

Clean air in classes

The rights of nonsmokers and the rights of smokers on this campus shall receive some delineation today as students vote on a referendum calling for a ban on smoking in classrooms.

We do not dispute the right of smokers to consume tobacco and the pollutants it contains. Indeed, we have argued for liberalization of laws restricting use of marijuana and heroin because of our firm belief in the principle that every person has the right to choose his or her own poisons and delights.

However, that right ends at the end of other peoples' noses, veins and lungs.

To protect the rights of all people, smokers and nonsmokers alike, to enjoy a clean atmosphere and to choose when to subject themselves to tobacco contaminants, we ought to pass the referendum. Efforts to enact a classroom smoking ban ought to be actively pursued by the Bates administration, by the Campus Governing Council and by individuals and groups interested in clean air in classrooms.

Those opposing the smoking ban have argued that smokers have a right to smoke whenever they please and that if one is annoyed by a smoker, one can ask that smoker to abstain for the duration of a class. Neither argument justifies the current subjugation of the rights of all for the privilege of the few.

Smokers should feel free to enjoy cigars, cigarettes and pipes when they do not subject others to that enjoyment. For many, smoke is an irritant to mouth, nose and eye. The haze of smoke that often hangs in the air of large classrooms can make the rooms stuffy, stale and uncomfortable for the nonsmokers and for those smokers who do not care to light up during a particular class. Nonsmokers are forced to become "involuntary" or "passive

smokers" when they must inhale the smoke exhaled by their classmates.

Beyond smoking as a nuisance, there is some evidence to suggest actual physical harm endured by nonsmokers who are forced to become passive smokers. In 1971, the U.S. Surgeon General warned that smokers could be harming the health of nonsmokers in indoor or poorly ventilated environments. The nonsmoker may suffer, the Surgeon General said, "from the pollution his smoking neighbor forces upon him. Nonsmokers have as much right to clean air as smokers have to their so-called right to pollute."

While data is lacking as to the exact extent of harm suffered by the nonsmoker, it is better to err on the side of protecting human health than on the side adversely affecting it. Just as later studies confirmed the conclusion of the surgeon general in 1963 that smoking is hazardous to one's health, so more extensive data may bring the evidence now available up to a level which will convince nonsmokers and smokers alike that public smoking is a health hazard. If that is the case, we should not risk nonsmokers' health waiting for an absolute causal link to confirm the initial evidence.

The contention that nonsmokers can request smokers to abstain is unsound. Not only are some nonsmokers too "polite" to harass the smokers, but in many instances, the smokers are scattered throughout a large lecture hall and cannot be asked by a nonsmoking student to abstain.

The real point, in any event, is that the smoker should not engage in an activity polluting the air breathed by those around him.

Just as we collectively have passed and enforced anti-pollution acts aimed at the externalities of industry and municipalities, so we must collectively pass this anti-pollution measure. The ban on smoking in classrooms is in order. It reflects an earlier move in the School of Public Health and action across the country at banning smoker-pollution from public places.

Whatever doubts we may have about taking this step toward clean air in classrooms should be assuaged by the comment of Dr. David M. Burns, the federal government's top medical expert on the issue of smoking and health: "There is ample evidence that involuntary smoking causes annoyance and minor eye and throat irritations to a substantial percentage of the population. It may cause major and, occasionally, life-threatening problems to people with heart and lung disease."



No Smoking

Tim Dugan

SG: A case of operational strangulation

Just as the smoke seems to be clearing in Suite C as Darrell Hancock and the rest of the Supreme Court decide whether to eject Mike O'Neal from the treasurer's office, we read that Deborah Bloom has filed suit against the Media Board for its failure to represent the graduate students adequately.

A catchy euphemism for these and other activities could be "structural reform," but reform usually connotes improvement and growth. The operations of the executive branch have been severely impaired for over a month

and now there is the possibility that the Media Board will have to cease its operations again.

Deborah Bloom's motives for requesting that the present board be prevented from operating while this new issue is under litigation are highly suspect. Perhaps the constitution should be amended to include a malicious prosecution clause. I think a better word to describe these antics is "operational strangulation." One may argue that certain constitutional questions are worthy of attention; in

these cases, however, there are other more pressing matters to be concerned with.

On Friday, the Faculty Council will decide whether to change the present grading system. Have Student Government officials been able to devote enough time to affect this decision adequately, or have they been bogged down sitting in court rooms or consulting with their defense counselors?

The establishment of a student radio station is nearing completion; many

important decisions must still be made by the Media Board, yet the board finds itself again confronted with another petty ploy to prevent it from operating.

A big problem which has seen little if any attention this year is the question of student activity fees. The amount of these fees has not been increased for well over ten years, yet annually, fledgling organizations like those under the Sports Club Council have their budgets slashed to bare minimum levels preventing their ever developing into viable organizations.

The racial situation on this campus is not improving. Most white students are aware of a black culture on campus only when the BSM has a demonstration. Large amounts of money are spent each year on the Black Arts Festival which only a handful of white students attend. This is not to imply that the festival is useless, but perhaps more racial understanding could be had through channeling funds to the paper *Black Ink* thereby increasing its circulation beyond the walls of James dormitory.

