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The Daily Tar Heel

92nd year of editorial freedom

Ready or not, here we come

A nuclear war with the Soviets? No problem. We could handle 'em.

Problem is, Moscow knows we could handle 'em — at least in the nukes department. The dirty Reds would think twice before firing up their new and presumably nuclear-tipped cruise missiles. They'd much rather come at us with their conventional forces, since they've got more of them than we do.

So goes, anyway, the scenario envisioned by the Reagan Administration: a nuclear standoff, with most of the fighting instead occurring on the battlefield. It follows, then, that the Reagan-U.S. objective is to have not only a greater nuclear arsenal (for deterrence purposes), but, in addition, to have all forces ready for combat on the first day of a war. Presumably, they'd have the capacity to sustain battle until American industry could shift into large-scale wartime production.

All this, of course, is in line with Reagan's "America-first" foreign policy. However, of late it is difficult to tell if we really are "first."

Are we really "ready" for war? "Readiness" is a somewhat ambiguous term that describes and assesses the status of mundane things like fuel, ammunition and spare parts. Whether we are "ready" depends on who you ask.

The saga of a scapegoat

There is something inherently obnoxious about an assumption. It presumes where it may have no right or call to do so. It affects those who may wish to remain unaffected.

Take, for recent instance, the Coca-Cola company's revamping of our beloved beverage Tab. Our friends in Atlanta have assumed that we Tab lovers will love Tab even more if it is as different from our conventional notions of diet soft drinks as it can be, if it is as much like "the real thing" as it can be. Which all translates: if it is as sweet as it can be.

We have, to be sure, nothing against sweetness. We like our cookies, our cake, our ice cream, and our candy sweet. But there are times when we desire — more than the blood-racing sinfulness of sugar (or its most convincing facsimiles) — the vaguely bitter, faintly acidic aftertaste of saccharin, the satisfying sense of dietary sacrifice only saccharin can give us. If there is a hint of masochism in the claim, so be it. There is in each of us a martyr waiting to be lauded. Saccharin brought out the beast in each of us.

Our succeeding generations will doubtless look back on the 20th century and recognize saccharin as one of its principal scapegoats. The unlikely successor to cyclamates, which had been rendered hazardous (how familiar the story line now seems!) and unmarketable by the killjoy research scientists whose existences we recognize only in terms of all that they forbid us to do, saccharin was ill-fated from the start. Scientists plotted against it, claiming that it had caused the deaths of many a laboratory rat (without which, we might add, society is functioning just fine). We knew better, knew that we would have to each consume something in the area of four six-packs a day for the entirety of an epoch even to keep stride with the conspiring rodents. We, who live in an age when every substance other than air has been deemed a carcinogen, were not about to throw another of life's few joys to the winds of longevity. We fought for the survival of saccharin. So the surgeon

The Bottom Line

Biffy Bradley couldn't believe it. Summer was over. His days of lounging at the Country Club pool and playing tennis were over. Soon it would be time to put the top back on his Mustang convertible. And not too long after that, God help him, another round of final exams and the frantic hours of catch-up study they inevitably entailed. It was the beginning of what looked to be a long sophomore year. As he lay in bed Monday, visions of more frat parties and Tuesday nights at Purdy's danced in his head. The last thing Biffy wanted to think about was his first class at 11. Geography...pass-fail.

Just last week a senior Defense Department official assured *The New York Times* that the United States is ready. He said American forces could fight a full-scale war for at least 30 days — twice as long as four years ago — with the supplies on hand. Even better, he said, the readiness would double again — to 60 days — by the end of the decade. His only catch: Congress would have to approve President Reagan's military budgets.

Then, on the other hand, you've got the report issued last month by the Democrat-controlled House Appropriations Committee. It said military readiness had declined, despite rising military spending, and that "United States forces could not sustain combat against the Soviet Union or many lesser powers." On top of that, numerous leaks in the past six months have indicated a similar decline, and, further, the leaks themselves seem to have been confirmed by Pentagon war games.

