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The Daily Tar Heel

88th year of editorial freedom

Candid camera

Monday's Supreme Court decision allowing photographic and broadcast coverage of a criminal trial despite a defendant's objections may have been a victory for the news media, but, at least in North Carolina, that victory was little more than a moral one.

Supreme Court justices voted 8-0 Monday that states could allow radio, television and still-photography coverage of criminal trials even if the defendants or other parties in the cases objected to the coverage.

Though more than half the states now permit some kind of microphone or camera coverage of criminal trials, not all have allowed it over a defendant's objection. North Carolina, however, bans all electronic media coverage from its courtrooms.

The Supreme Court's decision in no way requires North Carolina to change its laws, but N.C. Supreme Court Chief Justice Joseph Branch has said that in light of the ruling his court will review its policy in the next few weeks.

In past years camera and broadcast coverage have been banned by judges for fear that such coverage would turn courtrooms into circuses and preclude any chance of a defendant receiving a fair trial. The initial ban on cameras in the courtroom, in fact, was a result of coverage in the 1930s trial of Bruno Richard Hauptmann for the kidnapping of the Charles Lindbergh baby. The trial, according to one observer, "featured photographers leaping about like acrobats, witnesses tripping over cables and broadcasting equipment and a constant traffic of messengers to the media."

Many things have changed since the 1930s, though. Journalists are more professional, broadcasting equipment is much less obtrusive and the public has come to rely more heavily on the electronic media for its information.

"In a sense, this (decision) validates the media claim of functioning as surrogates for the public," Chief Justice Warren Burger wrote in his opinion Monday.

Perhaps the decision will also help persuade North Carolina's Supreme Court that broadcast and photographic coverage of criminal trials, when done with guidelines, can be painless and could even be advantageous to the criminal justice system. As one media lawyer said Tuesday, the presence of television in the courtroom may encourage lawyers and juries to scrutinize their cases more closely. The added publicity also may make it more likely for witnesses to tell the truth, he said.

And in the long run, by their increased monitoring of the courts, the media could make our court system more accountable to the public, and therefore more effective.

Needed involvement

Twenty years ago, blacks in Mississippi encountered racial slurs and violence when they voted — or tried to vote. Now a study says Mississippi has more black elected officials than any other state.

Research by the Joint Center for Political Studies in Washington shows that Mississippi had 387 black elected officials for the 12-month period ending in June 1980. The political composition in Mississippi, once nearly all white, has changed primarily because of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The act banished literacy tests and other methods designed to keep blacks from voting, and kept state elections under the scrutiny of the U.S. Justice Department.

The study's encouraging results come at a time when President Ronald Reagan has called for a cutback in federal government involvement. In his inauguration speech, Reagan called for an end to an era where Americans looked to the federal government for solutions to their social and economic problems. He promised to return sweeping power to the states, to have them do what the federal government has been doing since the years of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Deciding which powers to return to the states and which powers to keep in Washington will provide the president with some difficult decisions. Reagan must use great care to guarantee that the federal government will still have the power to ensure that social equality will continue to be a high-priority goal.

If left up to state governments, the Voting Rights Act and laws like it would have never been enacted in many states, and blacks would still be denied access to rights as fundamental as voting.

In his speech, Reagan called for a nation "equal in fact and not just in theory." Reagan should remember his words when restricting the federal government. Most important is not the degree of federal involvement, but that justice through equality is served.

The Daily Tar Heel

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Reader says U.S. should honor Iran treaty

By STEVE SCHER

Richard Holcombe, in his response to the editorial, "The Negotiators" (*DTH*, Jan. 22), reveals some distressing facts about both himself and his politics. He starts his response off by claiming that he rarely reads the *DTH*, mostly, it would seem, because he disagrees with the paper's editorial stance. Not only does this show a complete disregard for any knowledge of what is happening on campus, but it also shows that Holcombe is so single-minded and stubborn that he refused to listen to opinions other than his own. I am different from Holcombe in at least three respects. First, I do read the *Tar Heel*, almost every day, and almost from cover to cover, and I generally agree with its editorials; second, although a rather vocal, self-proclaimed liberal, I do, on occasion, venture out and read things written by people whose political views are diametrically opposed to mine, such as William F. Buckley's *National Review*, which is perhaps the most conservative magazine available to the general public. Third, I feel that Ronald Reagan should honor the agreement with the Iranian government.

As the *DTH* mentioned, "protocol and precedent dictate that an incumbent president abide by his predecessor's executive agreement." Just because the Iranian

hostage decision was worse than any situation the United States has been in before does not mean that the government should disregard all protocol and precedent, things in which our government is grounded. What Holcombe is suggesting is that the United States do what I have heard many conservatives condemn other countries, such as the Soviet Union, for doing; that is, disregarding a treaty or agreement, just because the treaty is slightly painful.

