

The Daily Tar Heel

96th year of editorial freedom

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Quietly changing the world

The five days of celebrating human rights at UNC ended on an appropriate note early Friday morning in the Pit, when a small group of students gathered up their blankets and candles and a basket of more than 700 letters written on behalf of prisoners of conscience around the world. No photographers or reporters hovered around the group, but after sitting in the Pit all night, the students probably wouldn't have wanted their pictures taken, anyway.

They marched to the post office and mailed the letters to countries such as Syria and Chile. They hadn't collected enough money to mail them all (they came out about \$75 short), but that didn't matter. Their 24-hour vigil was over, and their request for letters had been more successful than they expected.

The students were members of the Chapel Hill chapter of Amnesty International, an independent worldwide movement dedicated to working for the release of political prisoners. The letters available for passers-by to sign and address asked for information about the cases of prisoners of conscience — people who have been arrested, detained, tortured and possibly even executed because their political views did not correspond with those of their government.

Amnesty International's office in

Look past Gardner to issues

The people have spoken, but state Senate Democrats don't seem to have been listening.

On Friday, Democratic senators met behind closed doors — as has become their custom when discussing sensitive political issues — to map out strategy with regard to Republican Lt. Gov.-elect Jim Gardner. The senators announced the appointment of a four-member team to explore the possibility of stripping Gardner of his powers after he takes office.

The lieutenant governor, according to Senate rules, may appoint committees and committee chairmen and assign bills. But now that a Republican has been elected to the office for the first time since 1896, Democrats suddenly seem to think it's time for the rules to be changed. "I've always favored that the Senate organize itself and appoint its own committees and assign bills," said Sen. Henson Barnes, D-Wayne. Are citizens supposed to believe that the timing is just a coincidence?

Granted, Gardner's margin of victory was slim and he certainly carries no mandate with him to Raleigh. Many have expressed distaste for his campaign tactics, and his support of Campus Watch, a group that advocates legislative interference in University affairs, is particularly worrisome for students. Nevertheless, the Senate Democrats' proposed action would set a dangerous precedent for N.C. politics.

This blatantly partisan behavior on

London assigned the Chapel Hill chapter one specific prisoner to work to release. His name is Nabil Ibrahim, a member of the Party for Communist Action. He was arrested in 1984 in Damascus, and he has never been charged, tried or sentenced. Although the group is concerned about many other human rights violations, members are focusing their efforts on this one case. The address to write to ask for attention to Nabil Ibrahim's imprisonment is: His Excellency Hafez al Assad, Office of the President, Muhajirin, Presidential Palace, Abu Rumaneh, Al-Rashid Street, Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic.

The act was a fitting conclusion to Human Rights Week because it reflected the goal of action through education. Who could read about the imprisonment and torture of innocent men, women and children and not want to bother trying to make a difference?

Writing a letter is a simple act of activism. It's easier than painting signs, marching to South Building, staging a demonstration or distributing pamphlets. It also attracts much less immediate attention. But protest doesn't have to be flashy to be effective — just ask the Amnesty International members who walked to the post office on Friday morning. — Jean Lutes

behalf of the Democratic senators demonstrates a complete disregard for the democratic process and is a direct insult to the voters of North Carolina. Gardner, regardless of one's personal opinion, was elected by the people to the office of lieutenant governor and is thus entitled to the powers and responsibilities that the position entails. Since when does a select group of party elite have the authority to redefine a position after voters have chosen someone to fill that position?

Negotiation will take place on Wednesday between Gardner and the four-man Democratic team. Gardner realizes that progress will be difficult in the heavily Democratic Senate, particularly if he has no power. On the other hand, senators fear a political backlash from voters in the 1990 elections if a move to significantly reduce the lieutenant governor's authority is made.

To his credit, Gardner has adopted a conciliatory attitude toward the hard stand of the Democrats. He has proposed a plan that would give Republicans the chairmanships of one-third of the 38 standing committees — there presently are no Republican chairmen — and would share the power of assigning bills with the Democratic president pro tem.

Whatever the outcome of the meeting on Wednesday, it is evident that Gardner will be stripped of at least some power — and so will the voice of the people. — Louis Bissette

the last word

Tuesday. We also try to cover mostly what's interesting to college students — international issues that we can analyze, political issues that will affect students' futures and news of what's happening at other colleges. On political issues especially, we try to cover both sides equally and fairly. State and national reporters are not tied overwhelmingly to one ideology, and we work hard to fight our biases.

