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The Daily Tar Heel

92nd year of editorial freedom

Soldiers of fortune

The CIA mining of Nicaraguan ports is but one example of the excessive, ineffective and frequently backfiring measures which the Reagan administration has pursued in its undeclared war on Nicaragua's Sandinista regime. Under a macho banner of anti-communism, the United States is aiding Nicaraguan guerrillas — the so-called "contras" — in less publicized acts which are almost as reprehensible. When a House-Senate conference convenes this week, it should strip from a bill already passed by the Senate a \$21 million appropriation for the contras.

If approved, the funds would go to fund a mercenary army which has expanded beyond anything initially envisaged by Congress. Following the leftward shift of the Sandinista revolution, the CIA began developing what were supposed to be small, paramilitary bands choking off Nicaraguan military aid to leftist rebels in neighboring countries. Without a declaration of war or even a breaking of diplomatic relations with Nicaragua, however, the United States has built the contras into a regular army numbering between 14,000 and 18,000 men.

The administration proclaims two goals for its funding of the contras. First, it seeks to stop Nicaraguan military aid to the Salvadoran guerrillas, a far left movement enjoying little more support in El Salvador than the contras have in Nicaragua. Second, the administration wants to pressure the Sandinistas into abandoning any thought of spreading communism to other Central American nations.

But U.S. aid to the contras is really given with a simpler, more ambitious objective: the military overthrow of the Sandinista government.

Such a military victory, however, is unlikely. Sandinista armed forces not only outnumber the contras five to one, but also have the support of the Nicaraguan people. The contras' use of economic warfare — blowing up fuel depots, destroying

A leash on mopeds

Ever been peacefully trudging to that Chem 11 eight-o'clock only to be almost run over by some moped rider who was hell-bent on making it to class on time? If so, then a decision by the UNC Board of Trustees on Friday should come as welcome news.

It seems the danger from the miniature bikes has been getting so bad lately that the trustees have decided to ban motorized bikes, scooters and mopeds from campus walkways, effective July 1. The change came after a recommendation from Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance Faris Womack's traffic and parking advisory committee was drafted in March and forwarded to the trustees.

No doubt the trustees' decision will rub some the wrong way. These free-wheeling spirits accustomed to speeding through campus with the wind in their hair will see it as an infringement of their rights. And some off-campus students, with perhaps a little more justification, will see the ban as an impediment to making it to class on time.

The wisdom of the board's ruling, however, seems clear. On a campus where 20,000 students share a limited amount of space, the possibility of someone being injured in a biker-pedestrian collision is very real. Put simply, allowing mopeds on campus sidewalks, Womack says, "is a menace because those things run faster than you can get out of the way."

Although University traffic officials

coffee crops and killing peasants — has done little to endear them to the Nicaraguan people. Obviously, nothing less than a full-scale U.S. invasion — for which the U.S. military has been preparing for more than a year — would remove the Sandinistas from power. But the American public is not about to stand for substituting American lives for American dollars. Nor is any aid to the contras an efficient means to the end of protecting Central American democracy, because of three side effects:

- The United States is put in the position of supporting what amounts to terrorist activities, and in doing so bankrupts its international credibility and moral force by joining the ranks of Libya, Syria, Iraq, North Korea and other regimes engaged in terrorism.

- Ammunition is provided to anti-American propagandists who try to blame domestic disturbances the world over on CIA meddling.

- The stability of the very Central American democracies the United States seeks to shelter may be shaken. Costa Rica, Central America's democratic diamond, has just accused contras awash with CIA dollars of corrupting its officialdom. Illegal contra bases on Costa Rican soil have jeopardized that nation's neutrality and boosted the risk of Costa Rica being drawn into strife by an angered Nicaragua.

