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The Daily Tar Heel

88th year of editorial freedom

The wall

At Ohio State University in Columbus, students can choose among several different restaurants located within their central student union; it contains a submarine sandwich shop, a pizza parlor, a McDonald's reported to be the world's largest, an ice cream bar, several snack bars and a sit-down, cafeteria-style, high-class eatery called The Terrace Room.

At UNC, we have the Fast Break and the Greenhouse. Admittedly, it is unfair to compare the food services of a university with 50,000 students like Ohio State with those of a university of 20,000 like UNC. The University's appetite is simply not that big, and it could not support all those restaurants. Food service here under ARA is surely no worse than it was under Servomation (maybe better), and the new company is trying to improve it. Unfortunately, some of its methods seem a bit bizarre.

ARA correctly identified the old Hunger Hut's problem; very few students were going into the little nook on the north side of the Union where the snack bar is hidden, and even fewer were buying hamburgers. The ARA solution was to remove the doors opening from the Union onto the Pit, an outlet constantly used by students. The reasoning there seemed to hold that students on their way out of the Union would wander into the dining area, run into the new glass panel where the door had been and bounce into the Fast Break, where they would reflexively order hamburgers.

Now the new food service is following through with its strategy by closing off the Union dining area entirely. A new glass-and-aluminum wall, costing \$7,000 in student fees, is being installed between the vending machines and the rest of the dining area. The objective there appears to be to trap those students still using old traffic routes through the Union. Once caught between the new wall and the snack bar students presumably will meander around, eating hamburgers, until they find their way out.

The snack bar's manager said the new wall would keep out noise, dogs and through traffic, none of which seemed to bother anybody before. Fast Break patrons, like Hunger Hut patrons before them, generally want to get in, get fed and get out.

Honestly, for \$7,000 a lot of people would happily tolerate noise, dogs and traffic. They would probably even create their own atmosphere; there sure isn't any there now. Before spending any more money on, say, hanging plants or chrome-and-glass furniture, perhaps the ARA and Union people should look into hiring a dog-catcher or installing traffic lights.

Investigative journalism

A reporter's fruitless search for answers in South Building

By THOMAS JESSIMAN

It is common knowledge that administrators are paid to serve the University. It is their job to make sure the gears of the University all work in harmony. If ever anything is discovered that needs to be changed or disturbs the regular life of the school, administrators will always talk honestly and directly with concerned students. After all, if administrators cannot be open with the people they are serving, then they are violating our trust and making a sham out of the whole student-administration relationship.

Yet despite that common knowledge, a young reporter from the student newspaper heard from his colleagues that many times administrators do not give the whole story. He was told that if he ever knew half the real story after an interview with an administrator he had done a great job. He was told that in fact a good number of administrators look at students as the enemy rather than the friend.

But this young reporter was a freshman and did not believe any of this. He needed to find out for himself. So he told his editor, he wanted to do an "In Quotes" with The Administrator, and when he called the secretary in South Building was fortunate enough to book an appointment three weeks later.

The night before the big interview, this reporter—let's call him Joe—made up a list of questions. He paced around the bathroom in his dorm and stopped occasionally to deliver one of his questions to the mirror. "No, that's too fast!" or "More feeling next time," he would say to himself and repeat the questions again and again until he spoke them perfectly. When Joe called home that night, his mother reminded him to wear his best blazer.

The next morning Joe began the long and lonely walk up the steps of South Building. He was so nervous that he hardly noticed the beauty of the old bricks, the four tall columns, or the North Carolina flag fluttering gently in the autumn breeze. He opened the giant door and walked inside. To his right was the sign—Office of The Administrator. He inquired at the first desk and then was shuttled deeper and deeper into the office. Secretary after secretary flashed by before he was finally seated outside the proper door.

After a while, The Administrator came out, shook Joe's hand and invited him in. The Administrator sat down behind a giant mahogany desk.

"How can I help you, Joe?" The Administrator said, lighting a pipe.

"Well, I guess we might as well get right to it," Joe said. "My first question is on the whole issue of minorities on campus. About a year and a half ago a dean at this school protested that not enough qualified blacks were being accepted here. And despite talk of increasing or decreasing enrollments of blacks every year, the basic fact is that this University is only 7 percent black in a state that is 25 percent black. What are your feelings on this whole issue?" Joe took the cap off his pen and opened his notebook.

