

Mark Dearmon

Petty conflict undermines media

Mike O'Neal must lay down his armor

The departure of Mike O'Neal from the office of treasurer will be a loss for Student Government in many ways. Mike has a well-developed understanding of the power structure of the University, its administrators and its student institutions. His long record of involvement in student affairs, from his days in Scott Residence College to his tenure as treasurer for all campus groups, indicates an active interest in student self-government. In addition, he has an alertness and a persuasive capacity that would be an asset to any political administration.

Mike has worked hard as treasurer. He has acquainted himself with the procedures and records of the Student Activities Fund office and has gained the confidence of its director. He has called a meeting of organizational treasurers to educate them about student treasury law. He has worked incessantly in his Suite C office, staying until the early hours on countless occasions. When he has undertaken an investigation into the financial status of a particular campus group, he has plunged into his work, sparing neither time nor effort.

It is this total immersion, in fact, that seems to be responsible for much of the concern and confusion centering on Mike's handling of his job. His total concentration on financial statements, Campus Governing Council statute books and alleged improprieties has obscured his vision as an administrator.

Although it is easy to claim that Mike's rigidity is a sign of his objectivity, it is far more accurate to describe his inflexibility as the tragic flaw in his executive character. Mike has used the full weight of the law before that weight was necessary.

If HEW had decided to use the full weight of the laws on desegregation against the University of North Carolina system as soon as HEW determined the system noncompliant, federal funds would have been frozen months ago, killing numerous research and educational programs across the

state. The critical negotiations now taking place would be counsels of war instead of conferences of cooperation.

If the American Bar Association decided to invoke its ultimate sanction against North Carolina Central's law school for failing to meet all accreditation criteria, 200 law students would now be pursuing a worthless education. The current special efforts to improve NCCU's law program might have been scrapped as the state conceded defeat and moved to economize rather than to enrich.

Flexibility is essential to good government. Combativeness breeds only hostility and distrust. Cooperation should be the hallmark of government. Punitive options should be the last avenues pursued when some individual or group fails to adhere to all proper regulations. By his rigidity and combativeness, Mike has moved the focus of Student Government away from cooperative progress toward divisive stagnation.

Mike, once the colossus of Suite C, cannot claim to be the Elliot Richardson of the Bates administration. Claims of illegal action by Bates in releasing BSM funds are inaccurate, since the freeze of funds expired following the second CGC meeting of this semester. Claims that "Mike is right and Bill is wrong" are simplistic and ignore many other aspects of the current dispute between the president and his treasurer.

The treasurer is appointed by the president and can be directed by the president to take certain actions. Bates has every right to remove such a subordinate member of the executive branch. Bates has decided that Student Government has been crippled by public and private acts of the treasurer. To salvage the rest of his program for student progress, Bates has decided to replace O'Neal.

Mike should lay down his armor and depart. To resist will only continue an ugly confrontation and further sully the less than shining reputation of student self-governance. There can be no winners in a prolonged fight.

Three cheers! The giants have been slain. The stifling bureaucracy has been conquered. The student press has been freed from any further needless interference. Or have they?

Over the past few weeks since the "resolution" of the DTH "financial crisis," there have been continuous efforts to hinder the functioning of the DTH business office. These efforts have taken the form of a two ring circus with Media Board Chairman Dick Pope, who claims to be a graduate business student, in one ring and Mrs. Frances Sparrow, SAFO Director and student body bookkeeper, in the other. There are also several SG jesters who juggle in the background.

Soon after the remainder of the DTH appropriation for this semester was released, Pope issued a letter to Reynolds Bailey, DTH business manager, requiring him to refund all credit balances from previous advertising accounts no later than October 15, 1975. This was done

without any discussion or approval by the Media Board and is an extremely stupid business decision. It also allows for possible embezzlement of funds, although with Bailey as business manager, that is the least of our worries. The credit balances should be maintained until either the advertisers use them for later ads or request in writing that they be returned. Despite the fact that this decision was made solely by Pope, Sparrow will probably enforce it.

Last week, Pope was quoted in the DTH as saying that he thought that all Media Board organizations funds should be frozen because there were no by-laws for the Media Board. Pope is, by virtue of his office, supposed to help regulate the campus Media, not cripple them.