The most fun for college political reporters, of course, comes when they can go to the actual events, rather than cover them over the phone. Our adrenaline starts flowing when candidates come to UNC to speak at forums, or when election night rolls around and the candidates are ripe for interviewing at their party headquarters.

Most of the time, however, S&N reporters live in the phone room. While we wait impatiently for sources to return our calls, we read and add to the legendary graffiti that fills the room's walls, and contemplate having our mail forwarded there. It's a bore sometimes, but when the calls finally come through, we hope we've given readers a fresh angle from solid sources — our own sources. — Sharon Keschull

Kennedy challenged America to do better

It is likely that our generation can only recall John F. Kennedy in the black and white film footage depicting his murder, and see in slow motion Kennedy lurch forward, then jerk back, in silence. Tomorrow, Nov. 22, will mark the 25th year following his assassination.

Without belittling the courage with which men have died, we should not forget those acts of courage with which men have lived.

The martyrdom Kennedy met on the streets of Dallas 25 years ago immortalized him. In the American mind, with its tendency to romanticize the tragic in human events, his memory has evolved to create a powerful image in politics. Kennedy has become the standard to which the American people compare their public officials, and to whom public officials in pursuit of acceptance compare themselves today. Yet it seems that Kennedy would have us instead look not at his death, but at his dreams.

In 1960, when America was still strong, confident and dominant, a leader who represented those same qualities was elected president. Yet Kennedy brought more to the nation — he brought purpose.

Today, the challenge of political courage looms larger than ever before. For our everyday life is becoming so saturated with the tremendous power of mass communications that any unpopular or unorthodox course causes a storm of protest.

The mists of time have obscured much of Kennedy the president and Kennedy the man. Kennedy came from a decidedly non-mainstream American background. He came from a rich family and went to an Ivy League school; it is even sometimes said he would not have won in 1960 without carrying Mayor Richard Daley's graveyard vote in Chicago.

But he didn't claim to come from

Stuart Hathaway

I Spy

mainstream America, and what he represented was not the mainstream voter in 1960 — he represented that which America knew it should be. In a time when governors barred the doorway to civil rights, Kennedy went on national television the day after two blacks registered to attend the University of Alabama to say that "every American ought to have the right to be treated as he would wish to be treated." He was a president who admitted mistakes, such as the Bay of Pigs, instead of trying to cover them up. Kennedy was not a slave to public opinion, but rather a voice of the American conscience.

Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans. . .

Kennedy endures because he had the ability to inspire the American people. He did not make promises to America, he challenged her. The Kennedy vision, indicative of his presidency, was ambitious; he saw greater good in the long term, not the short. He fused his rhetoric with almost timeless goals: a New Frontier, the eradication of poverty, the equality of all citizens. It is precisely because of the challenge of his words and the nobility of his vision that we remember him so well today, and why we appear to be so forgiving of his shortcomings.

Kennedy saw the growing power in the world and tried to harness it for those who could not do so for themselves. This philosophy led him to successes and failures. It allowed the Bay of Pigs, planned under the Eisenhower administration, to occur. It also allowed him to create the Peace Corps, a program of American volunteers using their knowledge and

ability to help less fortunate nations help themselves. He recognized what is still true today, that "the basic problems of the world today are not susceptible to a military solution."

Kennedy called upon us to do better, to try harder and to care more. He asked not "Are you better off than you were four years ago?" Kennedy challenged us to ask "not what our country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

In your hands, my fellow citizens, more than in mine, will rest the final success or failure of our course.

Kennedy did more than inspire and challenge those who heard his words — his words empowered. Kennedy spoke to each American, regardless of race, creed, gender or economic status and told them they mattered. Kennedy told us that we could make a difference — and that each of us, if we were able, had the obligation to respond. He had the ability to say that which few politicians today will say or act upon: "To whom much is given, much is expected."

Kennedy's assassination 25 years ago was a blow to America's confidence; it showed us all just how fragile and temporal we are. We are still looking to find another King Arthur and re-establish Camelot. But while John Kennedy was a great man, he was no king. America was a great nation, but she was no Camelot. We must let go of the past, yet remember it for what it was.

What we will remember of Kennedy, particularly our generation, is often only what happened a quarter of a century ago tomorrow. Kennedy would have it otherwise. We should heed Kennedy's words and keep his vision, and chart our course for the future of our nation and our world.

Stuart Hathaway is a junior history and political science major from Charlotte.

Readers' Forum

Republicans not all vandals

To the editor:

I must have misread Dave Downing's letter to the editor ("Wall graffiti to be expected," Nov. 14). In the first sentence, he condemns some pro-Bush people for painting graffiti on the campus. Yet, the rest of the letter accuses and insults an entire political party and all the individual members of that party!

