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The Daily Tar Heel

89th year of editorial freedom

Life on the Hill

Once again life in Chapel Hill is back in full swing after thousands of people returned this past week to the community that they consider home away from home.

By the time you read this, classes will be underway and no longer will freshmen have their eyes glued to the campus map, now only occasionally bumping into a tree or bush. Two weeks from now they will be pronouncing Dey Hall "die" instead of "day" and wondering why they were so nervous about coming to The Southern Part of Heaven.

The beginning of an academic year signals a fresh start for any university community, and by next spring thousands of people who have come to know and love UNC will have grown and matured in many ways.

The enthusiasm of the class of 1985 seems to indicate once again that this year's freshmen are proud to be here and ready to contribute their talents to the university, as well as take advantage of the many resources that a large research institution has to offer.

During orientation much is said about the tradition of this University and making the most of the opportunities that are available. On the opposite page three elected officials reiterate the belief that now is the time to seize those opportunities because the future of the state and nation will depend on college students across the nation.

For many of us who are seniors this realization is becoming clearer as the days pass. Just as the standard inquiry last week among freshmen was apt to deal with procedures about campus life or classes, so the basic question for people coming back for their last year at UNC last week was, "Can you believe this is it?"

But this is nothing new and faculty and administrators have seen classes come and go. It is surprising how little certain things change around here from year to year: student government, good service, desegregation disputes, water shortages, town-gown relations: the news runs in cycles.

But UNC continues to grow, as construction on campus indicates, and the thing that keeps this place going is the vitality of people who feel fortunate to be here, and realize their few years in Chapel Hill will become more special as they grow older.

Many people say a person's college years are the best of his life, and as the saying goes, "Why work when you can stay in Chapel Hill?" But ideally the years here should not signal the end of the best times, but only the beginning, as students take a little part of UNC with them wherever they go.

The next eight months are going to go by more quickly than anyone would think possible, but come April the people who make up this year's student body, faculty and administration will be able to look back and appreciate the bad as well as the good.

We at *The Daily Tar Heel* hope to be a part of that college experience. This year marks the paper's 89th year of editorial freedom, and *The DTH* will attempt to mirror events on campus as well as speak out on issues affecting the community and nation. It is a year we look forward to.



Neutron bomb raises spectre of nuclear war

By MARK MURRELL

NEW YORK — "There is a monkey in the White House," a WNEW Sunday afternoon disc jockey snarled to the audience, many of whom were engrossed in the Sunday *New York Times* in Central Park.

She immediately slapped the Beatle's "Revolution" on the turntable, and when it was over sneered, "You can count me out Jack."

She was reacting, just like many others, to the *Times* article headed: "Reagan reported to order building of neutron bombs for stockpiling in U.S. — Allied fear is seen."

The *Times* might well have added, "Domestic fear and outrage are seen," because everywhere I went that Sunday, people were shaking their heads, crumbling up the front page in disgust, and looking for a nearby garbage can to heave such news into.

The Reagan Administration had "counted everybody in," almost two weeks before. It began to dawn on park sunbathers that balmy afternoon that in some remote spot neutron warheads already were being assembled. Many began to see Reagan's decision as a move that would escalate a worldwide nuclear arms race, or make it easier for conventional warfare to degenerate into a nuclear confrontation.

At issue is the assembly of neutron bombs, or what the administration terms "enhanced radiation weapons."

The weapon is designed to produce far more radiation — without as much of a heat blast — so that it can kill as many people as a hydrogen bomb ten times its size without as much damage to surrounding buildings. The basic idea is more death, less destruction.

For many liberals who have ceased to be naive, and have grudgingly accepted Reagan's predilection for a military shoot-em-up-world, it is the administra-

tion's cold reasoning that is most disturbing.

What clinched it for many was Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger's explanation.

"There's been a lot of nonsense that it only kills people and doesn't destroy buildings or property," he told television interviewers. "Of course it destroys property and of course it kills people, because unfortunately that's what war weapons are for."

For some odd reason those are not words of comfort.

It is important to realize the administration's main point — and you have to stop and do some serious thinking to let this one sink in — that we are only going to stockpile these weapons in the interests of peace. If we can reach that end, it may well be worth the \$500 million to \$1 billion it will cost to assemble the system.

The warheads' danger is that it may bridge the gap between nuclear and conventional wars. Opponents argue that its narrow focus which could devastate troops on the battlefield might be an all too irresistible convenience for leaders if there were a confrontation with the Soviets. Use of the neutron warheads might cause the Soviets to retaliate with their own conventional nuclear weapons.

The fact that Reagan has chosen to assemble the neutron weapons as one of his first defense priorities, perhaps sounds the death knell for conventional warfare, although the administration plans to spend a mind-boggling \$1.5 trillion over the next five years on the largest peacetime military buildup in U.S. history. An assignment of nuclear priority over that of conventional weapons is frightening because it will more than likely encourage the Soviets to retaliate by redeveloping their own neutron weapons program, which they tested and abandoned years ago.

