

The Daily Tar Heel

91st year of editorial freedom

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FBI on the loose

When Attorney General William French Smith issued revised guidelines for the Federal Bureau of Investigation last week, he loosened restrictions that had been placed on the bureau's power since 1976. His new rules, to take effect Monday, allow federal agents to investigate any group that openly calls for criminal activity or even indicates it may want to engage in crimes in the future.

Smith's revisions raise questions over the nature of the FBI's power to investigate, questions which had first led to the 1976 leashing. Many of his new rules are vague, with a high potential for abuse.

Old problems

The rules adopted in 1976 were in response to reports of an unscrupulous FBI that, under the late J. Edgar Hoover's direction, conducted break-ins, blackmail and wiretapping. Then-Attorney General Edgar Levi issued guidelines designed to clean house at the bureau and polish the agency's tarnished image. Because of the new restrictions, the FBI was forced to close 10 security investigations that were based on nothing more than groups' calling for violence. To Levi, mere advocacy of criminal acts did not warrant FBI full investigations.

Smith's revisions, however, would alter the direction of the FBI. As California Rep. Don Edwards said, "The guidelines permit the launching of a full investigation based on advocacy alone." Furthermore, because of unclear guidelines, a group calling for nonviolent illegal acts, may now be investigated. This could mean, for example, that protestors at the University calling for the resistance to draft registration would become the subjects of a new FBI file.

Perhaps more importantly, the guidelines will allow for FBI infiltration at the early stage of an inquiry, before "probable cause" is established. Nowhere do these guidelines specify what circumstances justify using informers and infiltrators in an investigation. The new rules add that "highly intrusive" techniques may be used in preliminary inquiries where there are "compelling circumstances." The rules, however, fail to specify what "intrusive techniques" or define the "compelling circumstances."

New fears

Smith and FBI Director William Webster have offered assurances that the changes are aimed at only the violent acts. And as proponents have argued, an FBI empowered to investigate groups early on may be able to stop the violent act before it occurs. "Isn't it better to know that a bomb is being built than waiting and learning of the bomb's existence after the explosion occurs?" they have asked.

Certainly, what the proponents say is true. An FBI able to prevent violent acts by political groups is in the best interest of society. But putting this and Smith's assurances aside, there still exists the fundamental danger of unleashing a bureau which historically has abused its power. Smith's vague guidelines as they now stand could do just that. Congress, overseeing the operations of the FBI, now should study closely the changes and work to ensure that no abuse of power results.

Blacks must take initiative

By LARRY ELLIS

Despite Steve Powell's protests that the "race problem" has received too much coverage ("Who is...?", *DTH*, March 2), Laurence Thomas's controversial "black huddle" article ("Separate but equal?", *DTH*, Feb. 22) raises a number of issues that must be clarified. In particular, we have got to see that blacks must seize the initiative against racism, and must seize it now.

Thomas's principal shortcoming is that he fails to make a clear distinction between congregating by blacks, for whatever reasons, and huddling by blacks, for protection against racism. Responses to his article make it clear that when blacks on campus get together, racism need not be the central issue. In fact, it need not be an issue at all. This shortcoming aside, the rest of the article exposes with surgeon-like precision a malignant nerve of campus life, the black huddle.

The black huddle does indeed exist. It may not be co-extensive with black congregating, but the huddle accounts for a considerable portion. The essential question is, why the huddle? Is it really security against racism? Is it absolutely necessary for black survival?

The black huddle has been cited as a support mechanism ("Huddle preserves heritage," *DTH*, March 1). Support mechanisms serve two major purposes: They provide an arena for sharing experiences, and they help to develop strategies for resolving problems. Now it is true that conversation with someone who has shared one's

problems can be wonderful therapy. But such sharing cannot account for all of the huddling on campus. Spending that much time just sharing would be self-indulgent. And what about developing strategies for resolving problems? The point to remember is that strategies developed in the huddle eventually have to be used on the playing field. One cannot simply keep on huddling.

Seizing the initiative, as Thomas calls it, is another weapon for fighting racism — a more effective weapon than the black huddle. Each black student who joins a predominantly white campus organization, each black student who strikes up a conversation with a white passer-by, each black student who goes out to meet white hall-mates is seizing the initiative. To be sure, the mere mixing of bodies does not ensure an automatic change of racist attitudes, but it is a hell of a lot better starting point than the separation of bodies.

