

# The Daily Tar Heel

93rd year of editorial freedom

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## A compromise of starts

To compromise or not to compromise is rarely the question in American politics. There's usually no choice — either give in somewhere or forget it. And President Reagan proved last week he didn't want to forget it, as he compromised with the Senate Republican leadership on some key points to get an agreeable budget proposal.

Who else will agree to it is another matter and one that will be debated much more thoroughly in the coming weeks of Congress's battle with the deficit. Nevertheless, Reagan and his Republican senators have made a good start toward finding a budget that might make it all the way through the House.

Most notably, the president backed down from previously firm stands on defense spending and Social Security benefits. He's agreed to cut his planned defense increases in half and delete his campaign pledge "never" to cut Social Security benefits. Consequently, the Republicans have gone along with cuts and terminations in domestic programs.

Of course, all this will now come under the scrutiny of the rest of the Senate and then the Democratic-controlled House, so this can at best be considered a start. But it's certainly a much more promising situation than when Reagan was acting like any compromise on his defense proposals was inconceivable and tantamount to treason.

The plan aims at reducing the fiscal 1986 deficit by \$52 billion and reducing deficit spending by more than \$300 billion over the next three years. Judging by some of the reaction to the plan,

however, the final budget proposal might be a different story.

One of the major debating points almost certainly will be the Social Security question. The compromise calls for a 2 percent reduction in benefits for each of the next three years — seemingly breaking one of Reagan's promises during the campaign not to touch Social Security benefits. In a portentous remark, House Speaker Tip O'Neill promised that "Democrats will keep him honest."

And with all this chopping of domestic programs, more than a few congressmen will question the fairness of raising defense spending 3 percent. Reagan should not rule out a freeze in all defense spending if he expects to get such domestic cutbacks as the elimination of Job Corps past the Democrats.

The biggest debate will probably come when all the compromises are made and people start claiming it's not a good enough dent in the deficit. Then comes the issue of taxes. Reagan will undoubtedly put up a bitter fight to stop any tax increase, but the success of his fight must not come at the expense of a weak deficit reduction plan.

Considering the nature of compromise and the complexity and importance of the budget problem, Reagan and the Senate leaders should be commended for making some hard choices and, at least, getting the ball rolling on a plan that won't alienate the entire country, as one Senator put it, or back down entirely from the kind of sacrifices needed to reduce the deficit significantly.

## Remember me to the BOT

Patricia Wallace's official reaction to a recent Student Government report on the mandatory meal plan has been mild if not negligible. The Mills-Banks-Terrell Report cited evidence that administrators have misled UNC students over the need for a mandatory meal plan. Her reaction? To study the issue further and consult with the very same administrators. We believe this is entirely inadequate.

Well-researched study can be valuable to student representatives. The SG report is a 32-page analysis, with supporting documents provided in full. Only through such in-depth and competent research will UNC students be able to uphold their interests adequately in the future. But the will to use the results of such work is also necessary, and we cannot recognize it behind Wallace's strategy of cooperation and quiet persuasion.

Wallace's only reaction to the report's strong conclusions and even stronger recommendations has been to avoid endorsing its findings and to prepare a "more in-depth analysis." She refused

the authors' request to send the report to the University Trustees in advance of their Apr. 26 meeting. She opposed a referendum to give voice to student opinion because it would be "deceiving" to imply that the vote would have any impact on the Trustees. "It's saying to students that their vote counts for something," she told the CGC. "It doesn't."

Clearly, Wallace's stance is based on disturbing rationales: the students are not aware enough to speak in a knowledgeable way; the Trustees do not care about the students' feelings. But for whom is this meal service being renovated?

So far, Wallace has failed to represent our interests forcefully. If she continues without overt direction, our president will have failed to represent us and will have been "co-opted" by the University establishment.

The time has come to act. The students must vote April 18. And Patricia Wallace must actively uphold the student position.

## Forcing all to write right a UNC slight

By KAREN PECK

When I entered UNC last fall, I felt sure things would be different. I was optimistic as I envisioned the torture I had faced over the past 12 years finally ending. After all, why shouldn't things be perfect in the Southern Part of Heaven? I was about to embark on an educational journey in a sea of renowned professors, dedicated students and awesome basketball players. A university of the caliber of UNC, I thought, most certainly would be above the level of the public school system I had left behind.

