peels and paper galore covered the yard and tennis courts.

I wondered if these conditions existed everywhere, so I took a walk and looked. Yes, there's litter in a lot of places, folks.

Is it true that you don't mind living in a pig pen? How about it; will you help create a demand for trash cans? After all, this is Earth Week. What better time to become concerned? Please help.

Ann Florsek