

# The Daily Tar Heel

93rd year of editorial freedom

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## Standardize clean air

The 2,000 people who died in Bhopal, India, last year after an accident at a Union Carbide plant may not have done so completely in vain. That tragedy led to a congressional survey, released Tuesday, that could — and should — result in new national standards to control toxic materials.

The survey of toxic chemicals being emitted into the nation's air found that thousands of tons of cancer-causing agents and other very hazardous materials were released into the air from hundreds of factories. Even more distressing, there are no uniform standards to control the emissions of these substances, including the chemical that was responsible for the Bhopal deaths.

The congressman who ordered the survey reports, "Almost every chemical plant we received information about is releasing staggeringly high rates of hazardous chemicals, even in routine releases." And he adds that this is only the tip of iceberg, since the survey covers only some of the thousands of chemical production sites.

Much of the blame for this terrible situation must be placed on the Environmental Protection Agency, which has

national airborne standards for only five toxic pollutants. Standards for dozens more are set by states, accounting for the wide variation in chemical discharges from state to state.

More than a decade ago, under the Clean Air Act, the EPA named 37 dangerous air pollutants to high-priority study list yet has failed to regulate any of them. The EPA says it has plans to decide by the end of the year whether to regulate possibly 20 of the 37 substances, but we have to wonder what's to decide.

If it is true the chemicals cause cancer or can otherwise sicken people, then national standards ought to be set now and end the states' almost arbitrary control of hazardous pollutants. One pollution expert said that the states' controls are set (because of a lack of federal guidelines on toxic material) with "no rhyme nor reason."

The accident at Bhopal killed a large number of people very quickly. But an even greater tragedy with a greater number of deaths, though spread over many years rather than days, could occur if these daily emissions of hazardous chemicals are not controlled now.

## Destructive engagement

The recent police shooting of 29 blacks in South Africa is just the latest in the chronic and escalating bloodletting in that racist nation. While President Reagan has pursued "constructive engagement" with the white minority government, at least 242 blacks are confirmed to have been killed by police in the last 13 months. South Africa is slowly and painfully rending apart at the seams.

The whites' policy of racial separation, apartheid, is the basis of a brutal system of racist exploitation. The black majority (70 percent) lives in slave-like conditions. They have no political rights: no vote, no civil rights, not even citizenship. Their economic freedom is severely curtailed; blacks must have a job to be away from rural "homelands," are paid on a different wage scale and cannot go on strike. The average black receives one-tenth the income of the average white.

In view of this unjust system and the blood bath supporting it, Reagan's constructive engagement is exposed as a myopic result of a knee-jerk fear of communism and an amoral pursuit of profit. The President portrayed the recent killings as a case of "law and order." What kind of law and order for whom? Black demonstrators were indeed waving sticks and throwing rocks at police, but does Reagan propose gunning people down for such actions?

Meanwhile constructive engagement pays its benefits. American corporations reap their profits from the economic exploitation, often planning with the government against a black uprising (as with General Motors) or supplying tools

to the budding police state (as with IBM and Control Data).

Proponents of constructive engagement point to recent constitutional changes that open the political system to both Indians and those of mixed race (together less than 10 percent of the population). However, their two assemblies hold less power than the whites' single assembly, and a more powerful white executive now has dictatorial potential. Ironically, the elections for the Indian and "colored" assemblies were marked by violent demonstrations by these groups and blacks and set off the current yearlong blood bath.

Constructive engagement is a sham. It merely reassures South Africans, both black and white, that the United States will not act against apartheid and also contributes technology to modernize a police state that may prolong apartheid. Economic sanctions being considered by Congress should not only be passed but expanded to include technology controls similar to those applied against the Soviet Union and requirements that U.S. corporations contribute sizable portions of their profits there to black education and social progress. If one fears Soviet influence, the United States ought to offer security assistance to black African nations threatened by South African aggression.

