

Opinion

Student 'taxes' fund free shuttle service

Once again, our student "leaders" have come up with a ridiculous way to waste our money. This time it's a "free" late-night shuttle service from North Campus to South Campus.

When this no-fare shuttle was proposed last October, I felt confident that the blatant unfairness and poor economic basis for the proposal would doom the idea before student funds could be flushed down the toilet. I guess I was wrong. But then again, our benevolent Student Government has always turned a deaf ear to such petty details as fairness and economics.

First, witness the fraud of touting the shuttle as "free." As Scott McClellan of Chapel Hill Transit correctly pointed out in Tuesday's Daily Tar Heel, there is no such thing as a free lunch in the real world. Someone always has to foot the bill when politicians — of the student variety or otherwise — decide to create a "free" service. In the case of the shuttle, DTH editor Jean Lutes points out in her editorial ("Students deserve a free ride," Sept. 19) that the Residence Hall Association and Student Government are paying a large chunk of the expenses. Of course, what that really means is that students are paying for it, since RHA and Student Government are both funded by taxing every student at UNC.

A transportation fee would be no better. It would take money from everyone and line the pockets of students on South Campus.

This is where the issue of fairness comes in. Many students who live off-campus and already pay for their own bus service would be forced to subsidize the convenience of other students who live on campus. Not only that, frugal South Campus residents who pinch pennies, as I did my freshman year, and walk or ride their bikes back and forth to the library will be forced to pay for a bus system, although clearly they have indicated they do not care to fund the present bus service. Taxing all students for the benefit of a few seems to me to be the height of unfairness.

Of course, this simple yet unjust maxim is the basis for student fees in general. Students who take a full load and work on the side have to pay for parties and activities that they do not have time to attend. Students who are taking it easy are rewarded

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by having "free" activities to participate in, courtesy of everyone else.

And graduate students, who certainly don't have the time or desire to go to undergraduate parties and the like, are forced to pay for them anyway.

Wait! I have an idea. Let everyone pay for their own parties or shuttle systems! After all, most students already pay part of their own transportation costs by buying parking permits, bus passes or mopeds. Why should South Campus residents get a special break? If we follow the logic of our student "leaders," then why not tax everyone to pay for student parking permits? Or to buy all off-campus students a moped?

If South Campus students truly want and need a late-night shuttle, then they will pay for the costs of it themselves. That's a little thing called supply and demand. I suspect most student "leaders" are too busy planning parties with other people's money to study their own Econ 10 books.

This debate over "free" transportation services is not confined to the UNC campus, of course. Governments across the nation have tried the subsidy/tax approach for years. Now, many are moving more towards a "user fee" system, in which transit systems will be paid for by its users. You know, that's the way all other goods and services in a free market are paid for. If it's a good idea for the users, they will gladly pay for it. And if the service does not return enough utility to its users to compensate for the costs incurred, then it will fail.

Do students leaders think they know better what's good for us than we ourselves do? Perhaps they should heed my advice. Let the shuttle stand on its own economic worth to its consumers. Stop taxing everyone to support something that has no proven market.

And for that matter, give us back our student fees in refund checks and we will decide as individuals what to do with our own money.

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Bush grounded; Dukakis pulls a B

Report cards. Some they help, some they hurt. Recently, Gov. Michael Dukakis fared much better than Vice President George Bush on Environmental Report Cards prepared by the non-partisan League of Conservation Voters. Dukakis received a decent score, coming away with a "B." Bush, on the other hand, may get grounded — he got a "D-plus."

What does it all mean? Well, the report card is based on the candidates' recent environmental records as executives in government. It is then up to the voter, the acute reader, to play the admissions game: who should be admitted as president? Below are some central environmental issues and the truncated records of each of the candidates. Sources used include: both of the candidates' campaigns, the Sierra Club, Environmental Action, the League of Conservation Voters and The Charlotte Observer.

Hazardous wastes

Bush: Wanted to deregulate toxic wastes. Bush now wants to make polluters pay their own cleanup costs and supports a "streamlined superfund" program for quicker cleanups.