Democracy in small nations needs protection. In Central America this can best be accomplished through packages of military, economic and technical assistance to countries allegedly menaced by Nicaragua. The United States, as the world's richest nation, should have more to offer the Third World than the same guns and bullets dispensed by the Soviet Union. Funds now spent terrorizing the Nicaraguan countryside should be diverted to the rest of the region — and if this causes the contras to wither away, then the movement was never more than a collection of mercenaries to begin with.

say they have not heard of any actual collisions or incidents involving major damage, they say near-misses are frequently reported. In fact, at least two people have threatened to sue the University over close calls with mopeds.

Perhaps the greatest danger stemming from the use of mopeds, however, is not that posed to the average UNC student or the possibility that the University might have to shell out money to pay lawsuit damages. Rather, it is the threat that these bikes create for the handicapped and blind students on campus that is most alarming. It is difficult enough for most students to get out of a moped's way, but for those students whose mobility is impaired in some way, the problem is even greater.

Students, then, should not see the board's action as another example of the administration trying to stifle their freedoms. Students can still drive motorized bikes to class; they just have to walk once they get on campus. Had those riding mopeds been thinking of the safety of their fellow students, they would already have been doing this voluntarily. Now, they're required to do so.

For the record

Friday's editorial "Hark the sound of ... freebies" should have said UNC band director Major John Yesulaitis returned eight to 10 tickets for about three games, instead of the entire season. The DTH regrets the error.

Free enterprise adds life

By MARK LANGSTON

David Roberson's column on hunger and socialism ("A little socialism can go a long way," DTH, April 12) is a good example of the flawed thinking behind most socialist land-reform schemes. The column contends that in underdeveloped countries where the amount of arable land is small compared to the population, the profit motive and free enterprise will not serve to prevent hunger. Instead, he contends, wealth will accumulate in the hands of a few while leaving the many to starve. Land redistribution, he further contends, would solve this problem.

Roberson uses an example of the farming of a 100-acre area to illustrate his claim. A close examination of this example, however, serves to illustrate just the opposite. Roberson begins by stating that these 100 acres will be used one of two ways: a single farmer with a tractor and a few laborers, or 100 families each farming a one-acre plot. The use of a tractor will allow a greater profit, Roberson admits, but less food will be produced by the single farmer and his family than would be produced by the 100 families. Roberson then explains from personal experience how people such as those in Nepal get higher yields from their small plots because of a variety of strategies he labels "labor-intensive farming." Basically this type of farming involves using a large amount of human labor with high motivation and great care to outproduce the single farmer and his machinery.

In a country scarce of good farmland, Roberson contends, it makes better economic sense to adopt labor-intensive farming in order to feed more people. The result of not doing so, he claims, is that the one farmer simply harvests what he can and then lives well on his profit, probably exporting his crop, buying foreign luxuries and eventually even converting the production of non-food items such as coffee to make a higher profit. Meanwhile the other 99 families go hungry. There is a bit more to his argument, but I have reprinted here enough to make it clear.

No amount of reprinting, however, can make it of any value. The truth is that a land-reform scheme of the nature he describes would do more to keep people tragically locked in poverty and hunger than the most corrupted free-market system could do.

In constructing his example, Roberson has virtually ignored the basic laws of supply and demand, as well as failed to understand the reason for the existence of the "profit motive" he condemns as ineffective in this example. To start with, let's grant the notion that labor-intensive farming will produce more per acre than machinery. But this type of farming requires tremendous amounts

of work by the families just to raise enough food to live on. These 100 families will be slaves to their plots, working incredibly hard just to remain alive, with no hope for improvement. They will have no possibility of ever educating their children, obtaining a few comforts of life or amassing enough wealth to become independent and move. Further, they will have no protection from a growth in the population or severe weather, either of which will cause mass starvation as the people will have no surplus capital to tide them through the rough times. Much of India's population is proof of this. Socialist for years and a user of the labor-intensive farm idea, India is still trapped in poverty and despair, despite some of their advances in other fields.

developed countries, paid for by the people's labor certainly, but at a lower price than that of the subsistence slavery of farming single-acre plots. Nor will the individual farmers export their food staples (how could they compete with other countries which have surpluses?) unless they have crops more easily grown in that country than elsewhere. In that case, the farmer will profit well, leaving him money to invest in his country's economy by purchasing goods and services, sending his kids to college or just leaving it in a local bank. It is also doubtful that he will buy much of anything from outside the country, as the cheap labor of his fellow citizens will make local goods considerably less expensive. I seriously doubt many of these farmers would be watching imported video-

There is more to living than just getting enough food to eat. All animals know how to do that. Human beings were meant to do more than just exist, we were meant to live.