South Africa will not be ruled by its white minority forever. Apartheid will be destroyed, and perhaps South Africa with it. What shall U.S. policy contribute to — the ultimate destruction of South Africa or the early destruction of apartheid?

## A Bloom-ing shame

You didn't see *Bloom County* in Sunday's *DTH*.

Aha, you say: There was no Sunday *DTH*. Just testing, just testing.

But you didn't see it in *The News and Observer* of Raleigh, either.

*N&O* Editor Claude Sitton pulled the strip, an ad parody of the Dewar's Scotch series portraying successful individuals. The subject of *Bloom* creator Berke Breathed's "profile": sleazy attorney Steve Dallas, who says, "Its taste blends perfectly with the sense of accomplishment I feel after getting five accused nun-beaters sprung on a technicality."

The single panel, a marked departure from the strip's usual style, is bizarre, nearly libelous, a mite questionable in taste — but funny. And Sitton's reaction? "That panel is not suitable for a family paper."

The incident is not an isolated one, just the latest in a growing trend toward comic strip censorship. Breathed has been pulled from papers before, as have Mort Walker's *Beetle Bailey* (for strips treating shapely secretary Miss Buxley in a "sexist" fashion) and Garry Trudeau's *Doonesbury* (for strips too numerous to list, most recently during the hilarious "Vigilante" series).

These are the funny pages, huh? You wonder sometimes: Many newspapers run *Doonesbury* on the op/ed page. Segregating the strip from "humor" strips such as *Peanuts* and *Garfield* is one thing; censoring them altogether is another — and, we think, an unhealthy practice at that.

Sitton admits to enjoying *Bloom County* as a rule. While Sunday's strip was not to his liking, it was certainly experimental — a sign of Breathed's needs to stretch himself creatively. But censorship stifles. And actions like Sitton's are only detrimental to the artistic license of the most talented newcomer since Trudeau.

Should Sitton decide what is and isn't "family" material? The newspaper's extensive and, at times, sensational coverage of N.C. State freshman Percy Moorman's trial on charges of rape certainly wasn't "family" material, but it ran prominently in the paper.

There's a double standard, it appears, between news and entertainment. Comics aren't just for kids. If the *N&O* and others want to keep *Bloom County* out of children's reach, put it into the editorial pages. That way the readers — intelligent, well-read beings that they are — can decide for themselves.

## Meal plan should be fought now

By PETE AUSTIN

Wallacgate — the scandal of the '80s. Years of UNC administrators tried to coerce students into accepting an unpopular mandatory meal plan, and now they have been caught. The UNC administration screwed up and screwed us, and Patricia Wallace is left holding the bag. And oh what a bag it is.

Deceit. Trickery. Lying. Misrepresentation. Misinformation. Underhandedness. Chancellor Christopher C. Fordham III must be held responsible for this bag. Former President Nixon may not have known about his subordinates' actions (he may have known, too, but it does not matter now), but he was still responsible for their actions. Likewise, Fordham is responsible for his peoples' actions. Nixon paid with his job; what will Fordham pay?

Donald A. Boulton seems to be bearing the brunt of the blame, again. If his office of vice chancellor and dean of student affairs puts him in that position, so be it. Let us blame him.

Boulton misled several years of student body presidents, apparently thinking that if he kept plugging, kept sticking the knife in and turning, one student body president would give in and the mandatory meal plan would receive student approval. He was right. Mike Vandenberg, whom a few underclassmen may remember, yielded and claimed a Vietnam victory — a victory in the midst of defeat. "A \$100 meal plan is better than a \$500 meal plan," he said.

Well, Vandy, you wimped out. You chose to claim a small, easy victory rather than to serve the needs of your constituents and unconditionally oppose a mandatory meal plan. Shame on you.