Dukakis: Supported the first state "superfund" law in 1983 for toxic waste site cleanup. Dukakis seeks strict enforcement of a ban on ground disposal of toxic wastes, possibly linking eligibility for federal grants and contracts to a company's handling of wastes.

Ozone layer

Bush: Pressed for a Reagan administration policy that resulted in an international agreement to limit production of chlorofluorocarbons (CFC's) to one-half of current levels. CFC's are widely accepted as being primarily responsible for ozone depletion.

Dukakis: Outlawed state use of CFC foam packing material. He also wants to eliminate CFC's completely.

Clean air

Bush: The president's Task Force on Regulatory Reform, of which the vice president was chairman, tried to impede the reduction of lead levels in gasoline. The task force also assisted in delaying and decreasing auto emission testing requirements and endorsed a delay in compliance with gasoline quality standards. With regards to acid rain, Bush has vowed to cut "millions of tons"

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in acid rain-causing factory emissions.

Dukakis: Supported statewide regulation of automobiles to limit pollution from car emissions. Boston, however, has failed to meet federal clean air standards, and the Dukakis administration has been accused of not enforcing regulations on factory emissions. As president, Dukakis would fight for a 12 million ton reduction of these emissions.

Offshore drilling and wetlands

Bush: Supports offshore drilling except in environmentally sensitive areas. He also supported the administration's attempts to open up half of all federally protected wetlands. Bush now advocates protecting all lands which are currently protected.

Dukakis: Took the Reagan administration to court trying to

block drilling off the Massachusetts coast. Dukakis began a program to protect state wetlands but then allowed the construction of a shopping mall on a swamp wetland.

Public lands

Bush: Has moved to protect public lands by introducing a measure to create the Big Thicket National Park in Texas, by voting against logging in national forests, pushing for a trust fund to enhance sports fisheries and by favoring the creation of a trust fund for park acquisition. Bush favors drilling for gas and oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Dukakis: Sponsored a \$500 million land acquisition program in Massachusetts and supports a federal trust fund for buying park land. He opposes drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Energy

Bush: Holds a pro-nuclear energy stance, but stresses the importance of solving waste and safety problems. Bush assisted in repealing federal requirements for energy efficiency in new buildings

and helped roll back efficiency standards for automobiles.

Dukakis: Halted the opening of a nuclear power plant in bordering New Hampshire and opposes the opening of new plants until operations are proven safe and wastes can be effectively managed. He has promoted solar electricity and began using tax incentives to encourage home insulation.

Along with these specific issues, environmentalists also should note that Bush favors letting industry handle as many of its own problems as possible while Dukakis sees government as a teammate of business but also as a watchdog.

Though neither candidate has a perfect environmental record, Dukakis' is closer, and in politics — which is much like George Bush's second-favorite game, horseshoes — close counts.

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Two views of radicals and campus activism

Saving the world or making a glorified beer run

It seems that there's a great deal of surplus spleen on this campus; recently, a glut of it has been vented over both CIA recruiting and those who protest it. Perhaps another opinion on this subject is just another log on the fire, but regardless, I feel a great urge to try to put this into a new perspective.

My perspective. The reason I think the rest of the campus should give a damn about my opinion is simple: once upon a time, about seven years ago, I too was a campus radical.

Back in 1982, I went with a friend to hear a speech by a former admiral who supported a nuclear freeze on the grounds that the nuclear arms race was completely insane. The admiral was very respectable, very intelligent and very worried. After listening to him, I was convinced, too.

My friend and I decided that we had to do something. We discussed different options and settled on one the admiral had suggested: a letter-writing campaign. In the next few weeks, we organized our dorm to write letters to political leaders and raised money to pay for postage.

But about this same time another group of students started a campus-wide group to address the same problem. When we attended their meeting, we assumed they would share our goals.

We were wrong. I think that first Students for Nuclear Arms Awareness meeting at Appalachian State officially ended my youth. I knew all of the people in the room and liked them. In fact, I was excited to see so many people show up to support the cause. There was a distinct feeling of optimism, the feeling that maybe we could do something to help change the world.