But I was wrong. My torture continues at UNC because I am still discriminated against. I am among the ranks of the few, the proud, the lefties who are forced to sit in right-handed desks.

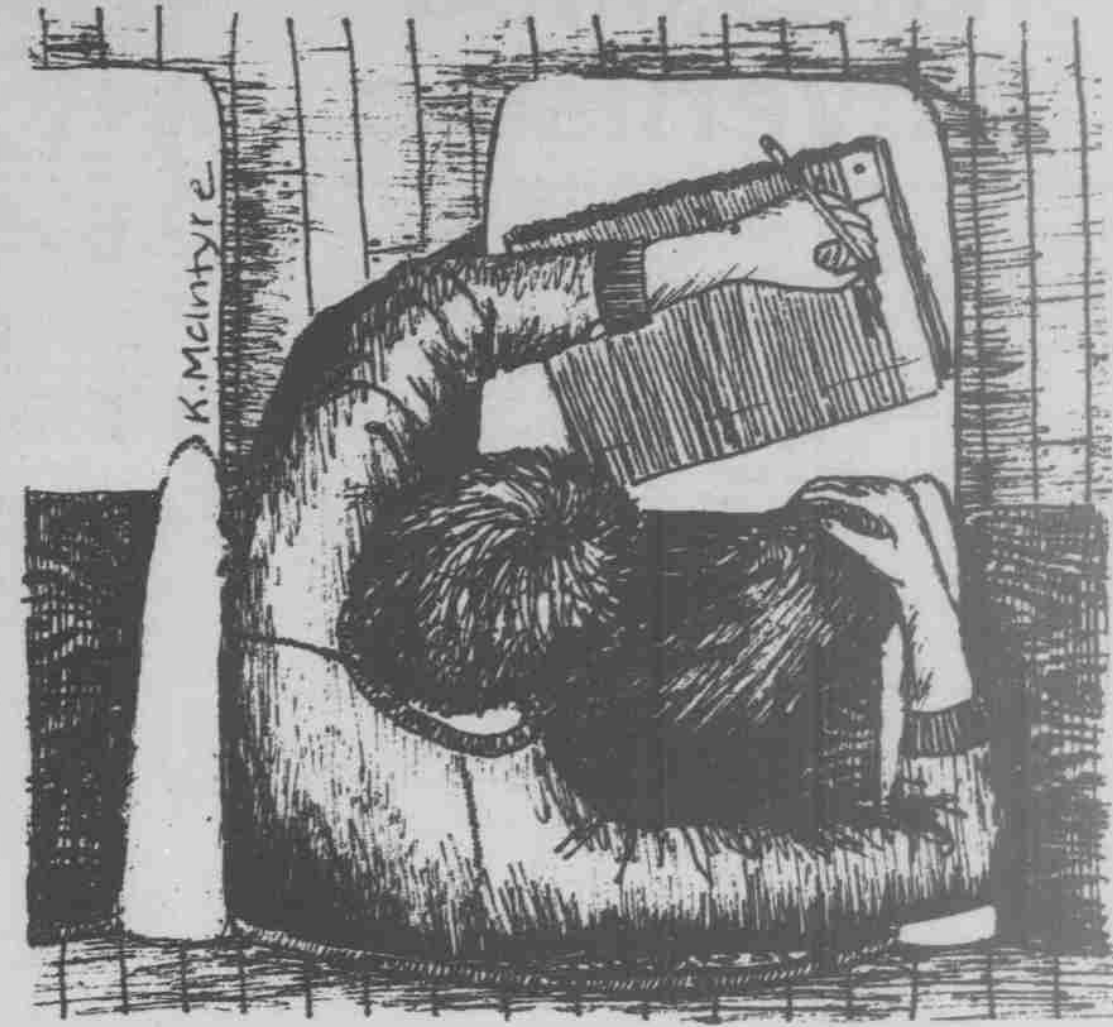
The student handbook states, "It is the policy of this University not to discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, or handicap..." Even though the buildings and classrooms on campus are designed to uphold this policy, they are not equipped to accommodate those Tar Heels who are southpaws. The left-handed students are forced to attend lectures in classrooms that do not have left-handed desks. In the small percentage of classrooms that do have them, the desks are always few in number and located in the extreme front of the room. It is true that lefties are of superior

intellect, but this does not mean that we all desire to sit in the front of the class.