The administration has been sly in claiming that the weapons will not be sent



to Europe but will stay at home, when in actuality if a conflict occurs they could be in Europe in a matter of hours.

A weapons buildup is something that seems inevitable with the current administration, so if nuclear disarmament is beyond hope, the American people could at least expect a little more sound reasoning from their government.

The announcement's timing seems to stand in contrast to the disarmament talks that Reagan has promised to hold with Moscow. It is also chilling that the words came on the 36th anniversary of the bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

Weinberger and Reagan both say they are committed to world peace — so committed in fact that they are now seeking an accord to keep the Middle East free of nuclear weapons while America continues to arm warheads with tridium. And it looks as if Washington will continue its "Do as I say and not as I do" policy. Now the administration is deciding who is and is not responsible enough to handle weapons that are safe in the hands of no one.

If the United States is drawn into a nuclear confrontation, the country will be able to respond with horrible force using the neutron weapon. It is a threat, they say, for the sake of peace.

"I think it would make it much harder to launch a conventional war and thereby preserve the peace," Weinberger said. "The more ways that we can be correctly perceived as being able to inflict unacceptable damage to any attacker anywhere in the world, the more likely we are to maintain the peace."

For all its apparent truth, that kind of reasoning is chilling, especially when one realizes that the United States is only one among many nations that feel that way.

The super powers will strive continually to have the upper hand militarily. Reagan's recent move simply advocates that type of paranoia, ensuring that the situation will become more tense in the future and that there is no end in sight unless it is THE END.

Mark Murrell, a senior journalism and English major from Jacksonville, is associate editor for *The Daily Tar Heel*.

Voting Act needed to curb discrimination

By BEVERLY SHEPARD

The "Olden Days." That's what my grandmother calls them. These were the days when "colored" folks never questioned going to the rear of the bus or the back door of a restaurant. And, when makin' a livin' meant sunrise to sunset picking cotton in a plantation-size field for 50 cents a day.

Oftentimes, I've shaken my head and widened my eyes in amazement. Then with a sigh of relief, I'd say I'm sure glad things have changed.

Just last week when the subject came up again, my grandmother said she didn't think people would ever allow things to be that way again.

But when Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., and other conservatives speak against the extension of the Voting Rights Act, they are encouraging the country to take a step backward. Anyone who believes the necessity of such an act has become obsolete is leaving the path open for the return of the olden days.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 provides voting privileges for minorities by suspending the use of discriminatory devices like the literacy test and the poll tax. That act, however, will expire next year if not extended.

Once expired, the federal government would rely on the good faith of state and local governments to implement fair voting practices.

The section causing all the controversy is Section 5, which applies to nine states and portions of 13 others, in-

cluding North Carolina. It requires these states to receive prior approval from the U.S. Justice Department or the District Federal Court in Washington before making changes in their voting procedures.

Thurmond feels that the act unfairly penalizes the South. He interprets the extension as a means to hold the mistakes of yesterday over the heads of Southern legislators today.

But judging from its past, the South is not ready to receive a free hand at the polls. Even the 15th Amendment, which guarantees voting privileges for everyone, did not stop the literacy tests and poll taxes from existing. Had that been the case, the Voting Rights Act would never have become a necessity in the first place.

Thurmond argues against the extension by saying that blacks have already acquired their rights and discrimination at the polls no longer exists. His saying so is like seeing America as one of the world's richest nations while closing your eyes to the people who still live in rat-infested ghettos.

It is amazing how some knowledgeable white and some misled blacks have determined that getting a few blacks out of cotton fields and into air-conditioned offices means racism is dead. The question is not whether racism exists, but in what forms it is found. Rather than the name-calling and the fatback and watermelon insults of the past, racism in a more subtle form, has appeared at the polls.

Recently, the Virginia state government outlined its senate boundaries in such a way that split Norfolk's 37 percent black population and resulted in two white-majority districts. The action diluted black voting strength

as well as decreased the chances of equal representation in the state.

The best way to decrease the occurrence of situations like this one is to extend Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act.

Vice President George Bush told civil rights leaders during an annual conference of the National Urban League held this summer that the United States had a "commitment to the principle of equal rights and opportunity for all Americans and that commitment means the protection of the right to vote."

The Reagan administration, therefore, needs to transform hot air into direct action. President Ronald Reagan's suggestion that Section 5 be extended to cover all 50 states is not the solution, either. To do so would be to overwhelm the justice department with clearance requests and create more problems than would be solved.

Action should be taken, however, where past history has shown the necessity for it. The South has made its own hard bed and until it can present a clean record during the next few years, the South should be made to lie in it.

Voting discrimination is no stone-age occurrence and its recurrence is by no means a distant and remote possibility.

For my grandmother, the years haven't erased the memories of the "Olden Days." It's important that the discrimination she experienced then remain past memories rather than become future realities.