"Joe," The Administrator said through a cloud of smoke, "you know, it's a complicated world. We can't



always have what we want and sometimes we need to take what we can."

"Does that mean you're pleased with the way things are, sir?"

"We're always seeking to improve, you know that. Change, any kind of change, takes time. But we're sure working on it."

Joe's hand remained poised to begin writing. "But sir, don't you want to say something about the way things are right now—I mean specifically."

"I just did, Joe."

Joe tried to think of another way of getting at the question.

"Joe, if you need specifics, I suggest you look out there at the people working in my office. You'll find people of all races."

"But what about the situation on this campus, sir?"

The Administrator emptied his pipe in the ash tray and sighed. He seemed disappointed in Joe. "That's about all I can say at this point in time, son. Any other questions?" He looked at his watch.

Joe looked down at his pad. "What about women on campus? Are you concerned that 55 percent of the students here are women and yet not even 15 percent of the faculty is?"

"I'm glad you asked that, Joe. As a matter of fact we have a committee looking into that right now."

"But what do you think?"

The Administrator chuckled. "Now Joe, you wouldn't want me to make any kind of statement before the final report is in. That wouldn't be fair to the committee. I can tell you though that I have put some thought into the matter."

Joe looked down his list of questions. Unfortunately most of them depended on the first two questions taking the interview somewhere. There was one

question though at the bottom of his notepad.

"Mr. Administrator, don't you think that all this construction going on around campus kind of ruins our claim to the Southern Part of Heaven? Is any of it ever going to be completed?" By now Joe could barely see The Administrator through the smoke.

"Sure."

"But isn't it all kind of depressing?" Joe persisted. "Not for me it isn't. I can look down the road and see what a great university we'll have when all that's done and finished."

A secretary entered the room and handed The Administrator a piece of paper.

"Excuse me, Joe," The Administrator said, "but I do have another appointment now. If you'd like we can continue our conversation another time?"

"No, I don't think that will be necessary," Joe said, capping his pen and standing up.

"Oh, one thing before you go, Joe. You wouldn't mind reading back anything you might attribute to me tomorrow, would you? I've had some problems with misquotes over the years."

"Well, it's our policy not to do that, sir, but in this case I think I can make an exception."

"Thank you."

"You said, 'I can look down the road and see what a great university we'll have when all that's done and finished.'" Joe began walking to the door.

"That's all you're going to use?"

"Yeah."

"Well, just make sure you use it in the right context," The Administrator said, laughing.

Thomas Jessiman, a junior English major from Newton, Mass., is associate editor for The Daily Tar Heel.

A growing war

With Jordan increasing its involvement in the war between Iran and Iraq, the situation in the Persian Gulf has been becoming bleaker every day. Alarmed by Jordan's alliance with Iraq, the United States and Great Britain have warned Jordan to abstain from entering the war. The fear is that if Jordan joins in the war, Syria will waste little time entering the fray on the side of the Iranians.

Obviously, the longer the war lasts, the greater the chance that the fighting could escalate to an international level. So far, both the United States and the Soviet Union have remained somewhat on the sidelines, though the United States sent four special surveillance planes to its strong ally, Saudi Arabia, and the Soviet Union offered some military advice to the Iranians. (The advice was rejected.)

Certainly an embarrassment to the United States must be Iran's use of American planes in the fighting. While 52 American hostages still remain at the mercy of the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and his government, American planes defend the Ayatollah's regime.

But if arms sales in the Persian Gulf do not make obvious enough the tentativeness of alliances in that area, the recent war has caused many Arab states to become more receptive to the United States. The Arabs live and die for their oil and with the war threatening the Strait of Hormuz, the passage by which 60 percent of the world's oil imports are shipped, they are beginning to acknowledge the value of the United States' interest in that strait.

But none of the increased Arab interest in the United States means anything until the war finally ends and normal diplomatic ties can be resumed. At this point though, with Iran vowing not to rest until every Iraqi soldier is driven from its land and the Iraqis showing no signs of retreating voluntarily, the war seems destined to go on for some time longer, perhaps even through the winter. And every extra week increases the likelihood of dangerous interference by other powers, both local and international.



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