

The Daily Tar Heel

93rd year of editorial freedom

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U.S. needs a black eye

What's as disturbing as the violence and oppression in South Africa — usually termed "unrest," which, in an Orwellian sense, equates the bloodshed with a case of insomnia — is the Reagan administration's policy toward it.

"Constructive engagement," through which the United States has tried to achieve reform in South Africa by working within P.W. Botha's white-minority government, was a necessary first step. But Botha stubbornly and openly refuses to advance further. To continue believing that he can be convinced to initiate reform is to repeat British Prime Minister Chamberlain's mistaken faith in Hitler's professed desires for peace on the threshold of World War II.

(Too severe a comparison? It exists when an uncompromising racist commands so much oppression within his sphere of power.)

A new perspective

The South Africans who deserve the sympathies and encouragement of constructive engagement are the down-trodden blacks. The Reagan administration needs to switch perspectives and bargain for a peaceful settlement from the black perspective rather than from Botha's, as it is doing now. Working with the blacks toward reform to build a government holds more promise of achieving equality than working toward reform that the whites see as destroying a government.

Perhaps it's too late and the blacks won't accept U.S. aid. And deciding whom to contact as being representative of black aims also poses a problem, although the exiled African National Congress seems to be the best organization through which to reach the fragmented majority. But at least Reagan must try.

Just by offering its support, the United States shows Botha its ability to see past the South African government's material advantages and to make the right choices: Between moral and economic inducements. Between peaceful change and violent revolution. Between helping to construct a democratic government that holds the promise of basic human

freedoms and supporting a regime that's anti-communistic only because the whites, collectively, seem to border on fascism.

Lesson from history

The United States has the opportunity to prevent another Soviet Russia or Cuba. By working with the forces battling repression and inequality from the start, the United States could guide change — influence it, at least — and avoid the rise of a dictatorship to replace the first. That the blacks will come out on top, as their intensifying spirit and struggle indicates, is only a matter of time.

Instead, Reagan continues blindly to support the guarantors of law and order, as if whites were the only ones who could keep it. Granted, the South African blacks are compromising their claim for sympathy through their violence, but their attempts within the system are routinely rebuffed. All the more reason to offer them U.S. help as a stabilizing force, before it's too late.

A call for campus action

UNC students can contribute to a push for reform by lobbying for divestment of University funds from South Africa. Some have argued that the economic losses ultimately hurt the blacks, but these blacks are putting more than their jobs on the line every day by jeopardizing their life for their cause. And how many of them have told Americans not to divest?

In addition, divestment plans have been devised at other universities that target businesses to have a maximum effect on the South African government while minimizing damage to blacks. It can be done here.