The problem is, what do we as students do now? The fact remains that the meal plan is unpopular, unfair and that we should oppose it. How? First, Student Government should organize rallies, speeches, marches, protests and candlelight vigils in Lenoir and the Pit. Then, a sit-in should be held, and I for one propose April 1. I hope you understand the connection between the date and the event. Students and faculty who feel future dorm dwellers are being ripped off are welcome to attend the sit-in on April 1 at 11 a.m. on the steps of the Swine Room, er, Lenoir Hall. The rest of you fools deserve each other and can pay for the meal plan out of your own pockets.

I am neither reactionary nor looking for a fight. I simply do not feel that future freshmen should be saddled with an unfair fee into which they had no input. Gov. Jim Martin's 10 percent tuition hike will be harsh enough. A \$100 meal plan, or even a \$1 meal plan, is a violation of freedom of choice that should be fought now.

We do not have to call in Abbie Hoffman and Bob Dylan to seek fair redress of our grievances. The administration has misled us, and this is a dangerous practice that should be halted. UNC administrators and student leaders can work together in an atmosphere of trust if the older policymakers will decide that students deserve to be equals and not subjects. Apparently, the only way they are going to realize this is through protests designed to hit home. As long as this unjust practice continues unopposed, students will be lowly serfs in a Chapel Hill fiefdom. We need to make our school the Southern Part of Heaven rather than a financial and social hell.

Pete Austin is a senior journalism and speech major from Chattanooga, Tenn.



## READER FORUM

### Let's not fund perverted, deviant sexuality

To the editors:

The issue of funding the Carolina Gay Association, or the Carolina Gay and Lesbian Association since it has let in women (or is it men?), is not an issue at all: You gays can forget it! As a heterosexual student at UNC, I don't want any of my tuition appropriated for the financing of a bunch of deviants so they can have a Valentine's Day dance, among other activities that are supposed to acquaint the UNC

community with homosexuality. I wish that gays would just understand one point: Sexuality is a private matter, so why try to inform the public about what you do in the closet?

Heterosexuals don't feel a need to inform, publicize or educate the public about their sexuality, so why should you? And why do you think that those who aren't gay should finance a gay organization in order

for you to inform us about something we would really rather not know anything about? Should the Campus Governing Council finance a Wolfpack fan club at UNC just because there are a few people who pull for State? Of course not. So why should we fund an organization that pulls for members of the same sex?

It all boils down to one point. We don't care what your sexual

preferences are. We are in no position to judge them as right or wrong, even if they are wrong. If gays want to run around campus yelling, "Hey boy, you look mighty cute in dem jeans," then that's their business. But they shouldn't ask everyone else to pay for the awareness of their perverted sexuality for our "benefit."

Bob Carlton  
Granville West



### Socialism offers no alternative at all

To the editors:

The distortion of socialism that Dale McKinley decries ("Status quo ignores, distorts socialism," March 25) is no distortion at all. The well-deserved contempt reserved for socialism is based on its denial of that which forms the basis of American society. The American ideal is quite familiar with such concepts as peace, justice, and freedom. It also familiar with individuality, opportunity and achievement, words that ring hollow to socialist application.

Socialism submerges and destroys individuality for some nebulous utilitarian notion of "the good of society." McKinley sees socialism as a way to work collectively to develop individual capacities for creativity, but socialism quashes that capacity. Creativity is fostered

by individuality and an entrepreneurial spirit and drive, which, in turn, is fostered by a capitalist society. Removing the foundations that foster that spirit results in a disincentive to be creative and imposes a drab equality that is forced, neither earned nor inherent to one's inalienable rights.

Those like McKinley who call themselves democratic socialists have created an ironic double standard. They attack examples of any excess of capitalism by calling for an elimination of the system but claim that the destructiveness of socialism as it is currently applied is not reflective of true socialism and should be ignored. The dilemma facing socialists is understandable. To eliminate the double standard requires the socialists to become

apologists for the economic failures and social repression of the Soviet Union (the Union of Socialist Republics) and the economic stagnation of France under the Socialists and Great Britain under the Laborites.