Of course, what happened was pure politics. Within 10 minutes, our original agenda was lost forever in a surge of egotism and mistrust, as the various campus radicals fought for dominance. My attempt to introduce the rules of order into the melee was shot down immediately. "You know, that's exactly what we don't want," said one of the combatants. "We should be open to hear everyone's opinion."

A word of warning: any time anyone tells you that chaos will advance your individual rights, look

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out. You are about to be blindsided.

By the end of the meeting, a power group had emerged. The people who wound up in charge were the egotists, the extroverts, the screaming blue weirdos. It was not enough to write letters, they said. We had to strike a blow against the establishment.

We set up contact tables, we handed out fliers, we hit up faculty members for money. In two weeks we gathered more than 3,000 letters.

But we didn't just drop all those letters in a mailbox. We marched to the post office to mail them. Three hundred students in politically correct clothes met, and after an appropriate period of self-congratulatory speeches and photo opportunities, off we marched to the Boone Post Office. En route we chanted such original and stirring slogans as "Two, four, six, eight, we don't want to radiate," and "Hell no, we won't glow." The old-timers eating breakfast at the Boone Drug lunch counter went slack-jawed as we marched by.

As I walked down King Street amidst the throng, I remember thinking it was strange that everyone was acting like they had just won the lotto. Nothing is more depressing than the prospect of global destruction, yet the marchers seemed positively giddy. It started to bother me; we hadn't resolved the arms race. Hell, we hadn't even mailed the damn letters yet.

After mailing letters and striking a blow against the Great Satan, radicals don't go to Disneyworld. They go to a bar.

I got there late. When I walked into the basement bar, a friend of mine motioned me to the head table, the hip table where the head-honcho radicals sat.

"Hey," he said, "we ought to give Conover a beer. He was one of the original leaders."

The head-bull radical had to think about it. "Okay," he agreed. "Go ahead. It's free."

I asked a girl sitting next to me, "Who bought the beer?" "Oh, nobody," she said. "We had about \$100 left over from our stamp

fund, so we decided to use it to pay for the beer tonight. Everybody's broke." Of course, not everyone who marched got to drink free beer. You had to meet the approval of the head table; sufficiently uncool people paid for their own.

What did the conversation at the bar have to do with nuclear arms proliferation? Nothing. Apparently we had already solved that problem.

My trendy-political-hipster friends had moved past nuclear weapons. The success of the march encouraged them to take on other controversial issues. The potential for protest was unlimited; there would be more photo opportunities, more group marches, more shocked looks, more free beer funded by contributions.

In any group of people, you will find those who feel strongly and those who merely seek strength. The desire of the latter tends to undermine the convictions of the former. In college, where the stakes are little more than image building, the co-opting of sincere belief by those who seek the limelight is particularly ugly.

The actions of the CIA protesters last year disgusted many of the people on this campus; unfortunately, those who speak out against the CIA are now equated with radical groups. This need not be the case.

When we overreact to an evil, we do that evil a favor. The original questions about the CIA's role in Central American drug-running and terrorism have been lost in a flurry of rhetoric about the students who protest it. Student radicals actually aided the CIA by diverting attention away from the original problem.

We need more activists and fewer radicals. Activists run campaigns to publicize concerns, while radicals run campaigns to publicize themselves.

Many problems scream out for solutions today, but they'll only be solved when we start looking for commonality across ideological lines. "Us and Them" protests do nothing but grab headlines.

And today's angry young man just makes me sad.

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I like Dale McKinley, and I'm no beatnik

I like Dale McKinley. I just wanted to get that straight. I don't care how many of you out there just said, "Oh, he must be one of those radicals who just wants to march and chant until this campus is full of beatniks again" and then proceeded to drop your DTH on the filmy tiled floor of some huge lecture hall. Sorry if you have to listen to your professor now. That's not the point.

But what is the point is Mr. McKinley. And that's what this is about.

For the three years I've been on this campus, that name has popped up consistently in the newspapers of the Triangle area. Some say he's wrong, some say he's right and others just want him to change his clothes and hair. I say he's right — to a point.

