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The Daily Tar Heel

86th year of editorial freedom.

Gaff an insult to Panama

The debates and disputes over the Panama Canal treaties in the U.S. Senate during the past weeks have focused on American concerns and American rights. Emphasis has been placed on the pivotal role the canal plays in U.S. defense policy, and a "reservation" worked into the first treaty, which provides neutrality for the canal, spelled out the demands of many Americans for access to the canal in times of strife.

Surely, the Senate must insure the protection of American laws and property, but it should also recognize its obligation to the thousands of people living in a country split by a canal they have never owned.

Panama has reacted with vehemence to the reservation, which was introduced by Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.), fearing that it constitutes something far more dangerous than an assertion of U.S. rights to intervene militarily if the canal were closed. According to Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho), the floor manager for the treaties, the Panamanians feel the reservation is "intended to humiliate them as a nation by delegating to the United States the ultimate right to govern their internal affairs."

The particular irony surrounding the reservation is that it was never needed in the first place. The treaty itself is designed to guarantee Panama and the United States rights to defend the canal's neutrality. Presumably, the closing of the canal would be considered a challenge to its neutrality under the treaty.

Several senators, though, would have voted against the treaty — and would vote against the second treaty to transfer the canal to Panama — if the reservation or some stronger acknowledgement of American rights were not included. Their rationale is not immediately perceptible but seems to be based more on patriotism or chauvinism than on sound diplomacy and legislation.

As political observers and newspapers across the country have noted, the Senate has painted itself into a corner and will have to do some quick thinking to find its way out of this jam. The success of the treaties does not depend solely on a consensus on the senate floor; Panama must understand the United States desires only to maintain its own protection. The wording and meaning of the controversial reservation are not at question. Instead, the motives and commitment of the Senate and the United States are being challenged.

The Senate would do this nation and the Republic of Panama justice by withdrawing DeConcini's pacifying, but nevertheless superfluous, reservation and reaffirming its support of the spirit of the treaties.

Housing: there isn't enough

The fact that 600 men and women will be closed out of their residence halls for the coming year doesn't constitute a housing shortage — it represents a major housing crunch.

When Chancellor Taylor removed the on-campus housing requirement for juniors and sophomores several years ago, he afforded a large portion of the student population the freedom to live where it pleases. Since that time, however, the freshman class has increased in size, turning the March dorm lottery for getting back into a particular residence hall into a gamble.

Some relief may be on the way, though, for the student closed out of his or her dorm. An Apartment Dwellers' Association, organized by Student Government, will serve as an information center for apartment seekers. The association will provide a listing system, including rent rates and feedback from current apartment dwellers.

The ADA will afford a useful service to students who would normally be without any such resource. Although its establishment will prove helpful, as members of the University community, we are still not attacking the problem at its roots.

Each year, more students hope to remain in University housing, especially given the shortage of affordable off-campus lodging. The chancellor's philosophy regarding freshman residency is a sound one, since most new students don't know enough about the community to decide where to live.

If the chancellor continues to maintain this policy, however, it will mean that some students who choose to live off-campus will be occupying dorm rooms that are already in short supply. Steps to ease the crunch must be taken, and the University can lead the way.

Plans for a University-funded and operated apartment complex should be attended to quickly. A search for private entrepreneurs willing to construct new apartments and residence halls like Granville Towers should be undertaken. With a little cooperation from the community, space could be afforded for the construction of such enterprises.

As a last resort, the University might find it necessary to exert pressure on the General Assembly for more funds to expand existing residence halls or to construct new ones.

Programs like the ADA are fine as temporary cures for symptoms that haunt nearly every student during his or her years at Carolina. But the problem only can be solved when the University recognizes there just isn't enough housing in this town to go around and takes action to provide more.

The Daily Tar Heel

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letters to the editor

Decline in union membership not just N.C. trend

To the editor:

In regard to Monday's editorial concerning the status of unionization in North Carolina, there are several points which should be considered.

- Declining trends of union membership are not unique to North Carolina. Unions lost 700,000 members nationwide over the last two years.

- Not only have North Carolina unions won fewer elections recently; the same has been true across the country. Also, union decertifications (employee-motivated ousters of their union representation) have increased dramatically, causing genuine concern among national union leadership.

- J. P. Stevens has paid fines relating to labor practices, but the Amalgated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (originally the TWUA) has paid more in fines than this oft-maligned textile giant. For example, the ACTWU was fined \$1 million for acts of violence and destruction in an eastern Tennessee case.

