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The Daily Tar Heel

92nd year of editorial freedom

Back to the press box?

The referees wouldn't have stood it for long if press photographers ran onto the court during Saturday's Duke-UNC game to block one of Johnny Dawkins' numerous breakaway layups. But in the game of elections, there are indications that the press, by making early projections of winners, has become more of an obstructor than an impartial observer.

Faced with calls from the public and Congress for restrictions on the media's use of exit polling and projections, the three networks agreed last week not to make predictions of election winners in a state until the polls are closed in that state. In making the decision, the Big Three are finally showing some awareness of the responsibilities implicit in the First Amendment, but their move does not go far enough to prevent the negative impact of election projections.

Democrats complain that many of their candidates in congressional and local races were doomed when the networks declared winners in the 1980 and 1984 presidential elections before polls were closed on the West Coast. They argue that many voters in Western states decided that voting was useless once the outcome of the presidential race was determined.

Even with the networks' agreement, they still may be able to make early predictions in presidential races. During the 1984 elections, the networks followed an informal policy similar to the one they have now agreed to in writing. Still, based on the electoral landslide rolled

up by President Reagan, they were able to project the race at about 8:30 p.m. EST — when polls in about half the states were still open. One solution to the problem would be for the networks to agree not to predict races until all polls across the nation are closed. But given their slow and grudging acceptance of limited restraints, further concessions seem unlikely.

A House committee studying the problem seems most likely to endorse a proposal calling for all polls to close at the same time in the lower 48 states — 10 p.m. EST is a time frequently suggested for ending voting across the nation on election day. While such a plan would cure the immediate problem, it could have a negative impact of its own. Polls on the West Coast would close at the relatively early hour of 7 p.m.; unless polls there opened at ridiculously early hours, campaign workers in the East would have more time to get out the vote. As states in later time zones have become a stronghold for the Republicans over the past two decades, the uniform closing of polls would likely give an unfair advantage to Democratic presidential candidates.

Perhaps one of the best solutions to this craziness is for the United States to follow the lead of Japan and not release any election results until the morning after the balloting. Election night would be a little more boring, but we'd all get more sleep and democracy would be healthier as a result.

A fallen presidency

There's something to be said of jinxes. In athletics, there's the sophomore-year jinx. On the tube, CBS is experiencing the Saturday night jinx — tragedy has befallen all three of its shows (the *Cover Up* shooting, *Mike Hammer's* cocaine bust and *Airwolf's* helicopter crash, for the sensational among you).

But UNC is not immune to jinxes. Consider Suite C, or more specifically, what's left of the Executive Branch. Since Paul Parker took over as student body president last spring, he and his underlings have suffered the following:

- One dislocated vertebra;
- One broken leg;
- One fractured foot;
- One sprained ankle;
- One sprained shoulder;
- Three different cases of intestinal viruses;

• And last, but far from painless, one dreaded case of hemorrhoids.

What's going on here? Is this the reactive (rather than active) government James Eum warned us about a year ago? Is Paul Parker's platform too weak to stand on? Or is something wicked in the water outside Suite C?

To use the executive office as a resume padder is one thing; to use it as a crutch is entirely uncalculated. Parker and compatriots knew the pitfalls of the office when they stepped into student



Parker: Smiling through the pain

government; chances are they didn't consider how many they might stumble into.

With a field as crowded as this year's running for student body president — 10 at last count — there's bound to be some crowding that would make Zola Budd envious. If you value your health, folks, drop out while you still have two of almost everything — or pay your Blue Cross on time.

Clearing up questions about The Plan

By PAUL PARKER

With the opening of the food services in the upper level of Lenoir Hall in August and, now, the Commons in the lower level, we are just beginning to see the fruition of years of research, planning and debate on the implementation of a quality food service program at UNC. For those who remember the old Pine Room and the Art Studio, these changes have been nothing short of miraculous. More is yet to come: by next fall, the renovations of Chase Hall should be complete and UNC will have, for the first time, a food service that is capable of meeting the needs of the University community. Unlike most miracles, however, these changes aren't free. In order to pay for these renovations, all students are paying an annual fee of \$10. Furthermore, once all of the food service facilities are renovated, on-campus students will purchase a \$100 meal ticket that can be used in those areas. Unfortunately, due to the necessary lag time between the planning for and the actual implementation of these changes, many misunderstandings have surfaced, most of them surrounding the ominous "\$100 Mandatory Meal Plan." Before you bail out of your dorm rooms, throw rocks at South Building (or Student Government offices, for that matter), or go on a hunger strike, there are some facts that you need to know.

