

## The Tar Heel

# \$100 meal plan implemented for dorm residents

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Students living on campus this fall will be required to pay \$100 a semester for a mandatory meal plan.

The meal plan, adopted in March 1983 by the UNC Board of Trustees to take effect this fall, will provide a financial base for food service operations in newly renovated Lenoir Hall and Chase Hall. Renovations of both Lenoir and Chase have been funded through a special fee.

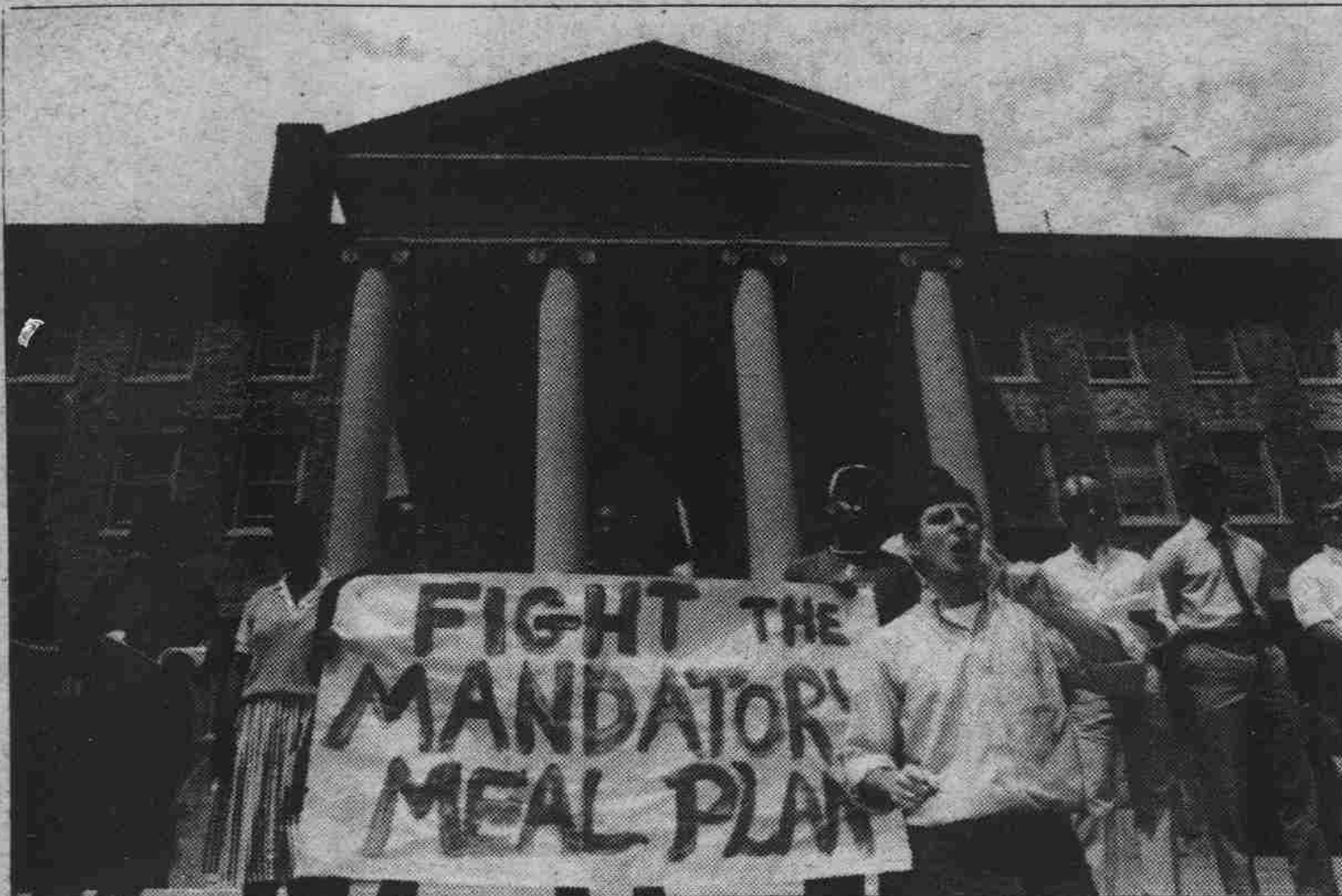
The meal plan implementation process was by no means smooth and without controversy. During the fall of 1981, students and parents were surveyed by a randomly distributed questionnaire to determine attitudes about and needs of UNC's food service. The survey showed that there was strong support for improved food services and renovation of the South Campus' Chase Hall cafeteria, as well as North Campus' Lenoir Hall and the Fast Break.

When Chase Hall closed at the end of the 1982 school year South campus students had to walk to Lenoir Hall on North Campus to eat a full meal.

Later, catering service was provided on South Campus, but it was decided that Chase Hall would be renovated and opened for full food service in the Fall of 1985. The controversy arose when current on-campus students found out they'd have to participate in a room and board plan.