Forcing left-handed students to sit in right-handed desks is not only discrimination, it is also torture. In order to use the desks, lefties have to turn sideways in their chairs and slant their notebooks almost 90 degrees. Sitting in such an uncomfortable position causes cricks in the neck and more cramps in the hand than one usually gets from taking notes for an hour.

Not only does sitting in the wrong-handed desk harm the physical well-being of lefties, but it also hinders their note-taking. The awkward position of a lefty's notebook causes the quality of penmanship to decline drastically. Many southpaws resort to holding their notebooks in their laps to be more comfortable, a practice that further reduces the legibility of their notes.

The lack of left-handed desks causes problems for the right-handed students as well. First, the right-hander's view of the professor, or any other being he or she may be scouting, is often obstructed by the lefty who is sitting sideways in his right-handed desk trying to take notes. Second, many righties are even more likely to cheat on an exam when they are sitting next to a southpaw. Since they know lefties are a superbly intelligent breed, the right-handed students are faced with a temptation that is often



hard to resist because of the close proximity of the lefties' answers due to the slanted test paper. Finally, the right-handed students in those classes that do have a few left-handed desks are deprived of the pleasure of being among the lefties who are forced to sit in the front of the room in the proper desks.

In order to maintain its non-discriminatory and national championship status, UNC needs to

make some changes in its classroom decor. Left-handed desks should be installed in all classrooms and placed among the other desks, not just in front. Such measures are the least the University can do to accommodate its elite group of left-handed students. After all, we lefties are the only people in our right minds!

Karen Peck is a freshman from Lumberton.

## READER FORUM

### Editorial's conclusions ignorant, outlandish

To the editors:

It has always been the duty of journalists, as reporters of events, to publish the truth. Too often, though, in writing editorials, journalists resort to half-truths, misinformation or, in the case of the DTH editorial, "The slumping shoulders" (April 5), ignorance and ill-informed conclusions. I was outraged that such a poorly researched editorial could make the pages of major university newspaper. Obviously the writer of this piece has not learned that a writer should never submit an editorial unless he has done the proper research.

The accident at the Union Carbide facility in Bhopal, India was a catastrophe of major proportions. Yet the author of "The slumping shoulders" attempts to establish fault without any knowledge of either the involvement of Union Carbide in the plant's construction and maintenance, or the laws regarding liability and negligence. First, I should note some rather important facts that the author was either ignorant of, or chose not to mention:

1) The Union Carbide chemical plant in Bhopal was built according

to American safety standards. Not only are these standards more strict than those in India, but Union Carbide has built an identical plant in Virginia that has had an impeccable safety record.

2) Union Carbide is generally regarded as the leader in safety in this type of chemical production by other chemical manufacturers.

3) Union Carbide, India is a wholly owned subsidiary of Union Carbide. Union Carbide maintains no actual control over its subsidiary's operation of the plants in India.

With some factual information finally established, I should like to start with the author's ridiculous and baseless claim that Union Carbide "neglected to tell its Indian subsidiary how to run the plant." This is typical of the way irresponsible journalists use a casual writing style to convey the idea that one party didn't care about the consequences of its actions. The fact is that not only did Union Carbide sell its Indian subsidiary the plant, but they instructed the Indian employees in the proper use and maintenance of the equipment. The

author of the editorial obviously made the statement out of ignorance or as an outright misrepresentation of the facts.

Union Carbide has not suggested that its Indian subsidiary deliberately caused the accident as the author indicates. Although the act of pouring the water into a tank of methyl isocyanate may have been deliberate, the intent of causing a major catastrophe was not there, as the author states Union Carbide has claimed. Additionally, how does the author know that no one poured water into a tank that it was not supposed to go into? Maybe the author was at the scene, or is privileged to some inside information that no one else has? This is what I mean by misrepresentation combined with baseless conclusions.

