The Daily Tar Heel

91st year of editorial freedom

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Follow the leader?

To what extent do our Congressmen determine our perceptions of important national issues, and to what extent do our opinions on these matters persuade them? This is a question one cannot help but ask in regard to the startling change of heart among House Democrats formerly opposed to the U.S. military invasion of Grenada. Led by House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill Jr., many Democrats who less than a week ago continued to denounce President Reagan's "gunboat diplomacy" are suddenly endorsing his intervention in Grenada and granting him flexibility in determining when American troops will return home. Although these Democrats cite the evidence brought back by a House fact-finding mission to Grenada as the factor most responsible for their new stance on the issue, it is more likely that overwhelming public support for the Reagan's rescue mission really changed their minds.

No doubt the politicians in Washington have noticed the polls gauging public reaction to the invasion of Grenada. While a Washington Post-ABC poll showed 52 percent of Americans for and 37 percent against the invasion the day after it occurred, figures now indicate a remarkable 65 percent of Americans for and only 27 percent against U.S. military action. The folks in Congress are all too aware that these same poll subjects are the people who either perpetuate or terminate a politician's term in office. They know that, in order to be effective, they must first maintain their positions through a certain degree of conformity to the desires of their constituents.

The truly concerned politician, however, must draw the line when the issue is critical and the public not as informed as he. Voters in this country often base their applause or criticism of leaders' decisions on superficial information. In the case of Grenada, Congressmen have access to information that the public and press are often denied. It is up to these privileged politicians to show us the light.

The House fact-finding mission in Grenada, however, did little to illuminate the "right" or "wrong" of our intervention there; their evidence consisted mostly of subjective appraisals of both the degree of threat to American lives and the relief expressed by the island's natives upon the arrival of U.S. troops. Yet it is precisely this evidence that, if we are to believe O'Neill, altered the opinions of Democrats in Washington. It is this questionable evidence that seems to outweigh United Nations condemnation of U.S. intervention.

The blessing of our election system, which puts U.S. Representatives on the campaign pedestal every two years, is the power it grants the people of our nation, the voters. The curse of this system, however, is the harness it puts on the decisions and ideologies of this nation's leaders, who are often more informed than those who elect them to office. If the recent transformation of opinion in concern to Grenada among House Democrats truly was prompted by the new evidence compiled by Pentagon officials, then all is well. But if the growing parallel between public and congressional opinion on the issue is an example of leaders concealing their convictions undeer the shield of political pragmatism, then the recent display of U.S. aggression may become the rule, not the exception.

Double dribble

When a contractor charged recently that faulty construction plagued the Student Activities Center, his accusations sent chills through Carolina basketball fans, right down to their blue-and-white pompons. And, when these accusations were later confirmed, the shivers hit the crisp \$100 bills in the depths of Super Rams' pockets. Since the charges, they have had to pour in thousands of dollars to examine the alleged faults. Still, it is a small price to pay, considering the product being purchased — safety.

The first indication that things weren't perfect in the 22,000-capacity blue heaven came when the contractor told University officials that several key walls had an inadequate amount of steel reinforcements. His accusations at first were met with \$30 million denials. Officials said they had no reason to believe the accusations, no reason except that the contractor had been in charge of that steel. But they soon discovered that five of eight metal tiers in the main column were missing. And they called in a specialist from N.C. State. This engineer has said initially that the building is still safe, but his report has not been completed.

Until it is, University officials shudder to think that the SAC may have to be torn down, but it still must remain an option. So far they've shown a commitment to checking out the accusations; now they must make a commitment to correcting, even rebuilding, mistakes that may have happened. That way, years down the road, a NCAA committee will be able to consider the Activities Center to be the site of the national championships. And that way, a last-second winning shot will never literally bring down the Carolina blue house.

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On dogs, cats and rats

By KATHERINE SCHULTZ

RAT.

That word has negative connotations for just about everybody, excluding laboratory scientists — they are the only ones who find any use for them.

I can name several of the terrors I associate with rats off the top of my head - Hitchcock movies, urban slums, rabies, bubonic plague, several guys I know

Very few of us come into close contact with this nasty breed of rodent. The unlucky ones who do are usually victims of circumstance, circumstance premeditated by a rat. Rats are evil. Dirty, nasty, vile, cunning evil. Rats have no redeeming qualities. (I'll make an exception for labora-

I met a rat last week in front of my apartment. It was a cold, dark Friday night. It was a perfect night for a rat to

stalk an innocent apartment dweller. I live in Colonial Arms Apartments — fondly known as Colonial Armpits or Colonial Farms. It was 7 p.m. I pulled up in front of my apartment, turned off my car and started gathering my books.