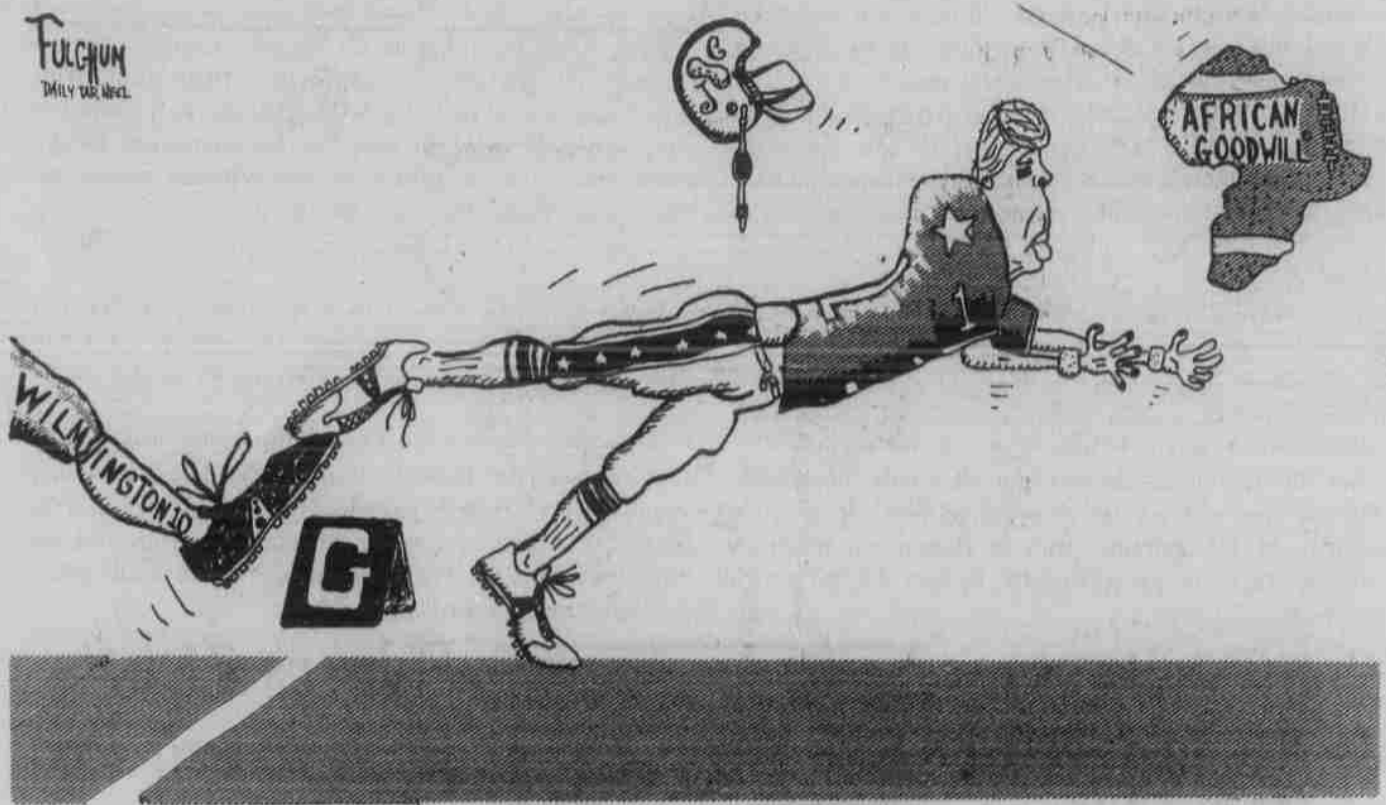
- The proposed NCCU labor center never received approval from the UNC Board of Governors, but merely from a subcommittee of that body. Furthermore, how could the North Carolina General Assembly "catch wind" of the proposal and formulate an anti-union stance when they haven't been in session during the controversy?

- The editor is correct. Additional examples need not be recounted. Organized labor has made little progress in North Carolina and is encountering similar opposition nationwide. If, as you state, the source of this opposition is not only private industry but the public at large, why should a decrease in union membership be seen as a situation begging correction? Why should we deny to the people of North Carolina the freedom of choice to join or not to join a union and the right to judge the relative merits of that choice?

- The average North Carolina industrial worker may earn \$1.61 less than the average industrial worker nationwide, but careful examination of the types of industry prevalent in North Carolina explains this. Fifty-five percent of North Carolina's industrial labor force is employed in the three lowest-paying industrial categories — furniture and fixtures, apparel, and textile mill products. Nationwide, only 13.8 percent are employed in these categories. Clearly, a comparison of absolute wage averages is invalid.