In short, evidence proving that military readiness has declined — despite Reagan's huge budget increases — is inconclusive. We may not be any closer to dominance over the Soviets now than we were in January 1981, when Reagan was inaugurated. The ambiguity alone is enough to cast doubt on the worthwhileness of his record spending.

general slapped one of his ubiquitous warnings on Tab and its competitors, thus paving the way — as well as the palates of those gullible to the government's claims — for a new sweetener.

Enter Nutra-Sweet. Whereas saccharin was brazenly briefed "a non-nutritive sweetener," the new sweetener has a prefix to fool the less than discerning. It's got what those in the chewing gum industry might call "big taste" or those in the coffee trade might term "robust flavor." But it's not such a large deal. Sure, it puts a new zang in something like Kool-Aid, which is artificial enough to begin with: tropical flavors, billious color. But its near-but-not-quite-sugar claim sissifies colas characterized by their crass carbonation. There's something iconoclastic about the syrupy snap of Nutra-Sweet in a can of would-be Coke.

It's the sweetness junkies, however, who dominate the market, who have found in Nutra-Sweet a less-fattening alternative to sugary soft drinks. They are not the ones who have persevered with diet sodas through the years and learned to love saccharin, to feel a certain gratitude for the taste sacrifice saccharin allowed us to feel we were making. They are the ones who now bring about the demise of our preferred, if imperfect, sweetener, the ones who switched from Tab to Diet Coke as soon as the latter incorporated the trendy new trademarked "brand sweetener." We clung to the remaining distinction between the two drinks, the distinction that is no more.

Much as we lament it, saccharin's days are numbered. As it becomes increasingly obsolete, a core of loyal friends — we among them — comb supermarkets for those few remaining colas which employ our persecuted friend, for those leftover Tab shipments. We frown upon the hedonists who insist upon sweetness and overwhelm our vocal minority of martyrs. And we pray that a new breed of laboratory rat will come along and pass along and prove Nutra-Sweet a villain of unforeseen proportions.

Slowly he raised himself out of bed and snuck a glance at the clock. 10:15. Oh well, the unwelcome beginning of school was about to take place.

Biffy muscled his way through the crowds in the dorm bathroom, then returned to his room to dress: faded jeans, polo shirt, and, the final touch, Ray-bans. Outside, the scorching light of a hangover morning reflected off the pastel shirts and blouses of thousands of students more energetic than Biffy. At least a three-day weekend was coming up.

A chance for Rams' redemption

By STUART TONKINSON

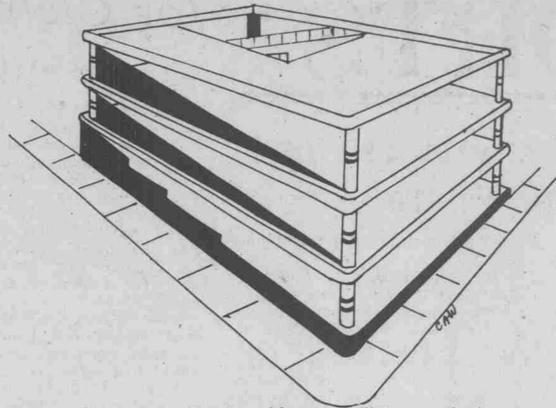
Mention "Rams Club" to a UNC student and the likely response will be a cynical growl. Students associate the sports boosters with fat-cat alumni who use their wealth to get the best parking spaces and the best seats at games, often to the detriment of students.

And the Rams Club, also known as the Educational Foundation Inc., has probably earned its reputation. Over the past couple of years, student interests have conflicted directly with Rams Club plans. For example:

• Two years ago, plans for the \$33.8 million Student Activities Center, scheduled for completion next spring, gave Rams Club members 1,000 more seats than students got. A petition to give the students more and better seats was moderately successful, but UNC officials said they needed to reserve a large number of seats to reward Rams Club members who made substantial donations to the school.

• Students were again outraged last year when the Rams Club asked permission to park cars on Carmichael Field during football games. James Field had been cleared to make room for the activities center, and the club was already using Ehringhaus Field for parking. The fields, essential to the life of intramural programs at UNC, were showing their wear. Combined action by Student Government and intramural athletes forced the Rams Club to find spaces off campus.

