

The GUILFORDIAN

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Soviet split to lead to chaos

Chris Ward
Perspectives Editor

Leonid Kravchuk was elected president of the newly independent Ukraine, Dec. 2, signaling the political end of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Since the failed coup of August, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's land of *glasnost* and *perestroika* has crumbled in a sea of atavistic nationalism. Although the separation of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and now the Ukraine has been welcomed by most Westerners, one must realize that the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. almost guarantees ethnic conflict and a high probability of civil war.

We cannot afford to celebrate the almost instant transformation of an enormous political entity that has existed since 1917, because democracy and freedom will not be the only results of the second Russian revolution. The people of the former Soviet Union, with the exception of the three Baltic states, have never experienced democracy before and cannot be expected to independently adopt democratic principles.

The Western assumption that Russia, the Ukraine and other significant republics will instantly become like the states of Western Europe or North America is a pipe dream.

Instead of expecting the former Soviet Union to become a Eurasian version of the United States, a more realistic scenario will include a Russian republic where over one hundred ethnic groups rip the nation apart, a Ukraine where Russians and Ukrainians fight over the industrial centers of the Donets Basin, a Romanian uprising in Moldavia, and a resurgence of pan-Turkism in Central Asia.

Although the former Soviet people have stopped listening to him, Mikhail Gorbachev has been predicting a similar situation if the republics do not maintain some sort of union. The central government in Moscow is fading with every passing day, and the Soviet people do not realize that the key to peace and economic cooperation is with Gorbachev and

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The Guilfordian does not necessarily endorse the ideas presented in this column. Rather, *The Guilfordian* seeks to highlight a particular issue and by doing so, increase awareness and stimulate positive discussion.

—The Editorial Board

Letters to the Editor . . .

News Line caption inaccurate

To the Editor:

I was disturbed by the caption "Criminal vs. Racist?" in the Nov. 15 issue of *The Guilfordian*. Personally, I don't dispute that Duke is a racist and Edwards is hardly trustworthy. What does disturb me is the departure from good journalism which this caption represents. The fact of the matter is that Edwards was cleared on charges of corruption. Therefore, the implication of his criminal involvement is in error until proven otherwise. Such commentary should be saved for the editorial column where personal opinions are appropriate.

Mark Aman

Forum draws feminist response

To the Editor:

Well, I guess I'm a little late, but nonetheless I feel compelled to respond to the Discussion Forum on abortion in the Nov. 8 edition of *The Guilfordian*.

I found it very telling that both sides of the issue were defended by men, but I'll leave that one alone for now.

Page made some very good points. I agree with him that a fetus is a life. I agree that the abortion process is "gross" and inhumane. I agree that our society is based on violence, and even that violence and exploitation are the central issues in the abortion argument. And finally, I agree that the response to the abortion question should be to "eliminate the conditions which bring it about." However, I disagree with Page on the interpretations of these statements.

First of all, I was very glad to see Matthew Levy recognize that abortion is "emotionally troubling and morally problematic," although I would apply that to most instances of abortion, and not merely "some." It is important to dispel the image that pro-choicers use abortions as they do condoms. It is also important to realize that abortion is not something done simply to a fetus. It is

simultaneously being done inside and to a woman. The acid is being put in/on the woman's uterus, although the fetus is alive, he/she is not a separate entity from his/her mother. In fact, their lives are so interconnected—the life of the fetus is so dependent on the mother, that it is unrealistic and sexist to consider the two as separate and distinct human beings.

Abortion for the woman is also very painful physically in all cases, and I think this says something about the violence inherent in our society. If a woman is willing to go through the physical, emotional, and moral trauma of having an abortion as opposed to refraining from intercourse, then it seems to me that she is lacking a level of choice at the time of intercourse.

I think that some of the conditions which make abortion a necessity are not, as Page implies, women who could care less about sexual responsibility, but stem from our societal definition of woman as sexually accessible, the expectation of heterosexual relations and the sexual as being defined on men's terms, and the epidemic exploitation of women through the media and pornography.

The violence involved in the actual abortion is only the result of the violence perpetrated against women on a daily basis. I was enraged at the statement, "Got an unexpected pregnancy? Go abort it." As if this would be a flippant decision. It seems more apt to me to say, "Got a hard-on? Go screw a woman." The violence is in the rape and attempted rape that at least 44% of us experience. The violence is in the molestation that 1 out of 4 children live through. The violence occurs whenever "no" is taken to mean "yes."

It may be true that given the legal definitions, only 3% of abortions result from rape or incest. However, we must remember that in many states when a man forces his wife into sex, it is not rape, but his "right." We also must remember that most rapes go unreported. And finally, we must remember the images we are given which define good sex. They almost never include, "Oh, stop kissing my neck for a minute while I go put in my diaphragm" or, "Yes, I'm a virgin, but I just happen to have this condom handy, would you please put it on?" These phrases either completely

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Submissions

The Guilfordian is the student newspaper of Guilford College, Greensboro, NC. Staff meetings are held Thursday nights at 8 p.m. in the Commons, Founders Hall. Submitted articles are welcome. Please address all mail to: *The Guilfordian*, Box 17717, Greensboro, NC 27410.