The situation is reversed under the management of the profit-motivated single farmer. Roberson insists that the other 99 families will go hungry as the farmer will not hire laborers. But while recognizing that the marginal input of these laborers would not cover their wages, Roberson fails to understand what this means. He erroneously concludes that it is better to let the people farm their own plots, a task that he has just admitted they cannot do productively! Regardless of the benefits of labor-intensive farming, these 99 families will be better off doing some other kind of work and will be more productive. The idea that these people will be unable to find jobs elsewhere is also wrong. Simple supply and demand will attract investors to this enormous pool of cheap labor, providing jobs in mills, factories and other areas. No doubt much of the capital to support these jobs will come from the developed nations, and no doubt they will make a good profit on that capital. But productive jobs will be provided, freeing the 99 families from the fields as the industrial revolution did for the United States. Nor will the workers be "exploited," as their wages, while low by our standards, will allow them better housing, education and protection from the harsh whims of nature. As time progresses, they will save enough to advance further, much as we do in the United States.

Meanwhile the single farmers will be producing food. If it is not enough to feed the population, more will be imported from the surpluses of the

cassettes when the majority of Americans still do not.

This, then, is the reality of Roberson's proposal for "land redistribution." In attempting to feed the hungry, he and other socialists would lock them into an unending nightmare of poverty. Free enterprise would instead do more than merely feed the hungry. It would offer a way to slowly but surely improve the standard of living. More so, it would give hope, something the socialist system totally ignores. There is more to living than just getting enough food to eat. All animals know to do that. Human beings were meant to do more than just exist. We were meant to live.

Of course, those people who have acquired their wealth through illegal means should be stripped of it and their wealth used for all — if their guilt can be proven. Socialism makes no provisions for those who have worked hard and saved. Land reform would take away from all who have wealth. But what Roberson does not understand, and unfortunately neither do many others, is that those who will lose the most under socialism are in fact those whom socialists are most trying to help. And that kind of help no one needs.

Mark Langston is a junior business major from Greensboro.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Put the laws on trial, not the system

To the editor:

What if the tables were turned? What if communist labor workers shot five Klansmen? Would people cry out that there was a miscarriage of justice? Regardless of what one's opinion of what the KKK and the Nazis represent, two separate juries found the defendants not guilty. Our nation was founded upon the principles of "trial before jury" and "innocent before proven guilty." I am greatly disturbed that the same people who would criticize last Sunday's acquittal of the Klansmen and Nazis are the same ones that would stand behind our founding principles so strongly. People seem to be hypocritical in their condemnation

of the juries' decision. Are we a people that convict people before a trial? The media has shown us the damning film of the shooting and we have read the equally damning editorials, but have we seen all sides of the story as both juries have seen?

If one disagrees with the decision made perhaps the laws of the country should be changed. The decision was made, however, and we as American citizens should uphold the law of the land. Inevitably, the Reagan administration will take the rap for the "wrong" verdict. People do not realize that the stronger case made against the Klansmen was made under the Carter administration. The only

case Reagan's Justice Department had was to convict the defendants on "legal technicalities." An argument could be raised that Reagan, for political reasons, used everything in the book to try and convict the nine Klansmen and Nazis.