Of all the outlandish statements in the author's editorial, none shows the writer's total ignorance of the subject at hand more than the statement, "Even if negligence was involved, it was unintentional." The author is here trying to clear the Indian subsidiary of blame by showing that there was no fault on their part. Unfortunately, the author once again has not done any

research on what he writes. For if he had, he would know that negligence, by definition, means that the party had no intent, but is still held to be at fault. If a person creates a dangerous situation without realizing it, and that situation injures someone, the person creating the situation is still liable for damages, even though that person had no intent to injure anyone. I suggest that the author learn his legal terms before condemning anyone in the future.

Finally, I will not debate the writer's conclusion that Union Carbide should pay "until it hurts," as it is based on ignorance and misrepresentations. In addition, I shall leave legal conclusions to the federal court system where they belong. Reactionary journalism has no place in modern American newspapers. I suggest that if the author intends to pursue a career in journalism, that he learn that there is some legwork that must be done before one submits an article for print.

Alec Peters  
Granville South

### Number 8?

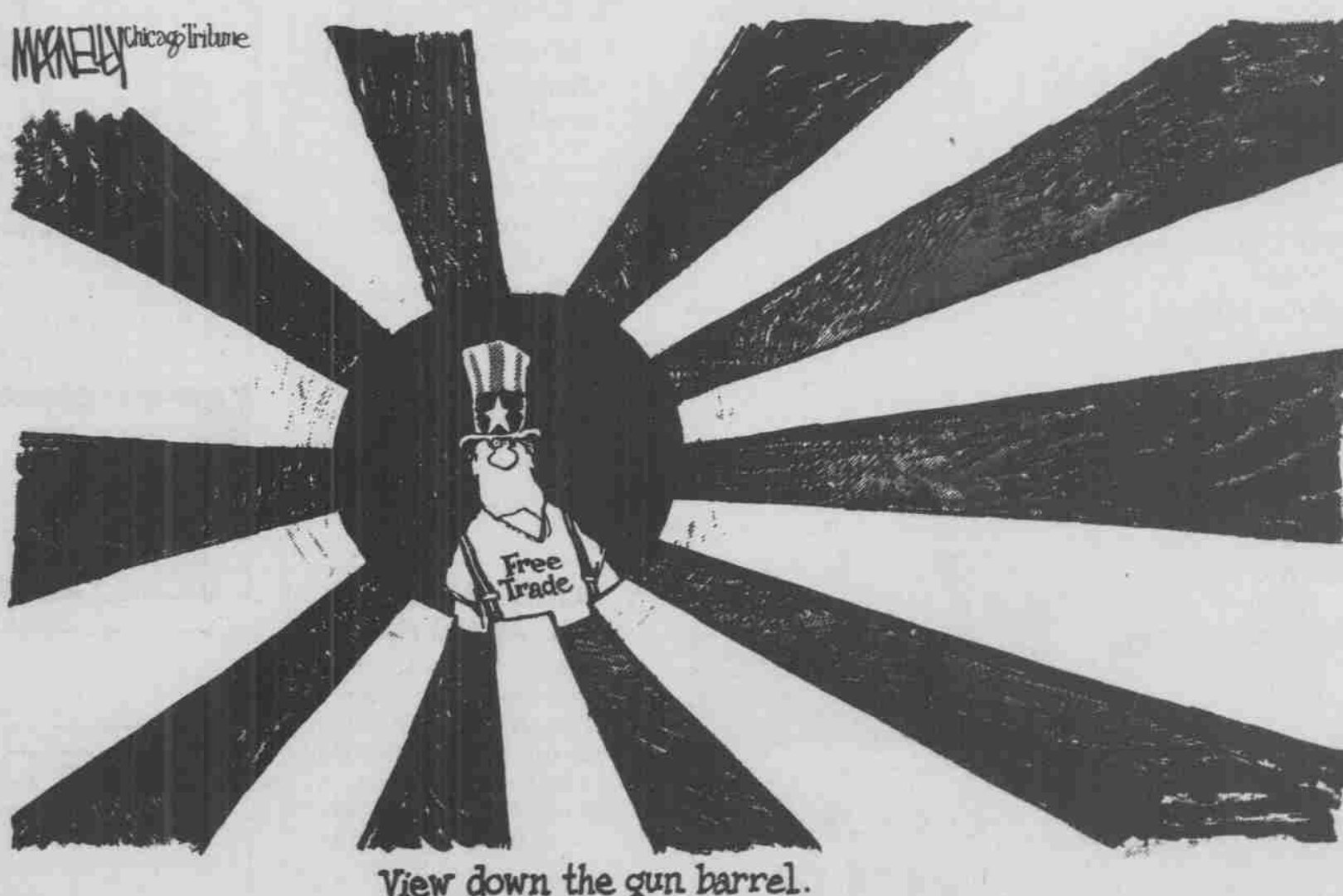
To the editors:

So Mike Morgan ("Seven theories on Christ's resurrection," April 5) asserts that "one can only conclude that the resurrection of Jesus Christ did occur?" Well, his exhaustive list of seven theories to explain the Biblical story has at least one glaring omission.

Perhaps, if I may be so bold as to suggest it, the entire report of Jesus' burial and the accompanying events is fiction. False. Untrue. At best, good literature.

The Biblical version of the death of Jesus is not corroborated by any historical source. To use the New Testament to "prove" that Jesus rose from the dead involves the worst sort of circular reasoning. Most, if not all, Christians believe in the resurrection of Jesus anyway. Others of us are not likely to be convinced by an argument based on such an "authority."

Adam Falk  
Carrboro



View down the gun barrel.

### UNC, KKK not as alien as you might think

To the editors:

When Ku Klux Klan leader Glenn Miller proclaimed, "White people are being dragged down to the level of black people" at a recent rally in Raleigh, he was claiming the title of spokesman for the entire "white race" ("Rally shows new, old values on the line," April 3). Moderate whites who try to ignore the remark, or dismiss it as the insignificant babbling of a fringe element, are lacking in empathy for the people it was aimed at. For these people, it carries a very real threat of violence. And when the majority of white people remain silent, those who most feel this hatred might begin to wonder if this man really is the majority spokesman. After all, the rest of us haven't been clamoring to refute his remarks.

The most human response to Miller's remarks is outrage, outrage that in a country that is founded on the precept that "all men are created equal" a man who presumes

to be majority spokesman asserts that some people are inherently inferior. These claims cannot be laughed away; racism is a serious matter. If whites can't learn to recognize it, Miller's vision may indeed become reality.

Those who write the Klan off as a harmless bunch of kooks should take a closer look at our own campus. The poison of racism moves in subtle ways. In recent weeks, the UNC administration has expressed concern over the decline in black enrollment. Yet I have heard no creative suggestions as to how to deal with this problem. The general consensus on campus seems to be that blacks prefer predominantly black colleges, or just can't make the grade here. I remember these same two arguments from my elementary school days when schools were first being desegregated. "They're happier with their own kind," or "They're just not

academically inclined, we were told.

If UNC is serious about recruiting black students, we must begin to make a serious effort to meet their educational needs. We should offer a black studies curriculum that is unrivaled by any other institution. The tremendous contribution of blacks to our culture must never be forgotten. Besides recognizing that a few black historical figures have made good in the white man's world, we must also recognize the unique contributions of black culture as a whole.

Constitutional funding for the Black Student Movement is another essential. Although the issue is dead for this year, it will come up again, and must be passed if this University hopes to become fully integrated. Recruiters must find it very difficult to explain to a prospective black freshman that the BSM has to go before the student legislature each year to ask for operating funds.

But the most flagrant example of white supremacist philosophy on UNC's campus is Kappa Alpha's annual Old South party. Flying confederate flags and fondly remembering the days when we treated a race of people like cattle is an offense against God and humanity. If Kappa Alpha wants their party to be authentic, they should include a few characters with white sheets over their heads and burn a cross or two.

Racism, flagrant or subtle, creates victims, but it also creates oppressors. While the victim is still human, the oppressor is less than human. We educated folk at UNC might flatter ourselves that we hold nothing in common with Klansmen. I wonder. Perhaps our quiet acceptance is more support than they had ever hoped for.

George W. Loveland  
Chapel Hill

## The Daily Tar Heel

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