• But, despite getting 700 extra spaces at the off-campus locations, the Rams Club continued to tow student cars on parking lots normally allocated to students, includ-



Deck parking: conciliatory project

ing part of the Morrison lot, the Bell Tower lot, the Rams Head lot, part of Stadium Drive and the Cobb tennis courts lot.

• And last summer, the UNC Board of Trustees voted to give the Rams Club almost 200 additional parking spaces on a McCauley Street lot, even though the Club will get almost 800 spaces in the new activities center. Although Student Body President Paul Parker opposed the allocation, the proposal was pushed through without encountering the student opposition that would have been present if it was introduced during a regular school year.

Yes, students have reasons to distrust the Rams Club, which consistently places far more emphasis on athletics than academics and almost as consistently acts out of

self-interest. But the Rams Club and the administration are now in a position where they can change that image.

You see, the Rams Club donated \$4.77 million more than the school needed to build the activities center. That's almost \$5 million that the school gets to play around with.

So many people contributed so much because of the reward of the contributions — the right to buy tickets to North Carolina's favorite sporting event, UNC basketball games. Now the University has to decide what to do with the excess funds.

The University could best make use of the funds by using them to help pay for a badly needed parking deck in the Bell Tower lot. This year, students who drive to classes will have to park further from the main

campus than before, thanks to construction. But student demand for parking spaces is higher than ever. The University needs an on-campus parking deck.

The BOT recently proposed looking into a plan which would construct a 2,000-space deck at the Bell Tower lot, at a total cost of about \$12 million. If the BOT approves construction of the lot, the plans must still be accepted by the UNC Board of Governors and the N.C. General Assembly.

Parker early this summer said he would oppose a parking deck because it would be too costly for students. UNC officials estimated that the paying for the lot would more than double the cost of parking permits, which now stands at \$60-\$72. But that was before the Rams Club's unexpected windfall.

Of course, if Rams Club money did help pay for the lot, it would probably be reserved during football and basketball games for Rams Club members. But, during school hours, it would be an invaluable boon.

In the end, as Vice Chancellor of Business and Finance Ferris Womack recently said, it is the Rams Club's money, and they can do with it what they want. But construction of the parking deck would help relieve one of the University's most persistent headaches. In addition, it might just help relieve tension between the boosters and the students.

Come on, guys; help us out.

Stuart Tonkinson, a junior history major from St. Louis, Mo., is news editor of The Daily Tar Heel.



A campaign is like a marriage: a wise or poor choice of mate makes all the difference.



Talking politics can be lonely

By KYLE MARSHALL

The following column should be clipped and saved. I expect to find it on most bulletin boards and refrigerator doors in the Chapel Hill area.

Two good friends and I always talk about N.C. politics when we're together. We can be found in area restaurants, watering holes or other gathering places, discussing things like the split between the moderates and the conservatives in the state Republican Party or the merits and pitfalls of the intangibles tax. Sometimes that's all we ever talk about, even with other friends. And we wonder why we have trouble getting dates.

But the topic has served us well. If you try to keep up with the political scene, you'll find that there's always something new to talk about, especially in this election year. So, this N.C. political primer is being presented on a one-time only special offer, and will enable the uninitiated to hold a conversation on state politics in North Carolina.

The conversation — assuming you're not already talking about Tar Heel politics, which is a safe assumption — can begin with a simple question: "What do you think of Jesse Helms?" That's a good start, but if you're eating dinner in a quiet restaurant, the argument may result in an immediate ejection from the place. No other politician in North Carolina, perhaps in the country, generates as much scorn and contempt as Helms, yet he stands more than a reasonable chance of being elected this year to his third term in the U.S. Senate.

For those of you who have been vacationing in Namibia for the past year and a half, Helms, a Republican, is being challenged for his Senate seat by Democratic Gov. Jim Hunt, who is ending his second term as governor.

Helms draws the wrath of many a North Carolinian. His detractors take exception to his strong stands on social issues such as abortion (he's opposed) and school prayer (he's in favor) and think that his votes to trim government spending are unfair. Still others perceive Helms to be a racist, and they point to his lonely campaign in the Senate to stop the national holiday honoring Martin Luther King Jr. as evidence.