I find it encouraging that American youth are active in the fight against socialist repression. We aren't ignoring those things that McKinley sees as challenging the status quo. Rather, we reject a system that destroys incentive and opportunity as a means to remedy problems. We seek a society of opportunity, not a society that destroys it. The socialist alternative is no alternative at all.

Brad Torgan  
Vice Chairman  
Students for America

## Spoiled sports

To the editors:

Hurrah for Tar Heel fans who met our basketball team when they returned from Birmingham Sunday night. We too would like to express gratitude to them for a great season. All season long we have noticed a disturbing trend forming among many of our Tar Heel fans, and it makes us sick. After UNC wins a game, it's always "We were great" or "We're awesome." I heard this over and over after the Notre Dame and Auburn games. Then, after a disappointing Tar Heel loss, we changes to *they*: "They played horrible"; "They suck."

Get a clue, Tar Heels. Our basketball team was picked in the pre-season to be ranked fifth in the ACC and were not even ranked nationally. By the end of the season, however, we were ranked first in the regular season during our year of "rebuilding" when no one thought we would be any good.

We have been spoiled by our past records. Maybe we didn't win the national championship, but our 27-9 season is one we can all be proud of. Besides, there is always next year

Marshall George  
Tony Kearney  
Stacy

## Letters?

Letters to the editors should be typed and triple-spaced. Lengthier opinions in the form of columns are also welcome. Both should be dropped in the little green box outside the *DTH* in the Student Union. Deadline for the next day's publication is noon daily.

## Only nuclear arms would go extinct under SDI

To the editors:

In response to Mitchell M. Pote's indictment of the Strategic Defense Initiative ("A dangerous proposal," March 19), I wish to proffer some auspicious facts overlooked by Pote in his hasty condemnation. Pote immediately suggested that if 1 percent of Soviet missiles could allude destruction during an attack, SDI would be a complete and unabashed failure. Domsday would befall us all as SDI centers would be targeted for first destruction by the primary strike. We would lie defenseless in wait for Armageddon. Sorry, Pote, but you assume that SDI will necessarily be a land-based system in your argument. Presently, three to four widely varied stratagems for defense

are being explored; the land-based systems being perhaps the most vulnerable and not perform the most effective. Other proposed satellite systems would be quite beyond the effective range of the Soviets. The Soviet anti-satellite weapon system is incredibly inefficient, almost to the point of worthlessness. (In comparison, our system, utilizing a F-15 launched booster rocket guided by infrared telescopes and a laser gyroscope, is very versatile and quite threatening. This perhaps explains the Soviet's recent concern over future anti-satellite system testing by the United States.) Therefore, unassured of effecting SDI, the Soviets are uncertain in their abilities to disable our arsenal in event of a conflict.

The vast majority of our missiles would remain for a retaliatory strike. I do not believe the Soviets would relish that possibility.

Pote then argues that SDI will inevitably lead to "new, unprecedented levels" of nuclear stockpiling. Perhaps, but I hasten to say that SDI has been commissioned only for the early phases of research as the investigation of its practicality. The Soviets are petrified and SDI has lent us a new advantageous position, from which to enter serious negotiation in Geneva. This is somewhat of an oddity, but nonetheless a strong bargaining chip that we should not forfeit!

Finally, Pote seems perturbed over the cost estimates for the SDI system. Agreed, research costs are

projected at \$26 billion over the next five years, but appraisals of final costs ranging from \$50 billion to \$500 billion only serves to illustrate and emphasize that no one really knows how much funding would be required for the system. At this point everyone is guessing; moreover, no one is saying that the system will be built. Much further research is needed. Huge obstacles stand between us and the advent of a feasible system, but is there harm in investigating the possibility? Should SDI ever be created and implemented, years away though it may be, it is nuclear arms that will suffer the extinction.

Scott V. Smith  
Chapel Hill