- Alan Reynolds of the First Chicago Bank, in his article "Is Alabama Richer Than New York?" compares the Snowbelt's (highly unionized states) to the Sunbelt's (less unionization) per capita incomes. He concludes that the Sunbelt's per capita

FULCRUM
MILY DE MEL



income is higher. His research found that the Snowbelt's higher state and local taxes and the higher cost of living found there more than offset the differences in unadjusted per capita incomes.

- Furthermore, last month's Boston Federal Reserve newsletter published results of a study comparing wages in the North, South and Midwest. For cities of similar size, little or no difference in wage rates was found. Obviously, larger cities are located in highly unionized areas, and therefore, misinterpretation of wage levels results. Big cities with low unionization levels compare favorably with big cities with high unionization levels.

- What good is a "400 percent better" pension plan if it is squandered on bad loans and political gifts as evident in the giant Teamsters Union and UMWUA which have no funds remaining in their pension plans? The UMWUA has sought company relief for its self-imposed situation.

The DTH has made two very basic mistakes in its Monday editorial by assuming that one, unions are predominantly good and benevolent, and two, management is predominantly "bad" and self-serving. The reverse, also, is not true. The facts were not addressed in a proper and logical manner, leading to false conclusions and an unfounded appeal to

increased unionization in North Carolina.

David Neal
Bruce Clarke
9th Floor Granville West

In honor of Polgar

"Instead of dwelling on the past and thinking of our great, great grandfathers, let's look to the future and the lives of our great, great grandchildren," Stephen Polgar once said.

He entered the class quietly, walked to the chalkboard and wrote: "SCENARIO — PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE" in big, printed letters.

"Now, finally, we will look ahead to what is before us," the anthropology professor said. It was to be his last class. After the sudden, tragic death of Stephen Polgar on Monday, we are left to grapple with this dilemma on our own.

Twice a week, for our 75-minute class period, Professor Polgar took us on a journey. In an anthropology seminar called Human Dilemmas, we were studying and questioning those problems common to all cultures: inequality, aggression, war, overpopulation, poverty and progress.

The class of eight was informal and we often related our discussion of other cultures and peoples to life in America as we know it.

But the talk never rambled too far. Professor Polgar always pulled us back in and questioned the reasoning and meaning of any thoughts. He wasn't one for lecturing, but his thoughtful ideas and insights were always relevant and sincere.

"We can't expect to find the answers to these problems that have plagued humans over time. All we can do is to learn and study and define in order to ask better questions to gain insights into past suffering," he once said.

Polgar questioned the institution of education in our society. He said that so often our curiosity was stifled by the standardized expectations placed on students.

It is repeatedly true here within the halls of academia at this University that we lose sight of the real value of learning, while struggling just to make the grade. Professor Polgar was a scholar in his field and was highly respected around the world. As a student of his, I am deeply saddened by his death, for he touched my life as so few teachers do. I am sure my classmates would join me in extending our sympathy to Professor Polgar's family. It is indeed a great loss for the University community and all who knew him.

Kim McGuire
207 Pittsboro St.
Anthropology 99

Little leaguers learn more than baseball

By ELLIOTT POTTER

Some people call baseball our national pastime. But folks around my neck of the woods — eastern North Carolina — never have understood such name-calling. Baseball was certainly more than something to just pass time to us.

Hardball (that's the official title, you know) was considered an important segment of life, perhaps accurately described as Life's Teething Ring. I personally learned many of the important aspects of living from the ballfield and those who occupied it.

Baseball's lessons rarely deal with sport and sportsmanship. They usually concern surviving, fighting, outsmarting and, yes, even sex.

Uncle Fred was an early student of baseball, or at least he said he was. As a growing kid, I always looked to Fred for guidance of my activities on the baseball diamond. Uncle Fred always looked me

up at family get-togethers, pulled me off to the side and related an early lesson about survival on the ballfield and elsewhere.

He was a spitball pitcher for the Princeton (N.C.) Bulldogs when he was in his early 20s. The Bulldogs were a semi-pro team that played in a two-team league with the Kenly Wildcats. Uncle Fred always said the development of a rivalry between Princeton and Kenly was the natural course of events. He apparently did not like the course of events during one season because he intentionally pegged Kenly's leadoff hitter in the head with the first pitch of one game. Uncle Fred recalled that angry fans chased him off the field and into hiding in a nearby cornfield after the beanball incident.