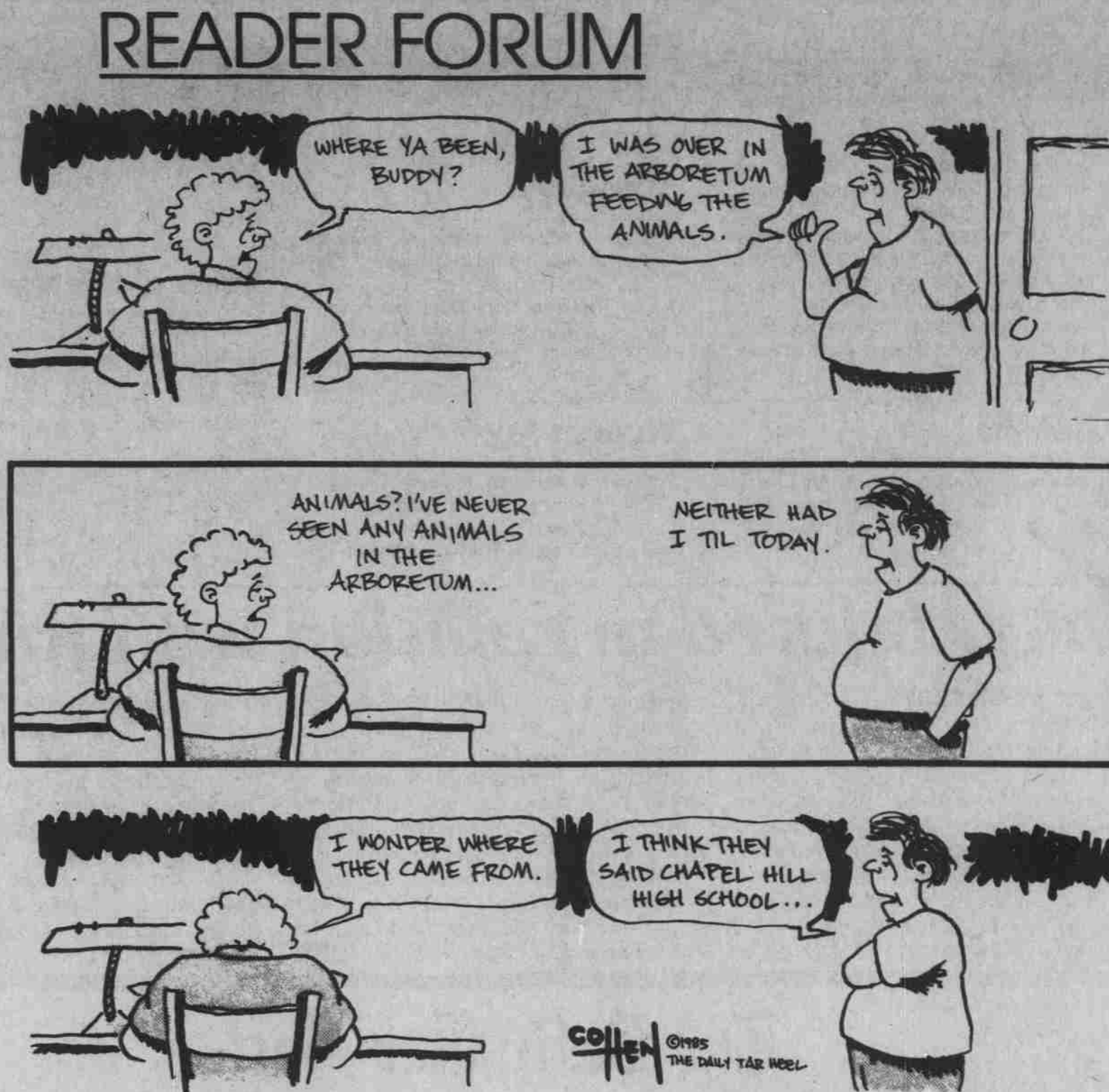
Acknowledging the limitations of a student editorial about such a complex issue but realizing its need for widespread attention, we urge students to discuss and follow the developments in South Africa on their own as often and closely as possible.

There are no simple solutions — just directions that people can't afford to ignore when injustice reigns.

Union films: nothing to brag about

To the editors:
As an alumnus of UNC and a Union privilege card holder of the past few years who has enjoyed immensely the films shown by the Union, I was disappointed to see the new film schedule, and appalled to read the comments of the new film committee chairperson in a *DTH* article ("Union committee sought film variety," Aug. 23), particularly her absurd remark that the movies this year are of a higher quality than in previous years. It is incredible that a person who brings to the Union such garbage as *The Ghost and Mister Chicken*, *Brimstone and Treacle*, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *The Nutty Professor*, and *Beverly Hills Cop*, and has apparently ignored the Union tradition of playing a large number of documentaries and foreign and art films, would make such a comment. I have no intention of purchasing a privilege card this year. The money, I am sorry to say, would be more wisely invested in Duke's fine Freewater program.

James Pryor
Chapel Hill



Liberals — a better style of patriotism

STEVEN B. EPSTEIN

It is quite disheartening to liberals, and Democrats for that matter, when conservatives and Republicans refer, in unadulterated demagoguery, that liberals and Democrats are "unpatriotic" because they criticize American relationships with right-wing dictatorial nation-states and bloated domestic defense budgets. I would like to offer a response — not a defense, because this sophisticated conservative claim is not worthy of one — regarding the liberal position on the issues of right-wing dictators and defense spending.

The claim that liberals and Democrats are unpatriotic because they criticize American support of right-wing dictators is tacitly a claim that they do not sufficiently criticize nations with communist or Marxist governments more diabolical than the right-wing dictators for whom they have a particular distaste. Two responses seem cogent here. First, it is completely untrue that liberals and Democrats do not criticize communist and Marxist governments. In the U.S. Congress there exists a joint congressional task force on Afghanistan in which the Soviet draconian policies tormenting the people of the sovereign nation of Afghanistan are brought conspicuously out in the open. On this bipartisan committee serve two of the most liberal Democratic senators, Sen. Claiborne Pell, co-chairman, and Sen. Earnest Hollings of South Carolina. Their outspoken solidarity (along with Ted Kennedy's and others) with the people of Afghanistan against the hegemony of the Soviet oppressor poignantly express the sentiment of the liberal community. Moreover, liberal Democratic Rep. Stephen Solarz of New York recently battled the White House and State Department to gain approval for aid to Cambodian refugees pushed out of that country by the incessant war waged by the Vietnamese communists on Cambodia.