I, too, was embarrassed by this vandalism, but I also resent the very insulting and arrogant accusation that vandalism "makes sense to a Republican mind" and that as such ties in with the "proven Republican tactics of libel and slander." As much as Dukakis supporters have the right to feel disappointed, they do not have the right to insult people who, after careful study of the facts and honest deliberation, made a decision to support the other candidate. The fact that you don't like a party or a candidate doesn't make it an evil party or candidate.

Mr. Downing says he is proud to be a Democrat, and he should be. It has many outstanding, patriotic candidates and supporters. But I am just as proud to be a Republican. The Republican party also has many outstanding, patriotic candidates and supporters. This campaign wasn't a war between good and evil. Both sides generally agreed on the problems; they simply differed on the solutions. Both parties felt their candidates to be better for America. Those of us who sincerely felt Mr. Bush to be the better candidate



for this nation and the world should not be insulted and accused of being evil or unjust or uncaring or supportive of vandalism.

To insult honest people who had nothing to do with the graffiti smacks of intolerance.

EVERETT LANGFORD
 Graduate
 School of Public Health

Ads rising from the ashes

Editor's note: Chris Kridler is the editor of The Phoenix; Timothy Elliott is the associate editor.

To the editor: We'd like to clarify a comment attributed to one of our assistant editors in the Nov. 14 article about campus publications ("Student press covers variety of issues"). The Phoenix's budget does indeed

depend heavily on advertising revenue and our own fundraising efforts, not just student government funds.

This year, we are building an advertising base from scratch. The Phoenix staff is composed solely of students — students write and edit the copy, sell the ads, lay out the paper and deliver the issues. We don't have any non-student, paid professionals on staff.

While we are working to increase our revenue, we are also working to be an open forum for the University community.

CHRIS KRIDLER
 Senior
 Journalism/English

TIMOTHY ELLIOTT
 Senior
 Journalism

Letters policy

The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments and criticisms. When writing letters to the editor, please follow these guidelines:

■ All letters must be signed by the author(s), with a limit of two signatures per letter.

■ Students should include name, year in school, major, phone number and home town. Other members of the University community should include similar information.

■ All letters must be typed and double-spaced, for ease of editing.

■ Place letters in the box marked "Letters to the Editor" outside the DTH office in the Student Union.

Rugby tours, recruiting and human rights

"I'm delighted that, having consulted widely, the chancellor saw fit to offer me the position." — Newly-appointed Provost Dennis O'Connor on his enthusiasm for his position.

"When you open a building in the evening, you are taking a big risk with security." — Donald Boulton, vice chancellor and dean of student affairs, on the possibility of opening an all-night study area on campus.

"There is a need for a new entity whose sole purpose is to plan and provide services which will link the whole region." — Patrick Simmons, the assistant director of the state Public Transportation Advisory Committee, on the need for a transportation link between Orange, Durham and Wake counties.

"We wouldn't recruit anybody who wasn't qualified. Quality comes first, then I might look at gender and color and things like that." — Harry Gooder, chairman of the Faculty Council, on recruiting women for graduate school.

Week in Quotes

"I've put one poster up in the same place four different times." — Joel Sipress, a member of the Carolina Committee on Central America, on posters that were torn down for a speech given by former CIA agent Philip Agee.

"It knocks out a hell of a lot of student support if you only stand on one side of an issue." — Thomas Elliott, Student Congress representative from District 7, on the congress' decision to allocate \$200 to help fund Philip Agee's speech.

"The human rights movement that flows forth from this country flows forth not from self-righteousness but because we want to save our brothers and sisters from the kind of violence we have experienced." — Andrew Young, mayor of Atlanta, during the keynote speech for Human Rights Week.

"The tour should really serve as an example to everyone. It just shows what

a bunch of guys can do on their own when it's what they want." — Jeremy Kelly, president of the UNC Rugby Club, on his organization's nine-day Thanksgiving tour of England. The club sold more than 3,000 T-shirts and accepted a \$400 donation from the University to fund the tour.

"They need to have the same passion and fire to win as they had last year." — Frank Comfort, UNC swim team coach, on his team's winning attitude.

"I've been denied a fair hearing because of the court's denial of my conscience defense. That's a major aspect of my defense, but there are many, many others." — Campus activist Dale McKinley on his pending reappearance before the Graduate Student Court. McKinley walked out of his first trial a month ago.

"Just say 'no.'" — Advice from ex-CIA agent Philip Agee on what to say when the CIA comes to UNC to recruit.

Compiled by associate editor Laura Pearlman.