Beverly Shepard, a senior journalism major from Jacksonville, is an editorial writer for *The Daily Tar Heel*.

Arms buildup a costly and ill-founded strategy

By JONATHAN RICH

The United States is now undergoing the largest peacetime military buildup in the country's history. Coming to office on a platform of supposed American weakness and imminent world domination by the Soviet Union, Ronald Reagan has initiated a massive spending program designed to reassert American might and superiority across the globe. The cost will be more than triple that of the five-year buildup for the Vietnam War between 1965 and 1970, even after adjusting for inflation.

Unlike the administration's controversial tax and budget cuts, Reagan's defense program has swept through both the House and the Senate with nearly universal support. Congress's recent approval of a \$222 billion military budget for fiscal 1982 has paved the way for the administration's five-year \$1.5 trillion military program.

Before the nation embarks on such a spending extravaganza, several of Reagan's basic premises must be challenged. Have the Soviets really attained military superiority? Is the United States capable of such expenditures without disrupting the delicate process of rebuilding the economy? Finally, will intensive militarization enhance American influence and standing in the world community, or will it result in increased tension and antagonism from enemies and allies alike?

Much of Reagan's defense plan is based on the popular perception that after years of neglect during the post-Vietnam era, U.S. military capabilities have fallen far behind those of the Soviet Union. Administration officials point to the fact that during the past decade Soviet military spending consistently surpassed this country's expenditures, while their imposing forces clearly exceed those needed purely for defense. There is little question that elements of the American military have fallen into dangerous disrepair, and that increased allowances for parts, training and modernization are warranted. However, a defense budget that will provide hundreds of new ships, more than 1,000 new tanks, and 5,000 new nuclear warheads is not.

Military analysts are by nature conservative and have traditionally stressed their own country's weaknesses versus an opponent's strengths.

The current administration is no exception. While Reagan has been intent comparing American and Soviet capabilities, the real test, the relative strength of NATO versus the Warsaw Pact, has gone unnoticed.

According to the Center for Defense Information, combined NATO military spending has exceeded that of the Warsaw Pact for many years. NATO's edge is further accentuated by its superior industrial efficiency. Despite the Soviet Union's large standing army, the Warsaw Pact is outnumbered in active military personnel 4.8 million to 5.1 million. Furthermore, U.S. and NATO troops are better trained and equipped, while recent events in Poland have placed the future of the Warsaw Pact in considerable jeopardy.

There are other little-known facts. According to the Center for Defense Information, NATO holds a striking naval superiority over the Warsaw Pact in both major surface combatants (400 to 235) and in total tonnage. The United States and its allies also maintain a significant lead in the area of strategic nuclear weapons and military technology. Superior in overall weapons accuracy and submarine warfare, the United States is in a much better position to exploit the emerging situation in which fixed, land-based nuclear systems are becoming vulnerable and obsolete.

Most military and political analysts agree that China is much more likely to wage war with the Soviet Union than the Western allies, and the past several years have seen China move closer politically and economically to the West. Opposed by the combined forces of NATO, their allies and China, the balance of world power is overwhelmingly tilted against the Soviet Union.

Those politicians and generals who periodically raise alarm over the U.S.S.R.'s formidable conventional forces fail to recognize that the Soviet's defense needs are much greater than those of the United States. Surrounded by hostile nations and U.S. military bases, the Soviet Union is much more vulnerable to invasion than the United States. Their continued paranoia over invasion from the West is deeply rooted in enormous losses during both World Wars.

This is not to say that Soviet military forces should not be respected and feared. Yet these reactions must be coupled with a healthy under-

standing of their defense capabilities and concerns.

The Reagan administration has demonstrated little such understanding for either U.S. opponents' or allies' concerns. A "defense gap" has been perceived and funds are pouring in without any clear plan or overall strategy. The goal is enlarged American power around the globe. Whether this can be achieved through an exorbitant military program that hopes to make America the world's policeman is highly questionable.

Aside from escalating a global arms race, Reagan's military program threatens to disrupt the administration's entire economic program. Through tax and budget cuts Reagan hopes to revitalize the economy to the extent that it can afford an increased defense budget. However, if this does not occur rapidly, and there are many skeptics, the large military budget could easily become an inflationary burden responsible for ever-widening government deficits. Past military cost overruns make this scenario even more likely. America is still paying the price for inflation generated during the Vietnam years.

In other respects, rapid militarization will compete with the private sector for scarce resources and capital, therefore running against administration plans to spur investment and economic growth.

As the administration knows, world power is as much dependent on economic strength as military muscle. Any defense plan that undermines the U.S. economy is clearly self-defeating.

National defense and rearmament is currently a popular issue, with many advocates and few critics. Yet rather than becoming immersed in military hyperbole and paranoia, the nation needs to step back and judge the matter with some degree of objectivity. A strong military capable of defending this nation and its allies is a necessity. But the United States should not make the mistake of initiating an unnecessary and dangerous arms race, costly both in economic terms and in its implications for global peace.

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