The second point concerns the inherently flawed logic utilized by the conservatives and Republicans in their assertions that liberals and Democrats do not sufficiently criticize communist and Marxist regimes. I believe close inspection of the facts similar to the ones I've

chosen here will prove that these assertions cannot be the issue of focus for one very profound reason: the United States, for the most part, has no significant relationships with the governments of these nations (that is, no economic aid, military aid, alliances, treaties, etc.), yet it does with such despotic regimes as exist in the following countries.

•Guatemala — where political opponents often disappear mysteriously, only to be later found dead.

•South Africa — where promulgation of martial law has sparked a vociferous reaction from the international community.

•Chile and the Philippines — where Pinochet and Marcos have often resorted to martial law and mass executions to bolster their fragile rule in their collective three decades of rule.

•South Korea — where the current leaders' main political opponent, Kim Di Juang, has been imprisoned in his own home for months because of fear that he might command enough political clout to win that country's forthcoming presidential election.

'It is nothing more than a two-faced policy to maintain relationships . . . with right-wing dictators, while chastising equally repugnant left-wing regimes.'

It is countries and more specifically, governments, such as these that the United States should be making a noticeable effort to distance itself from, similar to the way we reacted when Cuba fell into communist hands in 1959, and when Nicaragua dedicated itself to Marxism in 1981. It is nothing more than a two-faced policy to maintain relationships (often cordial, as in the case of a recent visit by Vice President Bush to the Philippines) with right-wing dictators, while chastising equally repugnant left-wing regimes. If there is to be true patriotism in the United States, a country that insists on moral highground in the international environment, then certainly our policies must be consistent, and consistently attached to moral motivations.

The Reagan administration has so twisted logic on defense spending that many Americans believe their patriotic duty begins and ends by electing representatives and senators who will vote for \$300 billion defense budgets. It was the words of John Fitzgerald Kennedy during his inaugural address that so captured the meaning of patriotism as to inspire tens of thousands of young men and women to volunteer for the Peace Corps and fulfill their patriotic duties in foreign lands. His memorable words, "And so my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country," inscribed across from his gravesite at Arlington National Cemetery, seem in 1985 to be buried along with their creator. It is here that Reagan has committed a murder so severe that the force most likely to be the decisive factor on the battlefield, true patriotism, is evaporating at a furious pace. This policy is not only very dangerous, but it evokes ominous scenarios for the future.

Moreover, the policy of "spend, spend, spend" on defense is dangerous for two additional reasons. The first has been in the news constantly over the past two years. This "spend, spend, spend" mentality decreases governmental scrutiny on what we are buying and fosters massive cost overruns, defective parts, weapons, and machinery, and most noxiously, waste, fraud and abuse. The ramifications surrounding these problems are quite obvious. Second, and even more important, is the fact that "spend, spend, spend" operates in careless disregard of a national deficit projected to exceed \$210 billion at the conclusion of this fiscal year. Does it make sense to spend \$320 billion on defense (as the administration proposed in its original budget submitted on February 6) when we have a deficit as calamitous as ours? Is such a policy fair to our children and grandchildren? Will not an American economic collapse endanger our national security? Does all of this truly constitute patriotism? I should say not.

I believe I have accurately depicted the liberal and Democratic response to the charge that they are unpatriotic on the issues of right-wing dictators and defense spending. Yes, liberals and Democrats can be and are patriotic, yet in their own, intelligent way.

Steven B. Epstein is a junior political science major from Oceanside, N.Y.

To the dth degree

Details, details, details

We haven't received many letters from our readers thus far into the year. My guess is that the most heated topics of the year have yet to crop up. I have no doubt that soon we'll be virtually inundated with letters of all sorts. And I can't tell you how much I look forward to that prospect. Mm-mm, who's going to ask me whether or not I dance this fall? Anticipation is half the fun, they always say.

For the time being, though, I am pleased to have the opportunity to expound upon a somewhat lesser issue.

Namely, this is the issue of what we call "fine craftsmanship." It seems to be a favorite among the young ladies.

First of all, this is an area of the paper that few people question by way of letter-writing. More commonly, the rare student who suffers to know the answer to a nagging question spots me or Dave stalking through the Student Union, then musters the courage to collide with said co-editor, and promptly spills her textbooks upon the floor . . . At this point, the co-editor is made aware of the fact that the particular young lady has a question to ask, be her methods ever so frank. The question never fails to relate to an aspect of the "fine craftsmanship" we put into the paper.