Helms' supporters, and there are many of them, defend his efforts to save taxpayers' money, provide a strong national defense and support tobacco and other agricultural programs important to North Carolina.

Personally, I like Helms because of his sense of humor, which far outshadows Hunt's cold and impersonal style of campaigning. "I saw Ted Kennedy standing with his hands in his own pockets for a change" and "With what Jim Hunt knows about international policy, he couldn't find his way to the International House of Pancakes" are two of my favorite quotes from Helms.

Hunt's appeal comes from mainstream Democrats. Considered moderate to conservative on most issues, he has not gathered a lot of support from the state's most liberal Democrats. They're casting their votes against Helms, rather than for Hunt, in most cases. The governor's support for the death penalty and his freeze on state employee's salaries during the



Edmisten, Martin: personalities eclipse issues

recent recession are particularly sticky points with them.

Political observers rate Hunt a slight edge to beat Helms, but almost everyone agrees the race will go down to the wire. Even aside from the Jim & Jesse Show, there's a lot to say about N.C. politics. Democratic Attorney General Rufus Edmisten and Republican Congressman Jim Martin, for example, are the two men who want to replace Hunt as governor. Edmisten had to overcome five tough primary opponents to gain the Democratic nomination, while Martin had the GOP nod wrapped up long ago without any competition.

This race is based more on the personal styles of the two candidates than on the issues. Edmisten is the folksy, country-boy type, endearing himself to the rural voters that have elected him twice as attorney general. Martin, a former chemistry professor at Davidson College, often appears more knowledgeable on issues, but he often falls into long-winded speeches and answers.

The way things are going now, Edmisten appears to be the favorite. When the traditional home stretch in politics begins after Labor Day, however, Martin is expected to tighten up the race with a strong television ad campaign. The ads will improve his name recognition with the voters, giving him a better chance against Edmisten, who is well-known after his two statewide races for attorney general.

In case you're interested, there are some other statewide races. Bob Jordan, the Democratic nominee for lieutenant governor, is expected to defeat Republican opponent John Carrington. Other races for attorney general, insurance commissioner, labor commissioner, agriculture commissioner, secretary of state and state superintendent of schools will go to the Democratic candidates.

Here are a few more important safety tips that will help avoid embarrassment during any political discussion:

• Democrats outnumber Republicans in North Carolina by a 3-1 margin. Nine of the state's 11 congressmen are Democrats. Only one Republican governor has been elected in the 20th

century (Jim Holshouser in 1972). Jesse Helms was the first Republican senator elected this century.

• The best way for a Republican to get elected is to saturate the airwaves with TV ads. It has worked for Helms, and it's why our other senator, Republican John East, defeated Democrat Robert Morgan in 1980. Much of the Republicans' funding for TV campaigning comes from the direct-mail approach of the National Congressional Club, founded in 1973 to help retire Helms' initial campaign debts.

• Voters in the rural eastern part of the state generally are more conservative than residents in the Piedmont and mountains. The mountain counties, where there are almost as many Republicans as Democrats, offer the best example of two-party competition.

• North Carolina, as well as much of the South, does not take too kindly to liberal politics on nationally prominent Democrats such as Walter Mondale. Mondale is given little chance of beating President Reagan here. (When Mondale visited Asheville earlier this month, most of the state's Democratic leaders stayed away, saying they had previous commitments to keep.)

That should be enough political trivia to sustain the conversation for a while.

But the hazard begins when you try to convince others that whatever values and positions you hold are right. While talking politics last week here in the DTH office, a friend told me that she always stayed away from political discussions.

"It's because your opinions are always wrong," I told her.

"That's not true, and I'm never talking to you again" was her response as she walked out the door.

I hope I don't lose any more friends.

Kyle Marshall, a senior economics and journalism major from Hendersonville and state and national editor of The Daily Tar Heel, often is found talking politics to the state Associated Press wire machine in the newspaper's office. Mildred, as she is called, is kept locked in a small room to prevent her from running away.