This week, when the SAFO started to post last Saturday's football issue of the DTH, Sparrow discovered that a higher than standard rate for ads had been charged for ads on the roster page. This has been done for the past three years

because this is the most widely used page of the paper. Last spring, the full Media Board delegated certain powers to the DTH business manager, including the power to set advertising rates above a minimum set by the Board. Sparrow and Pope refuse to recognize this stating that it is not a part of the DTH Standard Operating Procedures. As a result, Sparrow has refused to have her office post last Saturday's paper, thus delaying the collection of these accounts. Earlier, one of the major criticisms of the DTH business staff was that they weren't collecting the ad revenue. Ironic, isn't it?

But things like this didn't just start happening recently. In February, 1975, the DTH ran short of cash on hand according to the records of SAFO. There was almost \$4,500 owed by the Student Stores because of the mistake just cited. Because of the cash shortage, the DTH business manager could not requisition the coming week's papers. Bailey and I talked about possible remedies to the problem and decided to ask for a loan from CGC but Bailey

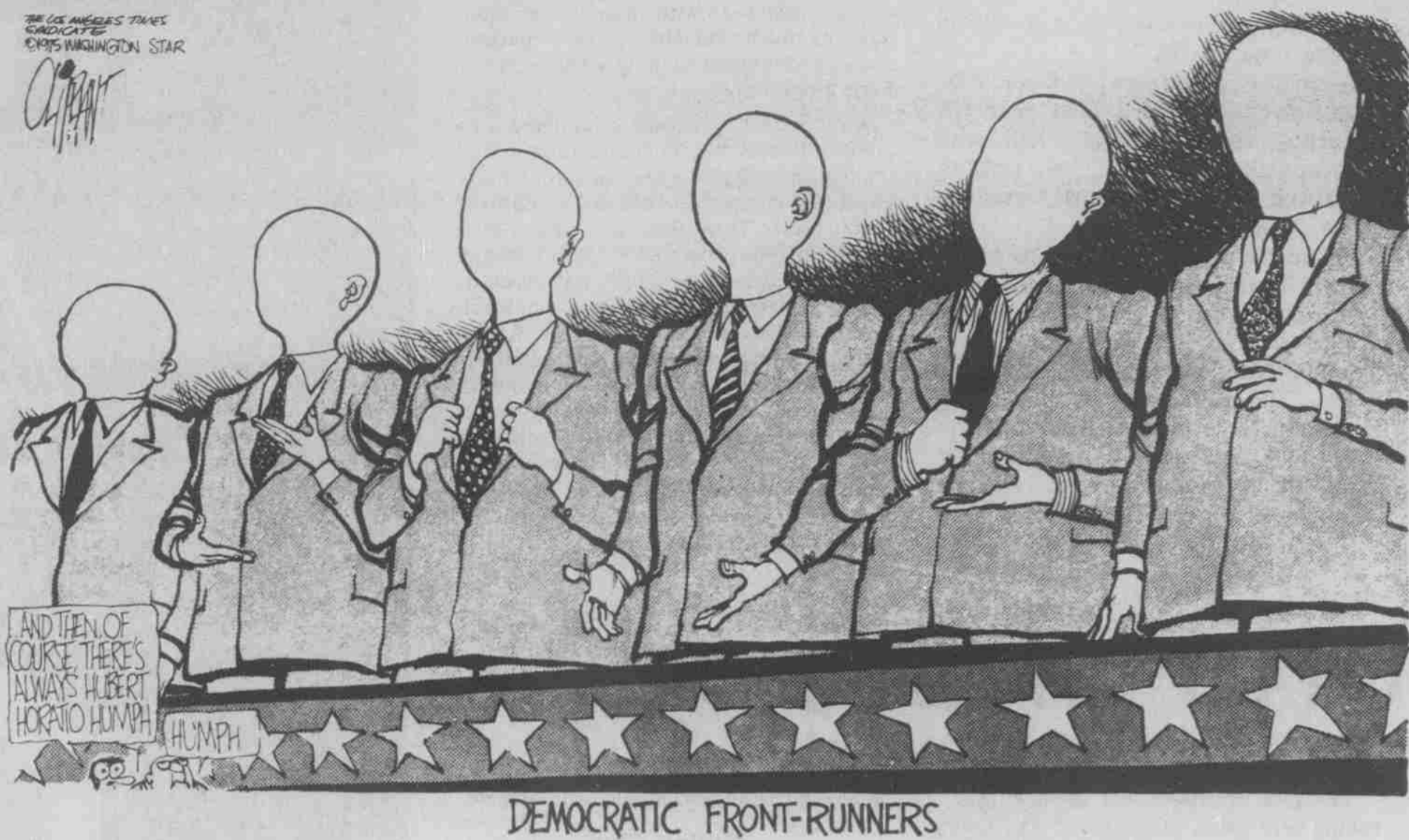
discovered a posting error in SAFO to the tune of approximately \$2,000, which meant there was enough to requisition the papers for the next week. On Tuesday, when I went to CGC, other members asked me if the DTH was really broke and if I was going to request additional funding. There were supposedly only three people who knew of the plans to request a loan, Reynolds Bailey, Mrs. Sparrow and myself. Bailey and I had decided to wait until later to decide about the loan, but Sparrow apparently thought we were going ahead with our plans so began to spread the word. Somehow, the loan became an appropriation in its route through the grapevine. At the following CGC meeting, I introduced a bill setting up an emergency loan fund for the DTH in case a cash shortage developed in the future, which would almost certainly happen due to the requisition system and the increasing number of accounts receivable.