What is the \$100 Mandatory Meal Plan? The plan is to require all on-campus students, with one exception, to purchase a \$100-per-semester meal ticket. The plan accompanies \$4 million worth of renovations of the food service facilities. The ticket can be used in all of the campus food service facilities to purchase food. In the South Campus stores, the card can be used to buy groceries and school supplies. You can also order pizza from the Commons' pizza shop. Off-campus students and residents in Granville do not have to purchase the meal plan. Fraternity and sorority members living in dormitories will have to buy the meal plan since most do not have complete board plans. The only on-campus exception is athletes who receive maximum aid under NCAA regulations and who are required to eat at the training table; this is because of NCAA rules, not UNC policy. All other athletes living in dorms will be charged the \$100.

Is it true that we don't need a meal plan? No. UNC is one of the very few major universities that has an inadequate food service and does not have a board plan. An independent study by the consulting firm of Hill, Enlow and Jacobs concluded that to provide for the renovations of the food services, the facilities and the quality of the food, a meal plan would be necessary. In addition, members of the Food Service Advisory Committee, including the student members, went to seven universities in five states to examine their food services and came back with the same conclusion. In order to provide a food program in Chase Hall for South Campus residents, the revenue from the meal plan is



GUY LUCAS, DAILY TAR HEEL

absolutely necessary. With a meal plan and guaranteed revenue we would have an outstanding bargaining chip in contract negotiations: the ARA Food Services contract comes up for renewal in 1986.

Is it true that the meal plan is being forced on students without any student representation or input? No. The UNC administration went out of its way to cooperate with Student Government and numerous student organizations to solicit and incorporate student opinion in the decision making process. Students were represented by elected officials in Student Body President Mike Vandenberg and Residence Hall Association President Scott Templeton. Both had an incredible amount to say about this issue and, in fact, many of their proposals were adopted: the original proposals by the administration called for an annual fee of \$12.50 per student and a \$450 board plan. Student Government was able to bring the fee down to \$10 and the board plan to \$100. Student Government and RHA co-sponsored a survey of nearly 30 percent of the South Campus residents — 46 percent said that they preferred an expanded, full food service at Chase (the most expensive option of the four presented on the survey). In addition to their representation, students made up a substantial part of the FSAC and made recommendations that were also adopted. The FSAC sponsored open forums on campus, formally requested suggestions and opinions from major student organizations, and sponsored a survey that went to 3200 students and 1000 parents. The survey concluded that 77.7 percent of the students and 88.9 percent of the parents favored improved food services, even if it meant paying for a meal plan. The Panhellenic Council and 13 of 14

Inter-Fraternity Council representatives approved of the meal plan.

Can we change the meal plan? No. The agreement has been made. The time for complaining was in 1981 and 1982. That is exactly what we did and we were granted many compensations. Before the Board of Trustees could or would agree to fund renovations, they had to make certain that continued success of the services would be provided for. They approved the renovations on the condition that there would be a meal plan. Furthermore, the meal plan was instrumental in securing the \$4 million bank loan that was necessary to fund the renovations. Also, we should not go back on the plan even if we could because it provides a needed benefit and is a good plan. In addition to being extremely inexpensive as far as meal plans go and providing for quality food in new facilities, the meal plan will allow for increased student employment in the food services, provide for expansion of Student Union activities to South Campus, and allow students to carry a card instead of cash. If the issue were to come under my tenure on the Board of Trustees, I would vote to leave the plan in effect and it would be a vote of 13-0; if it were to come up under the tenure of someone else, it would be a vote of 12-1 if that person opposes it. This is not because students have no power and are not listened to, because we do and we are, but because this plan makes sense.

Paul Parker, an international studies and French major from Jacksonville, Fla., is student body president

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Faulty reasoning provides deadly justification

To the editor:

Stephen Young's letter ("Abortion: a matter of personal choice, not law," Jan. 15) evinces the faulty reasoning that's been used in this country to justify killing more than 15 million human beings *in utero* in the last two decades — an atrocity that makes Hitler look like some small-time hit man. In this case, "Hitler" is all of us who condone or remain silent on abortion, not just the anguished women who submit their bodies and their babies to the knife, lethal chemicals or a suction tube.

