

# The Daily Tar Heel

94th year of editorial freedom

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## Editorials

### Reject ARA renewal bid

The UNC student body is such a diverse entity that unified student opinion on any topic other than rooting for the Tar Heels is indeed rare. This is why the University administration should give great credence to the overwhelming student opposition to renewal of ARA as the campus food service — and then award the contract to another corporation.

When questioned about the quality of ARA, students and their representatives have repeatedly expressed disappointment and displeasure in the current food service. Just look at the evidence:

- In the 1986 campus elections, students voted more than 6-1 against a referendum supporting contract renewal for ARA.

- Student Congress, the representative organization of the UNC student body, approved by a 17-1 margin a resolution that "strongly encourage(d) the UNC administration not to renew ARA's contract."

- A report by a coalition of student leaders lambasted ARA and urged the University not to retain the company as the campus food service.

But don't let that sway your opinion. The crux of the complaints in the report concerned contract violations by ARA — especially relations between ARA and its employees, and ARA and its customers. One of the provisions of ARA's contract is that it provide the

University documentation of training policies and procedures — but Charles C. Antle Jr., associate vice chancellor of business, told Student Body President Bryan Hassel that ARA had not provided the information.

Antle said Monday he felt ARA should only "tell us that they have them (the training records)." Why have this (or any) contract stipulation if it isn't going to be followed? If the University doesn't check up on ARA, who will?

Another violation that is particularly disturbing concerns ARA's pledge to conduct "bi-annual preference poll(s) of all boarding students to assist in making menu selections." In response to the charge of violating this clause, Branch said: "There are no boarding students here. It's a total cash operation."

Branch's statement can be described two ways: It is either a crafty way of evading part of the contract or an admission that ARA has messed up. What kind of responsible business doesn't seek the advice of its customers? In Branch's defense, since his arrival in January ARA has shown a willingness to seek student input and has tried to respond to the allegations. However, it appears to be a last-ditch effort to appease unruly students.

Students are the reason campus food service exists. Students deserve a food service that respects student opinion. Students deserve better than ARA.

### Unpopular aid

As the House begins to consider whether to approve the president's \$100 million in proposed aid to the Contras, a recent New York Times-CBS News poll reveals widespread ignorance of the situation in Central American and massive opposition to Reagan's proposal. The lesson is clear: Before committing a significant portion of American resources to the conflict in Nicaragua, the president and his administration need to first demonstrate the American public's intelligent support of the aid plan — support that clearly does not now exist.

According to the poll, only one out of four Americans support sending aid to the Contras. A whopping 62 percent of those polled opposed the plan, which calls for \$70 million for military expenses and \$30 million in humanitarian aid. Opposition to the aid stretches across party and ideological lines. Of those who called themselves conservatives, only 35 percent supported the package. More than half of the Republicans polled said they were against aid.

When asked why they opposed the aid, respondents gave several reasons. Some feared the risk of the United States getting sucked into another unwinnable conflict the way it did in Vietnam. Because of a perception that the Contras are fighting an apparently stable government, many said the United States would

be throwing the money away in a futile gesture. Most of the respondents expressed a belief that the \$100 million could be better spent on necessary domestic programs threatened by federal budget cuts.

It is clear from the above that the president does not have the support of the public for his proposed package. Furthermore, despite Reagan's recent heavy-duty campaigning for the Contras, those polled demonstrated a very weak understanding of Central America.

Only 38 percent of the respondents knew that the United States was supporting the opposition Contras, not the Nicaraguan government. One-fifth of those polled called the government of Nicaragua, which is allied with the Soviet Union, a right-wing dictatorship.

Such a lack of awareness is obviously embarrassing; more than that, it indicates how little Americans really care about Central America. President Reagan has made his support for the "freedom fighters" a high-priority cause, but his sense of urgency has not been transmitted to the average American. In fact, a large majority of those who do understand the situation oppose the aid package. Reagan must recognize that most Americans do not stand with him on this issue; they do not even care enough to understand the facts.