After knocking heads together in the ritual of gathering up the young lady's textbooks, the two parties are obliged to look at one another and to smile (as if to say, mutually, "Gee, isn't it funny how these things'll happen?")

The young lady will then realize that opportunity has knocked. "Aren't you . . . (pause) . . . with the *DTH*?" she'll ask (and the gracious, knowing-eyed co-editor already will have begun to nod, wondering what it will be *this* time). Her next line will be somewhat of a further tip-off: "I thought so," she'll say, "so which one are you?" For my part, I

always admit to being Arne. The evidence seems to be indisputable.

"Oh, really?" she'll say (a question to which I will one day respond quite sarcastically, if asked often enough, but to which I will only nod at present). And then she will go in for the kill, her hunger for knowledge being too great to restrain.

"What was that thing in there the other day about towers?" she'll ask. And thus, the long process at last will be complete.

And yet, it could have happened in no other way.

You see, these are the questions that no one wants to ask in a letter. For no one wants to admit that they failed to understand something so trivial as a play upon words . . . (Incidentally, in Friday's paper, we wrote, beside the masthead, "Get an eyeful . . . You won't find any towers in our special pullout section." Get it? . . . Eyeful? . . . Towers? . . . Eiffel towers? . . . ho boy. . .)

Well, at any rate, it's that sparkling eye for wit that makes for "fine craftsmanship" at the *DTH*. It's not enough for our front-page weather brief to tell you what the weather will be like during the day — it needs to be done with a creative twist, or at least a little warp.

And it's nice to know that so many people appreciate our efforts so highly. After all, if they're willing to spill their textbooks for the sake of becoming better informed, then I think we've done our duty by making them so hungry for knowledge. And that's what this country is all about. And, and it just makes me so goldang awful proud to be an Amerccan that . . . well . . . shucks, it makes me want to go out and write even more unintelligible puns.

— ARNE RICKERT

By JIM ZOOK

Did y'all miss Week in Review last Friday — that *DTH* oldie but goodie? Well, we thought you might. So to make up for it, here's a few of those little newsbits to keep you up to date until our award-winning, comprehensive, just-can't-get-enough-of-it, news in review comes out again.

Equestrians around the world galloped into their living rooms Saturday night to watch national newscasts in hopes of catching a glimpse of their top jockey, President Reagan, who was expected to take a trot around his southern California ranch for the first time since his surgery last month for colorectal cancer. They weren't disappointed.

Taking advantage of a great deal of media hype over the anticipated ride and a slow newsday, President Reagan followed his weekly radio broadcast with a picture-taking session, I mean a leisurely jaunt atop the ironically-named Elusive Hobby. Adorned in full riding garb, the president's ride was accompanied by the droning hum of camera shutters rolling and television cameras capturing the day's best human interest story.

Presidential aides expressed optimism that signs of growing strength and returning vitality will suppress any public doubts of inability to perform under pressure as the November Summit talks with Mikhail Gorbachev draw closer.

Blotto over Lotto

Another story that has topped the news of the past couple of days is the saga of another group of instant

millionaires, the beneficiaries of yet another lottery. Three ticketholders — a computer consultant, a group of 21 factory workers and a barmaid — will split the whopping \$41 million grand prize in the New York State Lottery, a North American record. After dividing the purse three ways, each recipient will receive a paltry \$13.6 million.

Debora Turcotte, the barmaid from Troy, N.Y., deserves additional congratulations for her frank statements about winning the fortune. How many times have you seen winners of past lotteries who have sworn they'll keep their job as a garbage man or McDonald's fry cook? C'mon, be serious. Well,

nobody had to question Turcotte's sincerity as she told reporters this weekend that her days of serving up cold, frosty mugs of beer are long gone.

Letter from the Editor

You could say that Jim McCaffrey was a little irked when his camera was stolen from his car. After discovering that his equipment was pilfered, the editor of the Glenn's Ferry, Ida., *Pilot* addressed a letter in the next issue of the paper to the "street cur" who "took my trade tools," putting a "curse on your head" and hoping "you travel through this world alone and

unloved" and "your children die young (so) that you may never see the fruits of your love."

Now, that's the kind of stuff we like and hope to see in letters to the editors this year. Of course, first y'all will have to write us. Hint. Hint.

Nevertheless, if a similar event should occur to one of our editors or if someone writes back in a vain attempt to refute one of our editorials, we at the *DTH* promise a slightly higher level of civility and understanding than Jim's antics.

Well, maybe.
Jim Zook, a junior journalism and political science major from Little Rock, Ark., is an editorial writer for The Daily Tar Heel.