Young's argument in favor of a "pro-choice" stand has two major premises: 1) that to abort or carry to term an infant *in utero* is purely the personal decision of the mother; and 2) that if a mother decides she cannot provide the child adequate

nurturing and an emotionally and socially rewarding life, she has a "right" to end its life.

The first premise denies the personhood of two other human beings involved: the father who just may be opposed to abortion himself and who, in any case, is equally responsible for the pregnancy — and the newly conceived infant. No doctor, scientist or moral philosopher has ever proved that human life "begins" at some point subsequent to conception. Indeed, all recent scientific inquiry points to an understanding that the fetus contains, in microcosm, all the genetic characteristics of a postpartum human, including feeling, memory, emotions and will. Particularly strong is the "will to live," as documented by the fierce resistance the child *in utero* wages against

the instruments that pierce the womb to take his or her life.

The child within has the same right to be respected as a person as the child outside. He or she is a unique creation, with a personality, aptitudes, intelligence and, probably, a strong bond with the mother.

Young's second premise is equally short-sighted. He presumes no possibility of change in either the mother's economic circumstance or in her capacity for child-rearing. No one can read the future. Some who are well-off today will be bankrupt tomorrow, and vice versa. Besides, the child frequently proves to be a catalyst in parental maturation. A woman is willing to make sacrifices for the child she can see that she would not have thought of making for an unborn, unseen child. So is

a father.

Unmentioned too in Young's letter was the fact that, in America at least, there are long lists of couples waiting to adopt children unwanted by their natural mothers. All arguments in defense of abortion that hypothesize an unloving or impoverished ambience for the yet-to-be born would apply equally well to infants who have issued forth into the light. It would be just as logical to murder infants at birth or in their first week outside the womb, and then justify the killing because of the child's poor prospects for a happy, fulfilling life. At least then we, as a society, could see clearly what we are doing — and the blood that is on our hands.

John Patrick Grace
Chapel Hill

Get a grip,
wake up,
get real, etc.

To the editor:

Regarding "How 'bout a big boo for frou-frou?" (Jan. 16): what on earth is this world coming to? To think that a DTH staff writer (and journalism major, no less) took the time and the space of the editorial page to rag on a stuffed animal. It's amazing that this staff writer has nothing better to do than look up intellectually stimulating words such as "frou-frou." Who cares how you feel, Lucas? Depicted in your poor attempt at an article is a harmless Care Bear, or as you so bluntly describe them, "those little bears with tattoos all over their fronts." This form of "frilly ornamentation" happens to bring happiness to children, as well as others — yes, Guy, even sentimental athletes, "for Pete's sake." These cuddly creatures haven't a thing to do with any kind of foreign politics.

What's the big deal? Do you have something against rainbows, clouds and stuffed bears, or is this a hopeless attempt to protect your manhood, which you obviously feel is being threatened? It is highly unlikely that the inanimate creatures will arrive and "suck children and adults into a fatal muck of frou-frou." After all, the animals are like you — full of stuffing.

Let's get real, Mr. Journalism. Write something worth reading or consider an alternate career. How 'bout a bigger boo for Guy Lucas?

Katherine White
Chapel Hill



Does mandatory mean necessary?

To the editor:

The \$100 mandatory meal plan enacted for the coming fall shows not only weak reasoning on behalf of the Food Service Advisory Committee but also a lack of concern for student interests.

The reasoning that the meal plan is necessary to improve the quality of food may be true, but why impose the \$100 bill on those who choose not to eat on campus and, therefore, have no concern as to the quality of the food? In fact, unbeknownst to many students, a \$10 student fee is tacked on to tuition to pay for the food service renovations. The

students who must eat on campus should be responsible for this so-called improvement in food if they feel it is necessary.

The second absurd reason given by the Advisory Committee is that all other institutions surveyed have a mandatory meal plan much over the \$100 mark. Perhaps UNC's past meal plan was a reason for a student to attend UNC.

Lastly, the committee states that the mandatory meal plan is justified because anyone can eat \$100 worth of food. This attitude exemplifies a lack of concern for student finances. There are many students who

cannot afford the overpriced meals at Lenoir Hall and prefer to eat simple meals in their dorms. And what of the sorority and fraternity students who already have a mandatory meal plan to budget? It is ridiculous to have to drink soft drinks or eat candy bars every day in order not to "waste" the \$100.

The \$100 mandatory meal plan deserves more consideration, or at least revision, before it is imposed upon the college student's already-stretched budget.

Jennifer Carter
Parker

The Daily Tar Heel

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