### The Daily Tar Heel

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## Tar Heel Forum

### Veteran's diary of a man-made nightmare

Editor's note: The following is the second and final part of Behan's account of his experiences in the Vietnam War.

This column contains graphic language that, even in censored form, ordinarily wouldn't be published. Considering the extraordinary subject matter, however, a waiver was made in this case.

Richard Behan

Guest Writer

I was 19 then, on my second tour with an "A" Team in a place called Long View, Ka Shan. Four miles south of the Demilitarized Zone, one mile east of Laos. The VC and the North Vietnamese Army were real bad up there. They had the Ho Chi Minh Trail 900 yards west. There, the VC and the NVA were moving a lot of s— by foot, truck, bike.

We were getting hit 24 hours a day with rockets and mortars. Human wave attack — we got to clean them off the wire, 50 to 100 bodies at a time, and put the remains in a pit and burn them. Rats as big as cats.

We didn't know how long we could hold the place. Four guys were dead, two wounded, six left. It was f—ed. I knew I'd be killed, but I kept going. I was all f—ed up then on pot. Then, oh God, I was hit — took some scrap in the back. It was nothing serious, I was back on the line in 12 hours.

They kept coming. The VC and NVA, the first guys to get over the wire, stepped on the dead to get in. Then, more VC. It was usually a suicide squad. A lot more dead. Then, hard-core NVA. Heavy f—ing s—. They came with armor, tanks. Oh s—, let's get out of here, I thought. Twelve hours later they couldn't get us out. Four left active. The dinks were blasting choppers out of the sky like flies, B-52s were dropping thousand-pound bombs 250 yards away, jets with napalm rockets were 75 to 100 yards away. Oh God, I felt dead. VC were inside the camp now. It was hand-to-hand, 10 to 15 yards. I got one coming around a truck, broke his neck. I'm a karate expert. Almost out of ammo, I was really crazy. Kill, kill, kill or be killed. Three more went down by hand, one shot point-blank. More blood and brain all over me. Didn't have time to get sick now. The strike force out of Da Nang was on the way. Thank God. Now I had to find a place to hide. The NVA got the camp. Two left. We had to find a way to get to the landing zone and get out. We made it. A B-52 leveled the camp.

The U.S. forces lost 350 men. We went back 24 hours later — nothing left but the smell of death. We had to clean up. Burn the enemy; try to identify the good guys and to hell with the rest. We closed or lost that camp, along with four others that week. 1968. They were kicking

our asses.

May. Tet is over with, but Charlie is real super bad. We would go out on ambush, set up, get ready and then two or three would walk into our ambush. We'd zap them. Everyone would run over to identify the kill, and the "F—" gets us. It's called double ambush — give up two to get 10. It worked. The dumb 18-year-olds fell for it all the time.

Some called Vietnam a "police action." I called it "war." Do tax dollars pay for war or for police action?

Even our housekeepers and maids could not be trusted. They would put snakes in our beds, booby trap our living quarters, put grenades under our pillows, trip wires in our doors. They would count off steps to our ammo, petro and ammo dumps, then at night call in rocket and mortar. It was all f—ing crazy. A 10-year-old tried to shake my hand and drop a grenade in the back of our jeep. Thank God I got the grenade. I stuck it in his mouth and let him explode. Better him than me.

In my third tour, 1968-69, it was back to camp 105. It was really f—ed up. VC hitting daily. We were under 24-hour red alert. They came at night (the usual time was 3 or 4 a.m.), 40 to 50 at a time, sometimes from the north, sometimes from the south. There was no plan to their attack. A lot of Special Forces were getting killed. Thank God I was lucky.

We walked into their ambushes a lot. But we also got a lot of them. We would set them up, send in two or three guys, get hit, run like hell and lead them into our ambush. We got a lot that way, but I finally got my Big Hit. I was chosen to be the one to walk in and run. I got hit, smack, right in the left knee. I went down. Brad put me on his back, he started running. Oh f—, I got hit again, in the left elbow. Still running into our bush, we made it. I remember Brad putting me down, calling a medic and rolling over to join the fight. I knew I got two. Then I was put in a medic chopper and taken to the hospital in Da Nang. It was late February.