McKinley's past actions have included Pit rallies, vigils, meetings, letters to the editor, shanty living and protests. Of course, he's not the only one doing these things, but he is generally considered the leader.

And that's fine. The rallies in the Pit are very stimulating to watch, and the shanties out on the lawn in front of South Building were very dramatic. How can you not stop and consider the plight of South Africans when you have these makeshift shacks contrasted with the beautiful old buildings at the heart of the UNC campus? It makes you wonder.

And why is this campus so torn over a man who is not a hair over 5-feet-8 and who, when you see him in public, is a very docile person?

He is a radical, that's for sure. But one thing many overlook when they rear back and rip McKinley, either in public or private, is that he's been there in the middle of "the action," where the gravest example of human injustice in the world — that this nation can control — exists.

McKinley is a graduate student from Gweru, Zimbabwe, an African nation that butts heads with South Africa as the latter curls around to the Indian Ocean. Except for maybe, at the most, a handful of other people on this campus, he is the only one who knows first-hand what is happening in that nation.

Two years ago, when the above-mentioned shanties sprung up and Action Against Apartheid (AAA), the support group McKinley formed,

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began screaming for divestment, their non-violent protests worked. The Board of Endowment approved plans to remove the University's investments in South Africa, and the group had won.

Even though AAA later claimed the University hadn't really completely divested, all was "well" on the South African issue. Of course, if you asked Nelson Mandela, you might get a different view.

The point of their actions over the past few years has been to go after an entity that is holding humans in bondage, to somehow make an impact on the Botha regime. And they, and McKinley, have done that overwhelmingly.

For McKinley, this struggle is personal. It's a horror that he has seen, one that has been right under his nose. If it has scarred him into the exhaustive efforts that he has undertaken, can you imagine the injustices that must be there?

Oh, we know they are there, because they have been well documented on various news programs in this country. What a shame that this wound exists in a world as advanced as ours. But I think McKinley must realize he made a mistake last Feb. 23, for on that date, another McKinley support group, the CIA Action Committee, confronted a CIA recruiter at the University Inn. The recruiter was there because the committee had raised such a ruckus that the CIA said it wouldn't recruit on campus.

Instead, interviews were set up at the Inn, and committee members showed up and spilled a red liquid on the floor in front of the recruiter's room.

But the best part was when, after the recruiter fled the hotel, members of the committee followed him down Interstate 40 in a car and motorcycle to make sure he had left town for good.

Last week, when McKinley found out the CIA was coming back to campus, he stepped into it again. "Just the fact that after our actions

last semester Career Planning and Placement still invited them here shows we need to do some more work," he said. Later in the story, he said, "We know we're in for a long fight."

But the CIA still has a right to recruit here, because the students want them here. They prove that by signing up for the interviews.

More than that, McKinley is violating student's — yours and my — basic rights. We have the right to do as we want, to see who we want, to eat what we want, to wear what we want, to interview with whom we want. And this right is the one that blows any of McKinley's arguments out of the proverbial water.

If the CIA is a terrorist-like organization, as has been stated in the past, then McKinley needs to stop and think — really think — about what he is doing. He is at a crossroads right now, and if he isn't careful, all the credibility he has built up over the past few years will disintegrate. More importantly for him, he may lose much of his support over this issue.

It works this way: if the CIA is a terrorist-like organization, due to terrorist-like actions, then what the hell does McKinley think his actions are? A terrorist uses terror, violence and intimidation to achieve an end, and he produces fear.

McKinley is dangerously close to this point.

He has intimidated, and he has produced fear. Is violence next? He is treading close to losing a suddenly convincing argument that, by not being able to arouse sentiment as he has done in the past, McKinley is trying to — and here's that word again — intimidate others so that he can stir up a cause. If you think that's false, then just read the above quotes from last week.

To retain any credibility, Dale McKinley must drop this CIA intimidation. It's not my cause, and I'm not a member of any of his support groups. But it would be a shame for him to blow away all that he has worked for by foolishly pursuing a fight in which he is on the wrong end.

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