Respect is the main advantage that seizing the initiative provides. Respect is not something you are offered, it is something you command. Seizing the initiative and seizing it right necessarily commands respect. Others may not like you. They may in fact come to fear you. But they are forced to acknowledge you as an equal, which to me sounds like the defeat of racism. The black huddle simply cannot give that kind of power.

The other advantage of seizing the initiative is that it can be effective against racism by itself. The black huddle, however, cannot be effective by itself. In order for racism to end, whites must come to view blacks as equals. Such a change can only happen when blacks confront whites on common ground. The black huddle can cause confusion,

tear or any number of emotions in whites, but it maintains blacks and whites on separate grounds. Unless it is followed by seizing the initiative, by meeting on common ground, the black huddle is useless against racism. Seizing the initiative, on the other hand, can be a solo move. True, an occasional huddle might provide strategies for seizing the initiative. But seizing the initiative affords the freedom and the flexibility for one to act before the huddle, after the huddle or without the huddle. Blacks do not need to huddle. It is within each black's power to act on his or her own.

Now an all-too-convenient move to make is to say that seizing the initiative advocates ending all black congregating. I make no such claim. There are many excellent reasons to congregate; however, merely huddling to survive racism is not one of them.

Finally, the question always arises, why must blacks seize the initiative? Why shouldn't whites make the first move? The answer is quite simply that blacks must seize the initiative because we have much more at stake. There are many things that whites ought to do to combat racism. But we cannot sit huddling waiting for things to happen. If a black student is upset with racism on this campus, she or he must seize the initiative. We catch the brunt of racism. In seizing the initiative we gain considerable control over our environment. We have a weapon for ridding this campus of racism, a weapon that the black huddle by itself simply cannot match.

Larry Ellis, a 1983 Rhodes Scholar, is a senior philosophy major from Skillman, N.J.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Kremer letter ignores facts

To the editor:

This is a response to Chris Kremer's letter ("Contraception coverage biased," *DTH*, Feb. 25) in opposition to the "squealer law." Come on, Chris, you can't really believe that the employees of the Orange County Health Department and Planned Parenthood advocate birth control because their salaries depend on it. Believe it or not, organizations such as this don't exist solely to promote, as you put it, "young people's promiscuity." They provide innumerable other services, such as blood pressure and dental clinics, general clinics offering immunization shots, multiphasic clinics primarily for the elderly

and counseling services. So I guess that destroys that line of reasoning.

If we understand the rest of the letter correctly, it seems you are saying that it is safer for teen-agers to give birth than to use "unnatural contraceptives." Although you produce statistics on the safety of teen-age pregnancy, you fail to show us how many teen-agers have actually died from these unnatural contraceptives. Oh, and "death sometimes associated with..." does not count as a statistic.

As for your assertion that parents have a "right" to know about their "loved one's" sexual activities, this is at most a dubious right dependent on their future support and toleration of their teen-ager's

activities. In many instances, this mandatory knowledge might invite abuse of the teen-ager, or his or her alienation from the family. We suppose it is better to strain the family bond than to foster confidentially "superficial rapport" with competent health professionals.

Seeing as we are all living in the real world, it naturally must be better to avoid contraceptives altogether and consequently bring all teen-age sexuality to a halt. If some indiscretion should occur and result in pregnancy, naturally these "loved ones" would delight in knowing that their teen-age daughter avoided "potentially dangerous contraceptives." Of course, abortion will cease to exist in this jolly

ideal world, due directly, we're sure, to the dampening of promiscuity caused by abstention from contraceptives. With the squealer law, all "promiscuity" will fizzle, and everything will be hunky dory. What splendid reasoning, Kremer!

However, your main point is well taken. You are absolutely right; teen-agers would benefit from postponing sexual activity until they are emotionally ready, but unless you are also advocating chastity belts, we doubt the law alone will have any effect on a teen-ager's actions.

Miles Midgette
Chapel Hill
Julia Pearlman
Winston

Physical education should be optional

To the editor:

The recent death of a North Carolina State student in a required physical education course has forced a re-examination of the requirement for physical education for college graduation. Physical education for students should be optional — not mandatory. Physical health is vital for the individual, but it is also the responsibility of the individual. The University should provide opportunities for students to enhance their physical health, but using these op-

portunities should be the decision of the individual.