Response

I agree with Holcombe that a country should do what is best for it within the law, and what was best for the United States was to secure the hostages' release through diplomacy and treaty, which was a far sight more successful than any military action was or could ever have been. Regardless, the treaty was arrived at, and the Iranians lived up to their part of it. Whether it was for political, economic or other reasons is not important; now it is time for America to live up to its

end of the agreement.

Holcombe says that, "the stories of mistreatment of the hostages demonstrates that Iran did not negotiate in good faith." That statement is, to use Holcombe's expression, "trash." The treaty said nothing about how the hostages had previously been treated, that would have been pointless, since the mistreatment was irrevocable anyway.

Furthermore, Holcombe claims that the United States was forced into its treaty with Iran. That anyone would believe that we were forced into anything is, to once again borrow a phrase from Holcombe, "laughable." Thanks to some war-hungry and vote-conscious politicians, the United States has one of the largest, if not the largest, military arsenals in the world. Iran could not force the country into a treaty. We had something they wanted — their assets — and they had something we wanted — the hostages. A compromise was reached, and a treaty was written.

Reagan's decision to sign the treaty should not be based on what is best for the United States and the few remaining Americans in Iran, as Holcombe suggests, but on the fact that the 52 hostages are with their families.

Steve Scher is a freshman from Coral Gables, Fla.

Letters to the editor

'DTH' Election Board editorial hammered

To the editor:

In the Jan. 26 issue of the *DTH*, the editorial, "Scurrilous spending" addressed the campaign spending controversy surrounding Joe Buckner, a candidate for student body president. For those who may not know, scurrilous means "grossly and offensively abusive." Although it did provide an effective piece of eye-catching alliteration, its application to Buckner's campaign is, in my opinion, scurrilous.

The charge against Buckner was that he had violated spending regulations by claiming old Jim Hunt buttons and soiled funeral home sheets to be worthless and of no monetary value in his campaign. The Elections Board has ruled unanimously in Buckner's favor.

But the *DTH* obviously felt that Joe had gotten away with something, that he had, in effect, found a loophole where he could shadily buck propriety. The editorial suggests that although the buttons and sheets have no market value, they do have worth to the candidate and that worth should be included in the candidate's report of campaign expenses.

All right. Why don't we figure out how much Joe's time is worth to him? Why don't we make Buckner add up all the manhours he and his supporters spent finding ways to run an effective, cost-efficient campaign and include those in his financial report.

I think it is too bad that Buckner must be equated with the type of person who would rip off flyers to write his own campaign pitch on the back, or who would ask his friends to buy up merchandise and spoil it to evade cost inclusion. I fail to see why innovation must mean sneakiness when used in a campaign, and I see no reason not to believe that the same resourcefulness Joe is using in his campaign would make him a better candidate.

Chris Long
114 Ehringhaus

Buckner commended

I am appalled at the *DTH*'s reporting of Joe Buckner's campaign expenses.

First of all, after finding Buckner was easily within the expense limit, both last week's article and Monday's editorial on his expenses were useless. I think it was poor journalism to print them.

Second, Buckner's campaign expenditures should be commended instead of criticized. He has been incredibly ingenious in his campaign material: finding used sheets and buttons. Of course, he could have bought new sheets and buttons, but that would have defeated the whole resourceful purpose of the two projects.

No election laws have been broken. Joe Buckner is within the spending boundary. It is unbelievable to me that the *DTH* has tried so hard to magnify nothing. I dare say it is a bit biased.

I think we should look at the articles with a positive view instead of the intended negative ones. It's simply another reason to vote for Joe Buckner; for he is already exhibiting resourcefulness and creativity.

Wendy Hopfenberg
209 Alderman
and 80 others

Editor's note: Wendy Hopfenberg is STOW coordinator for Joe Buckner.

Meaningful careers

To the editor:

In his letter to the editor "'DTH' fails to investigate athletics" (*DTH*, Jan. 21), David M. Poole makes the assumption that some careers are more meaningful than others. He implies that "such things as recreation administration or physical education" are not curricula that lead students to suitable careers. The question



becomes, "What constitutes a meaningful career?" As recreation administration majors, we have found both the curriculum and experience in the field challenging, rewarding, and most of all, meaningful.

Maybe Mr. Poole should have researched these areas before he came out with such a blatant remark. Even a small amount of research would have revealed the countless ways in which physical education and recreation administration serves entire communities. At N.C. Memorial Hospital, recreation administration majors are at work in the areas of Pediatrics, Adult Rehabilitation in the Burn Unit, the Ninth Floor Recreation Center, and the Adult Medical/Surgical Program. Across the nation, professionals devote their lives to the enhancement of scouts, veterans, nursing home residents, etc.