There are many more problems which should be dealt with, but a list would overflow this page. These problems, however, will never be confronted if organizations are continually brought to a standstill over disputes concerning their structure.

If Deborah Bloom and others were sincere in their desire to redress certain inequities and inefficiencies in SG, they would realize that these particular questions are at best trivial and would cease tying the hands of those who are trying to do something worthwhile.

Tim Dugan is a senior accounting major from Potomac, Md.

Realizing that many hard-core UNC smokers will have a rough time adjusting to the classroom smoking ban should it go into effect, we present a few new products and helpful hints:



Smoke a few extra ones before class

Chew some of these— one piece satisfies the minimum daily adult tar requirement



letters

Reaction to smoking ban and the recall

To the editor:

In Monday's *DTH* Charles Poole argued that cigarette smoking should be banned in University classrooms. While his presentation of the self-injury of smoking is well documented, his conclusion that a classroom ban in necessary does not follow. He asserted that "the question of creeping infringement on personal freedom is fundamental and complex," but offered lame answers to the very question he posed.

First, the assertion that "public behavior is already well regulated" provides no grounds to conclude that regulation is desirable in the specific case of smoking. If anything, the proliferation of such legislation should make us wary of further restricting individual freedom.

Second, it is unreasonable to infer that smokers are irrational simply because smoking is harmful. To make such an inference is to assume that everyone has the same values (i.e., prefers possible long life to going without cigarettes). There is no evidence to indicate that such values are universal, and hence no justification for the inference that smokers are irrational.

Even if we include the influence of advertising, movies, and social custom, the choice is still not irrational, but is, like any other pure preference, non-rational. If a friend chooses to smoke like the "Marlboro man" he is not irrational, he is merely exercising his freedom of choice. Mr. Poole's "rationality" is nothing more than imposed will.

Third, and most important, even if we accept everything that Mr. Poole wrote, it is still not sufficient to justify banning classroom smoking. It is not clear that the disutility currently suffered by non-smokers is sufficient to justify restricting those who want to smoke. If there is such information it should be considered, but in its absence, let us not assume it to exist. To do so is as arrogant as the discourteous smoker.

Fourth, even if it were clear that the preferences of the non-smokers outweigh those of the smokers, legislation may or may not be the best policy to pursue. If the enforcement of such a ban is to be as ineffective as that in current "no smoking" classrooms, such legislation would be as foolish as it is hasty. Alternative solutions exist (e.g., moving smokers or non-smokers to one side, a class-by-class decision, or simple courtesy) and their relative merits should be examined.

In short, Mr. Poole's argument does not carry the burden of proof which it must. It is a serious thing to legislate away the freedom of others, however frivolous that freedom may seem to us, and such restrictions must be viewed with skepticism. Those who have no opinion must not avoid the polls, but should recognize the rights of those who would be oppressed by voting "no." To do otherwise is to tacitly accept the restriction of the individual freedoms of others without a compelling need.

Tom Snell
C-18 University Garden Apts.

Smoking revisited

To the editor:

The rights of the non-smokers as a valid reason for the adoption of non-smoking standards may be acceptable but it disregards the major reason why we should concern ourselves with tobacco as an issue. Once processed, those beautiful smelling tobacco leaves that grow over what seems to be endless fields of our coastal plain is one of our societies major drug hazards. There is

no need to even review the statistical and toxicological studies that prove the hazards of smoking to the smoker.

However, there is a need for the public to reassess its perception of tobacco smoking as a harmful irritant and to perceive it as it most truly is—a deadly drug!!! Certainly this has far-reaching implications than for the student referendum but the sooner we realize the truth the better off we shall all be.

So let us ban smoking—not only for the non-smoker but for the smoker as well.

Stewart Auyash
Rt. 3, Box 291A

Besse—Voice of sanity and moderation

To the editor:

In his column yesterday, Mr. Dick Pope criticized Besse because he "has given up the speaker's chair on more occasions in order to speak his mind than any other CGC speaker." Mr. Pope fails to note that former speakers remained in the chair while making partisan comments, thus impairing the "neutrality of the chair" far more than Besse ever has.

Mr. Pope also suggests that Besse's preparation for legislative and other events is sloppy, and that he has been a "mediocre legislator." After his own negligent search for the bylaws of our Media Board, (not to dwell upon his own high-handed solution to his inability to find them) Mr. Pope should refrain from such petty criticisms. Some math is in order here. Mr. Pope says Dan Besse has introduced 8 of 130 bills approved: $8 \times (20 + 1) = 168$. Yes, with only 21 legislators, it looks like Dan Besse is keeping up his end of the deal. Also, if other legislators have had more bills approved, we might do well to remember that needless or poorly written legislation is no service to us, and that bulk may not be the ultimate criterion.

I urge the residents of Cobb and the Lower Quad to do themselves a favor and re-elect Dan Besse as their CGC representative.