I glanced up and caught a glimpse of a large blob right in front of me. I turned my car lights on and I saw it twitch slightly, but it didn't run away.

It was a brown, furry blob about the size of . . . an adult grizzly bear . . . every time I tell the story it gets bigger. . . . Now, I'll have to think back to the initial confrontation

to remember its actual size. . . . It was a little larger than a large cantaloupe, a little smaller than a football. I stepped out of my car trying to decide what the hell

this thing was. Several ideas ran through my head - a

groundhog? A gargantuan guinea pig? A baby Wookie? I walked closer to it; it didn't budge. I saw little brown eyes glaring at me, so I stepped back. I think I had interrupted its one-course meal of crab grass, that exotic strain of grass that graces the grounds of these glorious dwellings.

"Ruth Ann, Ruth Ann," I yelled. "Come here and look at this thing!"

Ruth Ann opened the door and ambled down the stairs toward me. "What's wrong?"

"You're about to step on it." SHRIEEEK. "Oh my God, it's a rat."

It only took her a split second to figure it out. I decided to take her word for it.

"Don't go near it, Katherine. Those things are vicious and they bite," she said.

We watched it as it waddled to a better patch of grass. Most rodents scurry; this one waddled. It had no pride and no fear. He sat there and gorged himself while we squealed various adjectives at it,

such as "UUUOOOO! Gross! Oh, sick! Nasty!"

This slew of girlish expletives (although I've said worse before) didn't offend the rat at all. It attracted the attention of a neighbor. He confirmed the creature's identity, but could offer no solution.

The rat still wouldn't go away. I decided to call the landlady. Charming woman. I won't mention her name, I'll just

make up one. "Hello. Is Mrs. Always-Hard-to-Get-Anything-Done

"I thought I'd call and tell you that there is a monstrosity of a rat outside of our apartment."

The reply was, "Oh really? How interesting. What does it look like?" After I gave her a brief description, this overly astute woman asked me, "Are you sure it wasn't a dog or a

I wanted to tell her that was the most imbecilic question I had ever heard, but instead I

rat, not a dog, not a cat. Of course it was probably an innocent mistake on her behalf. I'm sure a lot of people confuse descriptions of rats, cats and dogs. The similarities between the different species are so overwhelming. A dog has a smooth glossy coat

refrained and told her that it was a

and four long legs. Its head is separated from its torso by a neck. A cat has a smooth soft coat and it also has four long

Because cats and dogs both have long legs, the main parts of their bodies are raised from the ground.

legs. Its head is also separated from the rest of the body by

A rat has short, course fur and four short legs that you can't see unless you get closer than you should. A rat's head is connected very closely to the body so that he look like he doesn't have a neck, although he does.

Yes, I definitely see the similarities between these creatures, don't you?

At any rate, Mrs. Always-Hard-to-Get-Anything-Done told me she would check on things in the morning.

We looked outside. He was still there, and we felt like prisoners in our own home. I decided it was time for immediate action, so I called

the police. The Chapel Hill Police Department is very cooperative in matters like this, with a little prodding. I explained that it wasn't a life-or-death emergency but it might be if the rat ate much more and got a little bolder.

Amid his snickers, the dispatcher told me he would have to call his supervisor to see what they could do about it. I reminded him that most policemen carried guns or billy sticks, but I guess he didn't think the situation war-

ranted such action. He called back a few minutes later and said, amid a few more snickers, that an animal control officer was on his

Ruth Ann and I kept a watchful eye on the rat from our front porch so he wouldn't try to give us the slip. We wanted to make sure this rat did his time in the animal

pokey for harassment. He never made it to the animal pokey. As we were talking with the animal control officer, the rat attempted to flee the scene of the crime. By the book, it's known as resisting arrest.

A struggle ensued. The rat had met his match.

The rest of the evening was rather anti-climactic. I told the story over and over to friends, and each time the rat got a little bigger. By the time I left Papagayo, the rat was. so huge that only someone as big as Brian Blados could have tackled it, no pun intended.

When Dorrie, our other roommate, got home, we started to tell her about the rat.

"Yeah, I just saw it outside," she said. "I think it's headed for apartment No. 34. . . . "

Katherine Schultz, a junior journalism major from Winston-Salem and a staff writer for The Daily Tar Heel, will be eating rat steak for the next week.

as they have recognized students all year.