Meaningless? Maybe Mr. Poole should reconsider his comment the next time he decides to participate in such recreational activities as playing tennis or visiting a movie theater; the careers which he implies are meaningless affect his life every day.

The specific major, however, does not matter. The important fact is that what is of value to some may not be as valuable to others, but no career is absolutely meaningless.

Edie Horne
Anne Martin
Mary Beth Rehm
Toni TealRecreation administration majors
Connor Residence Hall

No time for GPSF

To the editor:

There's been a lot of space in *The Daily Tar Heel* devoted to the disappointing lack of candidates for graduate student positions in campus government, culminating in the editorial "Horseless Races" (*DTH*, Jan. 27). The complaint seems to come down to this: "You graduate students complain so loudly about the CGC's distribution of funds, and even demand guaranteed funding for your own organization. Why don't you get involved in Student Government and prove that you deserve the money?"

The answer's simple. Being a graduate student takes a lot of time. You spend enough time at it to get a little obsessed with it, and you pay for it by devoting less time to relaxation, hobbies, parties, spouses and kids if you have them, and peace of mind. So unless you're in law or political science or some other gov-

ernment-related field and can think of it as part of your training, Student Government is a low priority activity. I, for one, feel that there are about 15 other things I'd do if I had time for them.

So why do we even have a Graduate Professional Student Organization? That's simple, too. We want our money back. Very few of the campus organizations funded by the CGC involve graduate students to any degree — some don't even permit our involvement. I doubt my life would change much if the CGC were disbanded, except that I'd get some money out of it. GPSF exists to get us back some of the money your Student Government takes away from us each

semester, and every year we all hope some noble soul will volunteer to be president and spend a lot of time to get it for us. This year, it looks like nobody's got the time. It's understandable.

A friend of mine tells me that at his undergraduate college, a law was passed stating that any year in which less than 50 percent of the student body voted in campus elections, there would be no student government. What a fine idea! What's our usual voter turnout around here, anyway?

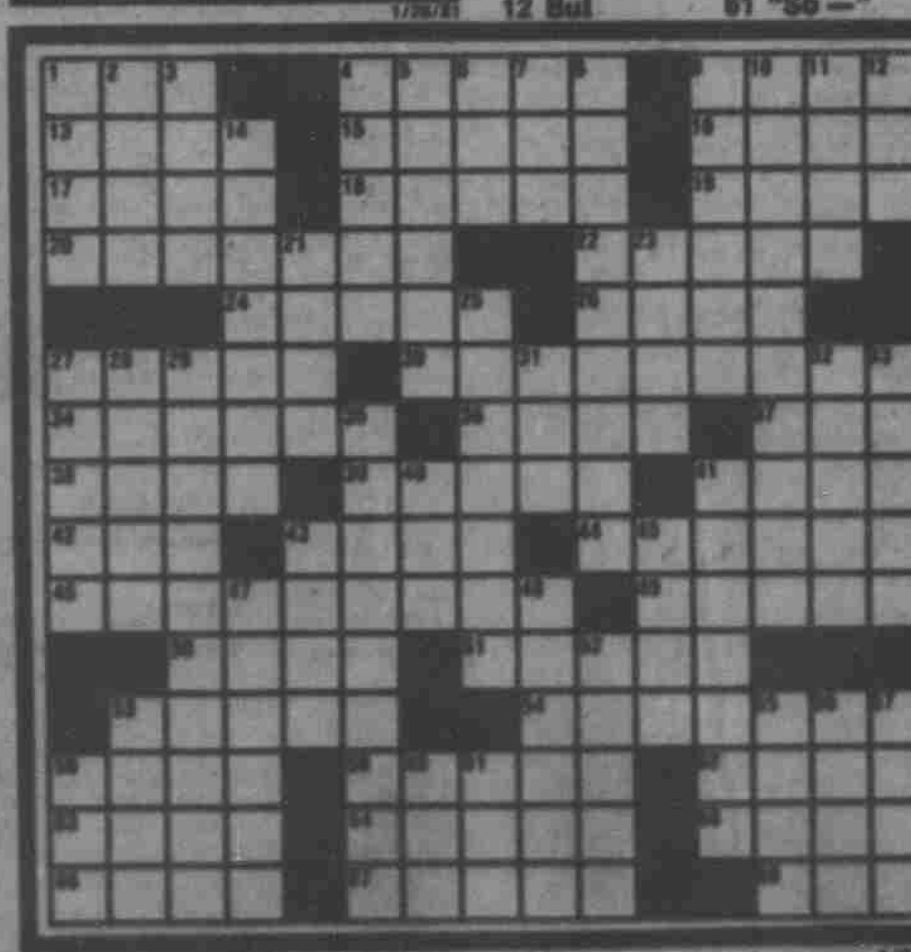
Timothy B. Brown
Curriculum in Ecology

THE Daily Crossword by Ello Desiderio

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