Dan Besse, speaker of the Campus Governing Council (CGC), more than any other single individual, has symbolized the voice of sanity and moderation in guarding the interests of the students. He has and is sponsoring CGC hearings on housing and academics. No other issues affect student life here as vitally as these. Our rights in the classroom concern all of us students; issues such as the proposed grade inflation solutions, the possibility of an extended drop-add period and input into departmental decisions concern us vitally.

Housing, too, is vitally important. We want input into Dr. Condie's decision as to how room sign-up is to be conducted; we want to find out just how necessary the rise in our room rent is; we want repairs made quickly, we want hot and cold running water, and we want our rooms back next year. Dan Besse is working to help us achieve these goals through these hearings/forums. If the *DTH* chooses to cover other events, that is their choice. The small coverage given the academic forum should refute charges that Besse is the creature of the *DTH*.

Besse's concern for our interest in the two vital areas seems to indicate that he sees the needs and interests of the students as a whole. His support, if it can be called that, of the BSM and the CCA is not such a heinous crime when one remembers that these students pay fees, too, and are entitled, just

as we are, to have a portion of their student fees expended on their behalf.

Kay House
Granville South,

A vote for Eric Locher

To the editor:

Congratulations to Dan Besse. Your article in the *DTH* was well planned and well executed. Good campaign support! Such timing, too.

We still differ on the meaning of representation. I would like my representative to do more than just sit back and wait for me to come to him. Is the district's consultation active enough for you to adequately realize the district's stand on major CGC issues? What good is our consultation in competition with your conscience? Does your conscience bother you if you go against the wishes of your district? If you don't try to contact your district personally, how can you be sure you are justly representing us?

Many of your opponents, I understand, have dropped out the race in favor of write-in candidate, Eric Locher, the Morehead Confederation co-chairperson. I know Eric was very instrumental and successful in setting up the Orientation schedule this year in our district and has been an active representative in handling Morehead events. Eric's practices are in accordance with the belief that a representative should contact his constituents and get to know them. Why is it that though I am one of the three officers of Aycock dorm, I never met you, Dan, until this election? Sorry Dan, Eric has my vote as a write-in candidate.

Todd S. Albert
317 Aycock

Weaknesses of the red-baiting "patriots"

To the editor:

I recently watched a two-hour television drama concerning the story of a radio personality fired from his job as a result of the McCarthyite commie-hunting techniques of the 1950's.

Dick Pope's column condemning Dan Besse in the Oct. 14 *DTH* reminded me of these bizarre form of public concern. Many of the weaknesses of the red-baiting "patriots" exposed in the program are present in Pope's column: • Meaningless innuendo—"Besse, who may or may not have his sights on the campus's top post next Spring..." (italics added).

• Guilt by association—Pope charges Besse sped processing on bills that "were of direct benefit to the *Daily Tar Heel*, the BSM and Katie Campbell, a student health advocate and wife of the *DTH* editor." (Which is not to say that most students regard these institutions in the egregious light that Pope does.)

• Half-truths—In the above example, Pope neglects to mention that the cited bills all involved finance. Requisitions,

cannot be accepted until the bills are signed by the Student Body President and the CGC Speaker, and delivered to the Student Body Treasurer and Student Activities Fund Office. Nor does Pope state that this procedure has been followed after nearly every CGC meeting this year for nearly every financial bill.

• Incomplete examples—Pope said the handling of invitations to administrators for an academic hearing was "typical of Besse. Letters to participating deans and faculty only went out five to six days before the actual forum." Did Pope know, when he wrote the column, that Besse had previously called every individual invited to the meeting, and that the letters were formalities? Did he know that all but one administrator invited attended the hearing?

• Rumors—The special interests are fighting hard for Dan Besse's re-election Wednesday—including the *DTH*—and from the record it isn't hard to see why." Except for the *DTH*, which endorsed Besse as its editorial privilege, no group has publically endorsed Besse. It may be true that members of the BSM support Besse due to his voting record, but would Pope also object to the fact that 97 per cent of the black voters in the 1968 presidential election chose Hubert Humphrey over Richard Nixon and George Wallace because of the comparisons of their civil rights stands?

Yes, Besse was recalled by his district, but the central issue was not his leadership as CGC speaker. Unlike Pope, Dan Besse has never had a vote of no-confidence taken against him by an organization he chairs. Pope, in his capacity as Media Board Chairperson, has

Art Eisenstadt
301 Graham

Janet Morgan withdraws

To the editor:

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly announce my withdrawal from the race for CGC District 8 seat in support of write-in candidate Eric Locher.

I entered the race because there was no one running whom I could, in good conscience, support. The other candidates were either too insecure or, as in Dan Besse's case, believed in a form of "representation" I could not accept.

Eric Locher already has experience working with the officers of the Morehead District since he is the co-governor of the Morehead Confederation. He showed a tremendous sense of responsibility and willingness to work as he served as co-ordinator of Lower Quad Orientation. Most importantly, I know I can trust Eric Locher to represent the people—not his own personal interests or special interests. And that's what it's all about.

In closing I would like to urge all residents of District 8 to come out and vote Wednesday from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. at Cobb and Everett.

Janet Morgan
354 Cobb

The Daily Tar Heel

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