Many students are working hard in Stu-

Greg Hecht

(District 15)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'DTH' criticisms of Student Government unfair

To the editor: It's a shame that the authors of DTH editorials "CGC: TBA" (Oct. 6) and "Vote Today" (Oct. 25) characterize the student body and Student Government rep resentatives of that body as apathetic. The students of this university are very active in creating new projects and legislation through Student Government that are valuable to all. The key has been students who have come into Student Government believing and trying to make a difference. If one enters with the attitude that nothing can be done, then nothing will be done. If students come into Student Government with high goals and strong projects, then improvements may and can take place at the University.

Many improvements have taken place this year. Many students and many CGC representatives, such as myself, are trying to start up one of the first student TV stations in the country. Legislation to make the DTH funds more accountable to the student body has been passed. Four residence halls were opened up to students who needed the living space for Fall Break. We allocated funds to SCAU to survey students about Southern Bell's charges for non-requested services such as callwaiting. Southern Bell has responded by listing such charges on the bill and not charging those who did not want it. Many other projects and activities have passed

A student fee increase was proposed because several organizations will have a hard time making funds meet their needs if it is not adopted. The alternative is to tell the student-funded programs such as Victory Village's Married Students' Child Care Program to care for fewer children or take toys away from the children who are there. I would hope that this does not. happen. The reason to wait until February for the increase is to guarantee that sufficient numbers vote to surpass the necessary minimum requirement to count the ballots. Last spring, the referendum did not bring out sufficient numbers. We learn by our mistakes, and thus we wait until the general election.

Please vote for the \$1.50 increase. There has not been one for six years, and even though it may seem trivial to vote for it, please do. It means the difference between partial programs and full care for many programs such as Victory Village.

The authors of these articles should realize that the main responsibility of the CGC is a legislative one. The council has surpassed, by far, the amount of legislation passed by last year's CGC. Many of us on the council are very concerned. There are those of us who spent more than an average of four hours a day in budget hearings for three weeks during the late part of spring semester. Additionally, many of us, on our own time, attend many floor meetings and executive council meetings to gather student input from our districts. I have gone to more than 25 and 15, respectively, and know of many others who have done the same.

We keep office hours and disseminate information to the student population.

Most of us care about the trust and responsibility bestowed upon us by the students and work hard to maintain it.

We welcome your criticisms of Student Government because we learn from them. Please come to CGC meetings, which are open to the public and announced in the Campus Calendar, and

Campus Governing Council 'Semper fidelis': One of the few

By S. L. PRICE

express your concerns. Suggest new pro-

jects and programs to us. We want stu-

dent input and need it to survive. Your

district representative will recognize you

dent Government and want your input

Pretty here. Two people walking outside in the grass kicking through golden leaves, but I am inside. Walls, towels, ceiling, floor — all white. My gown, my skin - white, but my hair is brown, so there is a difference. I've got the ball, hide it, but it keeps unraveling, the tissues keep unraveling. Wait. I take the ends of the tissue and put them together now and roll it up into a ball to make it round, perfectly round, but the tissue comes apart when I put it down on my stomach.

ATTACKING FORCE SEIZES AIRFIELD BUT IS SLOWED CUBANS CLASH WITH FORCE 30 SOVIET ADVISERS DEFENSE DEPT. SAYS MARINES AND RANGERS QUICKLY

Stop. Where is mom? she said last time that she is coming today. Her and dad fought last time, I want him out he said can't you see what it's doing to him? But they turned toward me, she said, can't you see he's asleep do you want to wake him hush up! But I was faking and my eyes were closed, I had the ball of tissue in my hand. He said I don't give a damn anymore we've got to get him out of here. They said I smiled at that. But I was faking, wasn't I? I smell food, remember Sunday mornings with the newspaper and the football game on the TV and sausage and pastries and eggs and eat up boy! how you expect to get big and strong if'n you don't eat? and Call her up son, she won't know you're mad if you don't call her we've got to get him out of here, what kind of countryshhhhhhhhh can't you see he's sleeping?

1,900 U.S. TROOPS, WITH CARIBBEAN ALLIES FEAR OF 'ANOTHER IRAN' FORCE SEIZES AIRPORTS BUT IS NEED ARISING FOR MORE TROOPS, SHIPS AND PLANES MOSCOW PROTESTS: BRITISH ARE CRITICAL - AT LEJEUNE. CHILD GETS EXTRA HUG after receiving a formal request for help, a unanimous request from our neighboring states, I concluded the United States had no choice but to TOLL IN BEIRUT BLAST EX-CEEDS ANY SINGLE VIETNAM.