The plan, approved by the Chancellor's Food Service Advisory Committee (which consisted of former Student Body President Mike Vandenberg and other students and administrators), originally called for a \$450 board plan for on-campus students and an across-the-board \$12.50 per-student fee for renovations. Through negotiations with student government, the figure was reduced to \$100 per semester and a \$10 across-the-board fee. Some current students, however, have said there was little student input in the decision and that the food service survey used loaded and biased questions.

Critics also claimed that students making the decision on the meal plan knew they would be long gone by the time the plan would be implemented, and that students affected by the plan had no representation in the



Protest outside South Building: but only 200 of 22,000 were there.

decision. Others have said there was little student input at all even in the negotiating stages, and that all students would be subsidizing a private food contractor.

Proponents of the plan said that the campus could lose food service entirely without the plan and that most other college campuses had some sort of board plan. They added that UNC could boast a quality food service and that the new plan would allow students to use their meal cards at snack shops in dorms for other items as well. Lenoir Hall renovations, they said, have also provided expanded services such as pizza delivery, quality ice cream and other food specialty items.

During the 1985 campus elections, the meal plan became a central issue in the Student Body President and Campus Governing Council races. While most student politicians opposed the plan, others had different means of dealing with the action. Former Student Body President Paul Parker pocket-vetoed CGC legislation that would have put the meal plan proposal before the student

body in a non-binding referendum.

During the 1985 Student Body President campaign, finalists Patricia Wallace and Doug Berger both opposed the meal plan but disagreed in how to negotiate with the UNC Board of Trustees. The BOT planned to make the final decision during the spring. Wallace called for negotiations with the BOT to persuade against implementation of the plan and Berger called for a campus-wide student boycott of food services if the BOT refused to strike down the plan.

Under Wallace and a new Campus Governing Council, the food service referendum made it to the ballot last April. Residence hall meetings with proponents and opponents of the plan were scheduled and widely publicized, but poorly attended (five students sat in on a panel at Morrison). Student voter turnout was between 10-15%, and of those voting, over 90 percent struck down endorsement of the mandatory meal plan in three different forms.

The Committee Against The Meal Plan (CAMP) was formed by Tom Terrell, Fetzer Mills and Sherrod

Banks to research the issue and lobby the Board of Trustees against implementation. On March 18, the committee presented a detailed report to Wallace. They claimed that past reports had not been supported by data, and offered data supporting the view against the meal plan. They also charged ill-faith actions by university administrators and failure of student government in representing student's interests. The administration responded to the charges and defended its decision to implement the meal plan as necessary for a good food service.

During April, about 200 students and campus leaders turned out in front of South Building to protest the mandatory meal plan. CAMP member Fetzer Mills appeared before the Board of Trustees' Student Affairs Committee meeting to testify against the meal plan. Wallace, as Student Body President and ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees, negotiated with the trustees and, while not endorsing the meal plan proposal, supported the BOT's financial reasons for approving it.

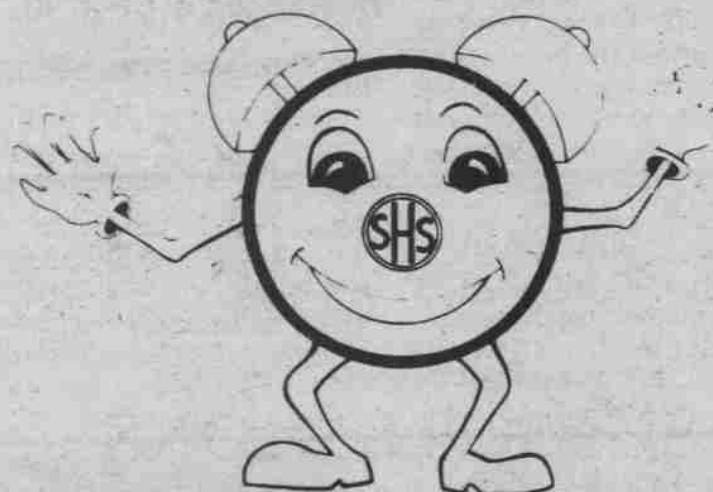
"Basically there was no decision made at the April 25 Student Affairs Committee meeting," Wallace said. "They listened to Fetzer and thanked him for his views. But there was no motion to change the meal plan."

"At the full Board of Trustees meeting, there was discussion about the last clause of Appendix X which said if the meal plan did not generate enough money it would be increased by \$25 each year," she said. "Chairman George Ragsdale expressed concern about an automatic increase, but said it should be brought before the board each year. They didn't decide if it would or wouldn't (be brought before the board)."

Wallace said the student referendum results generated little discussion, but that the BOT questioned the number of students fighting the meal plan. Chancellor Fordham, in a letter to *The Daily Tar Heel*, denounced CAMP's actions as representing a vocal minority of students.

"I don't know if greater student turnout would have changed their minds or not," Wallace said. "It was solely a financial issue. Students did

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**2. Appointment System:** All students will be asked to make an appointment to be seen this fall in order to ensure appropriate attention from your health care professionals. Students will be able to select a primary care provider of their choice. If your provider is not available at the time you need to be seen, another member of his/her team will be available to assist you.

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