In April, Sparrow told Reynolds that she didn't think he had enough money to finish the year and suggested a loan. She said she would take care of it for him. She did. She put \$10,000 in the DTH account. The bill that established the loan stated that the loan should be requested by the DTH business manager and must be signed by the Chairman of the Media Board, the Chairman of the Finance Committee and the Treasurer of the Student Body. The \$10,000 loan was given without any of the required signatures. Yet Bailey has been blamed for all the problems resulting from the loan.

It is quite unfortunate when one or two people are able to stifle the progress of an organization. It is up to the Media Board to take steps to prevent such actions against media organizations in the future.

Under the present system, or any system, mistakes will be made. It is only when all sides work together that a satisfactory solution to the problems can be attained. When underhandedness and backstabbing are the standard procedure, progress will halt.

Mark Dearmon is a senior RTVMP/journalism major from Kannapolis.



letters

Grade 'inflation' could be a positive sign

To the editor:

A university is a wonderfully bizarre place; it contains the only professional group I know that is distressed to learn that it may be achieving too much of its purpose. When I hear of "grade inflation," I wonder if the director of the hospital calls his staff together to express his concern that the death rate is going down and too many patients are being cured. How many architects boast that 35% of their houses proved uninhabitable and only 2 deserved prizes?

Nearly everyone concerned about "grade inflation" is trained in the interpretation of evidence and knows that one should not jump from raw data to conclusion with no examinations of the reasons for the data. It is statistically true that grade averages have gone up but that statistic does not prove the grades have been inflated. Only serious research into the quality of teaching, then and now, the quality of the students, then and now, and the quality

of the work now done as measured against an appropriate standard would do that. Unless that is done accusations of "grade inflation" are no more than uninformed impressions.

If the admissions officers do their job, if the students do their job and the teachers do theirs, we should give no grade lower than a "C" and we should, happily, give a great many "A's." In sad fact, the admission officers make mistakes, students are often lazy and irresponsible, and we who teach sometimes do a bad job. It is unfortunate that it is always the student who bears all the blame when it very often is the fault of someone else. But at least let us be cheerful as long as we can when we are offered evidence that can just as well be interpreted as a consequence of all of us doing our jobs better.

I would suggest that students not be too bothered by the proposal to change the definition of grades for a more meaningless suggestion would be hard

to imagine. It assumes something every sensible teacher and student knows is not true—that there is an existing thing called a grade whose definition can be altered by fiat. A grade is a shorthand sign for an act of judgment made by a teacher and, however respectful we all may try to be of the standards set by the community of our peers, at the end it is the individual teacher who defines the material to be covered, the level of achievement that corresponds to the several grades and the modes by which achievement will be tested and judged. This is true of all instruments of judgment, whether the most objective (an essay written by a human being and judged by a human being) or the most subjective (a multiple choice test judged by a machine or a human being acting like a machine). Changing the definition will not change that situation a bit.

I see a number of excellent students. I see very few outstanding students. At the moment there is no way of discriminating between them and juggling definitions won't help. Until someone proves to me that there has been a substantial shift in the general understanding of what these signs refer to, the adoption of this proposal will not have the slightest effect on my grading. I will not penalize the excellent student for the sake of an artificial definition.

Professor Leutze's proposal to enlarge the grading scale would accomplish everything that needs accomplishing within the limits of what is humanly and professionally possible. I give "A's" to the students I judge deserve them and I give no grade I am not willing to defend according to appropriate professional standards. But I know there are differences at each grade level. A fair number of students deserve a "10." Very few deserve "12." This is a proposal I very much favor.