Beirut. The doctor said son, try not to think about it, just try and put it out of your - what's wrong with - my mind. She said don't go and sign up your life, but she didn't know there was nothing eise I knew how to A Few Good Men. Semper

Fi, Mac. This, This gun, boy, this gun is your baby. You're gonna learn to run, walk, spit, speak with it, sleep with it, you're gonna take it apart, put it back together again blindfolded. Forget your mothers and your girlfriends they can't save you now, boy. This is your best friend in the world, take care of it

and I ran in the back yard with my stick bangbangbang I got you, you're dead! Watching John Wayne on Iwo Jima and Rat Patrol and Seargent Nick Fury and His Howling Commandos-how come he always had a cigar in his mouth? Tell it to the firstinthefightalwaysfaithfulsendin the Marines. Where is that Hitler, Mussolini, Ho Chi Minh, oh those dirty japs (lock 'em all up) where are all those American heroes, where all the enemies? far from the green, green grass of home

INVADE GRENADA AND FIGHT LEFTIST UNITS U.S. WAS WARNED BY MRS. THATCHER 214 U.S. SERVICEMEN DEAD, 20 TO 30 LOST REAGAN CON-SIDERED INVASION WHILE PLAYING GOLF CAPITOL HILL IS SHARPLY SPLIT The impact on our President was very severe. Without being parochial, I think I can say he loves the marines SOME IN CONGRESS QUESTION IF SECURITY WAS ADEQUATE AIR FORCE BASE IN **DELAWARE AWAITS BODIES** INJURED MARINES ARRIVE AT BURN UNIT IN TEXAS IN GERMANY; MEDALS FOR THE WOUNDED

Here they come. And I'm faking now asleep. Dad says Doctor when can we bring our boy home? And mom is sniffling hard and moaning and I don't get it why is everyone upset here, I'm OK right? Mom's pushing my hair back from my forehead why am I so sweaty? the ball of tissue is soaked through it's coming apart on my finders Mom is sitting so close on the bed but I don't want to see her cry, so I'm asleep. And he's whispering to the doctor now but mom is just staring at me I can feel it, my eyes are closed but she's staring at me so close. I can smell the coffee on her breath, she's breathing so hard, why is she so close? She's sitting in front of me on my thighs, but I don't feel the weight, are they still numb? Her hand is in my hair why can't I feel her sitting, she's sitting on my ohmygodwherearemy? legs.

S.L. Price is a senior English major from Litchfield, Conn.

It's your TV

To the editor:

In recent months, student interest in obtaining cable television for residence halls on campus has become widespread. Certainly the entertainment that cable could provide common rooms is attractive to most dormitory residents, but there are other reasons why installation would benefit these students. Recently recognized by the University and the Campus Governing Council, Student Television (STV) for UNC has programming plans that will directly involve students living on campus. Such productions will be aired over Village Cable's Channel 11, the University access channel, as well as in the Union over the large monitors located there. Also, a cable with transmission capabilities is on its way to Swain Hall, and programming over Channel 11 promises to increase once it arrives. Shouldn't the University be able to watch the shows it airs on the Universi-

ty access channel? Two questions to be answered before such a move can be made are: Are residents willing to have the expense added to their housing contracts? And what is the best way to actually get the cable into the dormitories? STV and the Residence Hall Association are currently working on both angles, as the University and Village Cable have shown little interest in actively investigating the matter. Certainly the 31/2 years of negotiation required to get cable into Odum Village, the married student housing on Manning Drive, is enough to discourage the two parties. However, it seems that with Odum Village residents enjoying cable and paying Village Cable the monthly rates, and Village Cable paying the

University a sum for permitting the installation, everyone benefits.

Wednesday and Thursday night, floor and hall representatives will be coming by with a petition asking for your endorsement. The petition will read as

"We the undersigned residents of UNC-CH housing are willing to pay up to \$5.00 a year for the benefits of cable television in each and every common TV room. By signing this petition, we are requesting that the University actively pursue the installation of cable TV in our residence halls."

The \$5-a-year figure was liberally aproximated by dividing the \$12-a-month basic supscription rate by the 100 students who share each room (again, both numbers are approximate), and adding in some of the expense of the installation.

Because of University policy, all cable must be buried, so the most efficient way to route the cable and finance its installation must be carefully worked out. The actual amount will most likely be less. Also, once cable is in the dormitories, the opportunity to go into individual rooms will certainly exist.

To conclude, students should remember that the University cannot finance such a project, but they, through a rent increase of at most \$5 a year, must bear the expense. Although signing the petition does not guarantee the installation will occur next week, it does document the support vital to this cause.

> John Wilson (STV) Mark Dalton (RHA)