That was my third time in the hospital; I came back two days later. It was time to go home. After the Da Nang hospital, it was on to Japan, where a bone operation was done. While I was in Japan, the Red Cross called to say Mother

was dying of cancer. I was sent home 48 hours later. I was lucky I saw her alive. She died three weeks later.

From there I had two more operations at a Fort Dix, N.J., hospital. After recovering, I spent most of my time at home. A lot of my spare time was spent in a bar. People called me "raper," "baby killer," etc. If I had a good leg, I would have kicked ass. But I didn't. So I kept my mouth shut and my hands in my pockets. This went on for months, years. I learned how to drink and fight in bars in 1970, and I never lost. The 15 years of karate sure helped.

I was out of the Army in January 1970. I went to work, but I did not know what was happening to me. They call it Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (P.T.S.D.) today. It was shell shock in World War II, but it's still the same. I used a lot of pot to forget, to sleep, to be cool. Then it went to booze (it was easier to get), and I became dependent on alcohol. I would not talk about the war to anyone. Even my own family turned on me. I found I had no friends, an alcohol and drug problem, no girls and a bad family standing. What — another war, or still the same one?

The point is, if you want war, don't call me. I'm too old, too tired and I've had enough. Ten years later — when you have nightmares, flashbacks, alcohol or drug problems, bad relationships, divorces and children with birth defects due to Agent Orange — don't tell me. Your Uncle Sam knows about this, he just won't admit it. With the Vietnam War and Agent Orange, U.S. veterans were bought off.

If you want blood, guts, brains all over you, go ahead. Enlist. Kill. Kill. Kill. But don't come home and cry on my shoulder. I need you to help me; I can't help you. But I will feel the guilt of paying taxes for you to commit the crimes, the same ones your parents and grandparents paid me to do. Then, they called me the bad one. That makes them just as guilty. Don't pay me to commit your crimes.

If you really want it — the war, the crime, the dreams — go for it. But when you see the results, smell the results, dream the results — burn in your own private hell, don't call me. I have my own war problems to fight. I wish you good luck, good killing. War is not pretty or nice when you wear brains all over you and you get sick. It's time to quit.

Richard Behan has canceled his planned speech, which was announced in yesterday's Daily Tar Heel, because of "political unrest" and personal conflicts.

### Put up or shut up

To the editor:  
 Pardon me while I break out the tissues! Jim Wooten's letter ("Sticks and stones," April 14) sure has me all choked up. He certainly wrote a very heart-rending and illuminating epistle on the fragility of Republicans' feelings. I had no idea they were all so sensitive and understanding of nature when it came to defending against the practice of name-calling.

Though, ignorant me, I suppose I should have looked first to their leaders to see just how sensitive these good Christian Republicans are about name-calling. Let's see, there's Ronald "You're a looney tune/ mad dog/ evil empire" Reagan and there's Jesse "You're a Mondale liberal" Helms (remember, of course, who threw the first mudball). And now, there's even the young Helms clone, David "I'm more conservative than you are because you voted for Tip O'Neill's big-spending bill" Funderburk.

All levity aside, I'm sick and tired of hearing how noble and fair-minded conservatives and their ilk are. So far I haven't seen them do one thing constructive — protesting against Soviet oppression in Eastern Europe is ludicrous because we can't do anything realistic, short of declaring war — to show their disgust of apartheid, a system which can be changed.

Republicans say that the United States is the defender of democracy and the Bible. To give any credence to this claim, then, they ought to be willing to act in every case. The liberals are at least offering a way to settle apartheid. They have rejected the military option as repulsive, and our present administration has rejected the option of exerting diplomatic pressure, so the only option left to liberals is to try and effect economic pressure by asking U.S. companies and institutions to withdraw their holdings.