The fighting started before the first pitch of the next game. When the Princeton team arrived at the ballpark for the game riding on an open-bed log truck, it was greeted by a mob of Kenly fans wielding hoes and axhandles. No national anthem, no nothing.

The lesson of his story, Uncle Fred said, was never ride to a game with Kenly on a log truck. I never have.

When my little league squad began searching for a coach, we naturally turned to Fred because of his wide-ranging experience. We lost quite a few games that first year but folks nowadays never talk about our losses. They talk about our secret weapon — Fred's Famous Potato Play.

We unveiled our weapon at the last game of the season against the first-place team. With an enemy baserunner on third base with two out in the last inning, our one-run lead was bordering on extinction. Uncle Fred called time out and handed the catcher a peeled potato.

The catcher, who was 10 years old and the youngest player on the team, heaved the potato over the third baseman's head on the next pitch and the baserunner started trotting toward home, believing the baseball was in

leftfield. The catcher tagged him with the real ball and our team escaped from the field with the victory before someone checked the rulebook.

The Potato Play taught us the advantage of brain over brawn very early in life.

However, Uncle Fred can't take much credit for our Little League team's first lesson in sex. He just provided the background information, saying we had to pick up the rest on our own. The rest was embodied in two girls, several years older than little league age, who always showed up to watch the team practice. I guess you could call them little league groupies. The starting infield finally discovered what the girls were after one day and the result was the beginning of the decline of baseball's popularity.

Things have never been the same since.

Elliott Potter, a senior journalism major from Goldsboro, is a sports writer for the Daily Tar Heel.

Dark toads demand equal swamp conditions

By JIM PROTZMAN

In a flurry of bureaucratic brainstorming, HEW Secretary Joe Helifino has apparently contrived the perfect plan to cure North Carolina's social ills.

The new proposal, christened "Tobacco Toad" by Washington insiders, reportedly not only resolves the state's tobacco industry woes, but also outlines plans finally to end institutional discrimination against dark-brown toads by their lighter-skinned southern neighbors.

The dark toads, traditional inhabitants of northern areas in the Great Lismal Swamp, took their case to the courts last year to try to raise their swamp conditions to the level enjoyed by their lighter, countrymen.

With Helifino's support, the darks claimed that south-swamp toads should have to share their wealth with northern sections, or lose federal funding for their sunny southern cities.

Lizard lawyers for the lights, organized a coalition called Amphibians and Reptiles Seeking Equity (ARSE), countersued, charging that it is unrealistic to expect lights to leave their neighborhoods and move north. After months of discussion, neither side has shown signs of compromise.

All, however, is not lost. Helifino's latest proposal to break the light-dark stalemate, and concurrently assuage the state's tobacco producers, appears to be right on target.

Under the new five part plan, Helifino suggests the following solution:

WELL — THERE GOES THE NEIGHBORHOOD...



DTH/Lee Poole

- Immediately divert all tobacco industry production to developing toad-sized cigarettes and cigars. HEW and Department of Agriculture price supports would insure the industry against inadequate toad tobacco consumption.

- Offer all of the swamp toads a home in the mountains if they will participate in a revolutionary new Food and Drug Administration cancer research project on the effects of toad cigarette smoking.

- Once the toads accept the offer, about which they really have no choice, use Department of Transportation reserve toad-trucks to cart the toads out of the swamps and into the mountains, where a new system of toad roads would be developed for the neighborhoods.

- Have Department of the Interior planners devise a new and glorious promised land for the displaced toads in which both lights and darks will enjoy government-guaranteed equality, with a TV in front of every toad-stool, until, of course, they all croak from cancer.

- With the concurrence of the State Department, sell the swamp to the Arabs for a jillion gallons of gas.

Seldom in the functioning of the federal government does a solution as simple as Helifino's present itself.

The possibility of compromise and cooperation among ARSE, dark-brown toads, the departments of State, Transportation, Interior, Agriculture and HEW, the FDA and the state of North Carolina represent a promising proposition worthy of our closest attention.

We therefore take the sweet-swamp toads to task and demand from them the same good faith shown by Secretary Helifino — good faith aimed at equitable toad distribution and continued tobacco subsidies.

If successful, "Tobacco Toad" would demonstrate the unparalleled value of institutional cooperation in resolving social segmentation in the South. With its dark and light toads living and dying together in harmony, North Carolina would become, for future toad generations everywhere, a true example of tolerance in Toad Town, U.S.A.

Jim Protzman, a graduate student in journalism, is from Chapel Hill.