John W. Dixon, Jr.
Professor of Religion and Art

apparently discarded. What for? Only because in the face of the most vicious and vile pressure he has refused to bend from what he considers to be right. We are damned tired of hearing Mike O'Neal's name ground into the mud. We admire his stand for decency and fair play. We want him to know he does not stand alone.

Russ Roberson
306 Teague
Dan Pike
107 Teague

Fifty-yard line supremacy

To the editor:

On the Saturday of the Maryland football game I saw three cars parked on the midfield line of Fetzer soccer field. Obviously the cars belonged to football fans. I wonder how football fans would like it if I parked my car on the fifty-yard line of Kenan Stadium. I doubt if the administration would like that very much. In fact, my car would probably be towed to Raleigh with a large fine tacked on to the windshield. What happened to the three football fans that parked on Fetzer soccer field? Absolutely nothing. A soccer field is as easily damaged as a football field, and deserves the same consideration.

Dwight Davis
J.V. soccer player

"Wouldn't it be nice?" tripe

To the editor:
The DTH would be nicer if it didn't print Kevin Barris' "Wouldn't it be nice?" tripe.

Ben Cornelius
2409 Granville South

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83rd Year of Editorial Freedom

John Miller

Academics: more student input

"What are the main impediments to restructuring the University? The administration, the faculty, and the students."
—Robert Jay Lifton

At least some part of the role encompassed in my longwinded title is that of aiding student awareness on university academic procedures. I'm sure that most administrators would agree that the lack of academic cognizance within the general student body is one of our bigger problems. We need to grasp a more fundamental understanding of UNC academia; to acquaint ourselves with what the University can offer us, and what we can offer in return. We cannot properly expect academic reform until we understand academic decision making processes to the point that we can actively contribute to them.

An increased academic awareness could be coupled with an increased opportunity in student academic input. It is hoped that the administration would seize an opportunity to use an informed student opinion. In the Academic Affairs Committee's dealings

with administrators, we have found that they are generally quite receptive to student proposals and ideas. In many cases, student input is actively sought. Of course, the strength of the student voice varies through departments. The political science department, for example, has an excellent vehicle for student academic input (the undergraduate Political Science Association). The association should be recognized as a model of what intelligent, serious, and reasonable student input can accomplish.

With the administration's acquiescence, this model for student input should be expanded to every department on campus. These organizations would serve not as a student outlet for radical rhetoric, but rather as a potentially useful input into academic reform; as a result of interested and informed student effort.

For this reason, the Student Representation Group will coordinate efforts to establish what will be called the Student Departmental Input Organization. By expanding already existing student committees and developing new ones, we hope to

establish a vehicle for permanent student academic representation. The groups would offer the opportunity for interested students to get involved in academic decision making regardless of the department they frequent.

Coinciding with the establishment of the S.D.I.O. would be the establishment of the Academic Forum. The Academic Forum would be a meeting of S.D.I.O. leaders from each department. The meeting would also include interested students, faculty and administrators. The forum would entail a free flow of ideas. Topics of particular academic interest would be discussed (with perhaps the help of guest speakers); lobbying strategies would be compared and evaluated; student opinion would be gauged. The Forum would coordinate the S.D.I.O. It would serve the dual purpose of disseminating academic information to students and obtaining student feelings on particular programs.

The academic naivete often seen on this campus would recede with the implementation of the proposal I have outlined. The flow of academic information would become a cyclical

system between administrators, student representatives and students. The students would obtain the information needed to make rational academic decisions, and their opinion would be represented in every department. The administration would be assured of the student input needed to make policies amenable to all parties.

The success of this proposal largely depends on faculty support. It is hoped that administrators would recognize the mutual benefits of this idea, and help bring the project to fruition. It is hoped that interested students will utilize this opportunity to get involved in a project that is in everyone's best interests.

If you would like to help establish a S.D.I.O. branch in your department, watch for future announcements of organizational meetings. If you would like to help the SRG coordinate these efforts, call me at 967-6772 and join us.

John Miller, chairperson of the Student Representation Group of the Academic Affairs Committee, is a junior international studies major from Winston-Salem.

O'Neal—courage and integrity

To the editor:

What is courage? What is integrity? These are abstract terms that cannot be strictly defined by words, but rather by actions. The recent actions of Student Government Treasurer Mike O'Neal are fitting examples of those virtues.

Mike O'Neal has been libeled, slandered, threatened and now—