No one disagrees that the loss of human life is horrible. I would agree with those who despise the KKK and the Nazis for their actions, but we should change our laws so that this could not happen again rather than condemn the juries that acquitted the

nine defendants. Calling for the death of the KKK and Nazis, as many at the Pit did Tuesday, only perpetuate the climate of fear. We must learn from our mistakes. We as a nation must change the laws about one's civil rights, so that someone pays for the death of five people. At least let us all refrain from condemning the juries and the Justice Department. Condemn the laws, not the courts.

Hal Wilson
Stacy

Rising above hatred

To the editor:

On my way to class last Tuesday afternoon I stopped for a few minutes to listen to the speeches against the Klan-Nazi acquittal. As I listened to them, a vague, disturbing feeling nagged at me: that, although the speakers claimed they were on the side of justice, their belief was not entirely accurate. By allowing themselves to be blinded by their disapproval of the Klan and Nazis, several statements they made were illogical and a few incorrect.

Again and again, I heard that justice was not served by the acquittal of the Klan and Nazis, and, so, the judicial system was totally useless and obviously obstructed the judicial process rather than served it. This is not true. One should not make generalizations based on specific cases. They extend their indignation so far as to condemn the entire judicial system. Then they dared to say that they represented good reason and justice.

I do not know the precise details of the case, so I don't know whether justice was served in this particular instance or not; I do know, however, that one of the jurors stated that there was doubt about the group's guilt. If this is true, then justice was served since in order to be found guilty there

must exist "guilty beyond a shadow of a doubt." And, what of "innocent before proven guilty?" It appeared that the speakers beside the Pit had already made up their minds long before the jury pronounced the verdict. At least the jurors should be commended for not allowing themselves to be influenced by anti-Klan sentiment. Just because they're white doesn't mean that they're Klan sympathizers.

Another thing that greatly disturbed me was a sign that read "Ban the Klan." No, I would not shed a tear if the Klan and the Nazis decided to disband forever. Their philosophy is based on hatred and prejudice and I pity the people who belong to these groups. However, does this take away their right to free speech? Does it take away their right to a fair trial and to the assumption "innocent until proven guilty?"

It's easy to be blinded by hatred of a group. The Klan and Nazis are a good example of two groups who specialize in hate. If we follow their practice, however, are we really any better than they are?

Karen K. Fisher
Morrison



More on alcoholism

To the editor:

My thanks to Arlaine Rockey for a superior, accurate and comprehensive article on alcoholism ("Recognizing the elephant," DTH, April 16). As a graduate student I have been concentrating on the public health dimensions of this particular disease. Both the magnitude and severity of alcohol-related problems in our society are startling. I would like to add to some of what was covered so well by Rockey's column.

In the listings of "preliminary" and "crucial phase" signs of alcoholism, a false impression may have been created. In fact, not all or even several of these signs need be present for the disease to exist. Only one or two of these signs may indicate a fairly evolved problem.

Your readers may also be interested in knowing that 20 percent of alcoholics are under the age of 30. And I have met several UNC students who are recovering alcoholics. These men and women are overcoming, step

by step, the mountain of miseries associated with this misunderstood and poorly diagnosed disorder.

Another issue I feel needs addressing pertains to the very fine illustration accompanying this article. Although the figures look more like Andean native derelicts than UNC students, the dark and lonely despair of the alcoholic is hauntingly portrayed. Unfortunately, this picture obscures the fact that most alcoholics are no more scruffy and derelict than diabetics are bedridden. At least this is not the typical case until the terminal stage of the disease has been reached.

A final point that the writer might have meant to mention is how a person contacts Al-Anon or Alcoholics Anonymous for help. Both are listed in the phone book. And both groups are comprised of people who have successfully dealt with the problem of alcoholism.

David Rogers
School of Public Health

Letters?

The Daily Tar Heel welcomes letters to the editor and column contributions for the editorial page.

Contributions should be typed on a 60-space line and triple-spaced. They are subject to editing. Contributions must be

submitted by noon the day before publication.

Column writers should include their majors and hometowns; each letter should include the writer's name, address and telephone number. Letters that are not typed will not be printed.

The Daily Tar Heel

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