If the College Republicans are truly against apartheid, as they claim they are, then I'm challenging them to prove it. Put up or shut up. I suspect that their little slogan emblazoned on their wall — "Isn't this all very silly?" — speaks more for their noble intentions, more so than any number of testimonials written by First Vice-President Wooten.

JOHN MARON  
 Senior History

To the editor:

When we look today at the lukewarm anti-apartheid demonstrators, we are tempted to look back with nostalgia at the Vietnam protestors. The had so much spunk. Today they build themselves a shack, but back then they took over entire buildings. And the



Vietnam protestors accomplished their goal — American boys came home. But what were some of the results of the American involvement?

One result was that the power vacuum created by the U.S. withdrawal was filled by the Soviets in South Vietnam and by the Khmer Rouge communists in Cambodia. War gave way to genocide as more than one million Cambodians were slaughtered. That is not to say that America shares the blame, but only that inaction or deactivation can have as many results as action. And that it is much easier to control and predict results when we get involved than it is when we withdraw.

Another result of American withdrawal was to encourage the Soviets to activate their plans for Afghanistan. The diplomat knows the oldest rule of foreign policy: Lack of resolve invites aggression. The U.S. withdrew in 1975, the USSR responded in 1979. Today divestment demonstrators are few, but someday they, too, may accomplish their goals. And, when the last U.S. dollar leaves South Africa, we will see the results. Let us hope that the more than one hundred tribes of South Africa undergo a nationwide revelation of the virtues of Jeffersonian democracy. But who really knows what will happen? Economic difficulty could raise the intensity of conflict and things could get messy.

Why haven't we considered channeling money directly to the oppressed in South Africa? Because even if we sent money to blacks, the oppressive white regime would still be on their backs. Yet we give and give to Ethiopia's hungry while the Soviets and Cubans sit on their backs.

At any rate, by the time the results of divestment begin to

### Letters to the Editor

appear, the demonstrators of 1986 will be in comfortable offices on Wall Street and Madison Avenue, far removed from the results of their active youth. And like Jerry Rubin and Jane Fonda, they can rejoice civilization and just forget about politics.

ALAN CULTON  
 Junior  
 Political Science

were to passively accept the opinions of others.

GARY FERRIER  
 Graduate  
 Economics

THOMAS HUSTED  
 Graduate  
 Economics

### Letter to Reagan

The following is an open letter to President Ronald Reagan.

To the editor:  
 I am citizen James Kenneth Leites and I believe we all have an equal responsibility to keep our planet the way God wants us to. I am not now going to claim that I have spoken to God, or he to me, but we can all see that you are playing with most powerful fire, which rightfully is not yours to command.

Do you understand what it is you are doing when you convert matter into energy? Do you own matter? You may think you do, but I know that you have your free will only and the rest belongs to God. Stop destroying that which isn't yours, lest God deprive you of all the rest.

I am a citizen of America by birth, and am most unhappy with the affairs of my state. Play not with matter as though it were no big matter and we will never see the beauty of the world burned. Please accept my good words and relieve this burden from the minds and spirits of all your frightened citizens.

JAMES LEITES  
 Sophomore  
 Education

### Polls validate

To the editor:  
 We feel compelled to respond to the letter by Jim Wooten ("Sticks and stones," April 14) upbraiding the UNC Anti-Apartheid Support Group for their ill manners. Wooten and his fellow UNC College Republicans draw our sympathies for having their feelings hurt; however, Wooten also earns our sympathies for not understanding the principles upon which our nation was founded.

Though we agree with Wooten that "our country was founded on the belief that all opinions should be heard," we must part ways with him when he suggests that "in a democratic society, one usually doesn't question the validity of an opinion."

Indeed, every election year we have the right to go to the polls to question the validity of one person's opinion while validating those of his or her opponent. This, we believe, is as important a part of our democratic heritage as the right to express our opinions.

Rather than finding it "frighting when a group starts to question the validity of another group's opinion," we would find it much more frightening if people