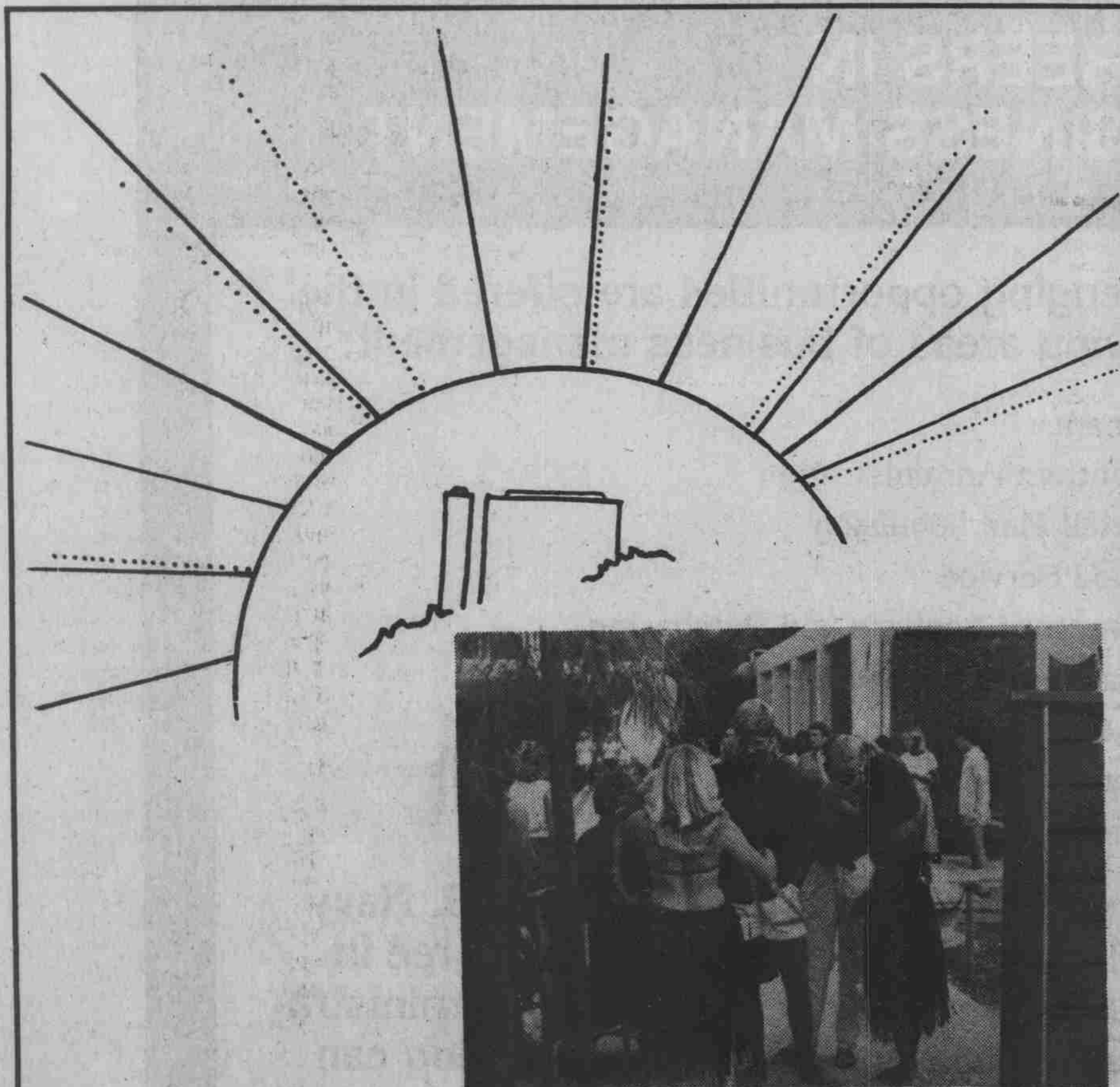
UNC should follow the lead of N.C. State in making physical education an elective instead of a requirement for graduation. If physical education were optional, students in the courses would have a better attitude since they would be taking it by choice. Duke University has optional physical education courses which students may take as credit toward graduation. Participation in the courses is high since many students wish to develop their physical capabilities or learn such

skills as tennis or racquetball. At the same time, students who take very difficult schedules or who simply do not wish to take physical education are not required to.

UNC should make physical education entirely optional and eliminate the requirement of either passing a swim test or taking a swimming course during the four years of college. A student at UNC should be able to take a maximum of two semesters of physical education for credit, with each course counting two semester hours toward graduation. If

physical education were optional, students would be free to take the courses for their personal enjoyment and benefit. However, students physically unable to take physical education or students who do not have the time for the courses in their schedules could take other courses that would count toward their majors. Making physical education optional would give students much more flexibility and freedom in planning their schedules.

Sandra Kaye Hedgepeth
Granville



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