The Daily Tar Heel

98th year of editorial freedom

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Ends don't justify means

Using discrimination to diversify is wrong

ingly important issues in the workplace as U.S. businesses attempt to diversify. But in some cases, they may be overshadowing a person's qualifications.

Last month, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission began an investigation into the Personnel Pool of Raleigh-Durham Inc., a company that finds employees for temporary jobs. The investigation follows a report earlier this year by an employee who said that Personnel Pool used discriminatory practices to fill those jobs. The evidence shows it placed workers based on their physical characteristics, not their qualifications.

Charlene Gaye Nicholas had been working for Personnel Pool for about a year when she went to the EEOC. Nicholas, a black female, was told to use code words on job applications to indicate an applicant's race and gender. Personnel Pool then matched the applications to companies' requests, which specified in code the desired race and gender of the employee.

Four businesses in Raleigh — Motion Industries Inc., Phoenix Management, NCR Corp., and the N.C. Electric Membership Corp. — specified who they wanted for open jobs. Motion Industries and NCR Page

Race and gender are becoming increas- indicated they wanted females exclusively, while Phoenix and Electric Membership indicated that they would hire only whites. And ADI bluntly wrote out "Blacks and Orientals Only" on an order form.

> This case is part of a nationwide issue. American businesses have traditionally been dominated by white males, and this needs to be corrected. Unfortunately, the programs designed to foster diversity, such as Affirmative Action and stringent Equal Opportunity, often give employers relatively little choice in hiring. Firms request workers based on color or sex; they hope to avoid accusations of discrimination by having the right numbers.

> But Personnel Pool is using discrimination to correct discrimination, and that is not appropriate. Ideally, employers would hire people according to their abilities, with the assumption that the numbers would naturally come out right. Minorities should have equal job opportunities, but should not receive any favoritism.

> While the ideal is not possible in today's society, groups like the Personnel Pool go too far in trying to correct it. That negative philosophy must come to an end, or the problem will never be solved. — H. Brock

A palling loss

Anti-capital punishment leader will be missed

organizations on penal reform and abolition of the death penalty may be slowly dying.

The Rev. Joe Ingle, a native of North Carolina, is stepping down Friday as director of the Southern Coalition on Jails and Prisons and will close the organization's headquarters in Nashville, Tenn. Ingle has worked for the last 17 years in support for the abolition of capital punishment, befriending death row inmates in North Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee and Ala-

-His book, "Last Rights," documents stories and conversations of many of those inmates and sheds light on who is on death row and why. His efforts earned him a nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1988, and today, Ingle corresponds with 200 death row inmates in the South.

The death penalty is a "hole in democracy" that targets an entire social class of Americans, discriminating against the poor and minorities, Ingle said. It is just a way for politicians to "score voter points" at the expense of people who do no apparent good for society, he said.

Ingle cited two reasons for shutting down the coalition's headquarters: diminishing

Sadly, one of the South's most vocal money and diminishing hope. He has buried 19 of the 146 inmates executed since 1974 in the United States, and the frustration of fighting a policy which is supported by a majority of the people - especially in the South - has worn him out. The main office has also had budget difficulties in recent years and it lost its major grant this

> It is sad to see such a cause lose its central figure, and even sadder for that figure to lose hope after years of hard work. Coalition offices in North Carolina, Virginia and Alabama will continue the fight, albeit on a reduced level, for better conditions on death row and for the end to capital punishment. But that does not quell loss of the coalition's heart and soul personified by

> He said Monday that he was "very committed to the work of abolishing the death penalty" and hoped he could someday "continue the work in some other way." In the meantime, human rights advocates should hope for more people like Ingle who are willing to commit themselves so wholly to reversing the unfairness the death penalty perpetuates. — Elizabeth Murray

Gettin Roworinsavol

Long bus rides: the stuff nightmares are made of

think it would be appropriate for me to begin this column by making a public apology to the airlines. Living in Canada, I've had to fly home for holiday breaks, and I've cursed late planes, crowded airports and lousy airline food.

But over Thanksgiving Break, I decided to take a bus to Daytona Beach and back so I could spend the holiday with my grandparents. I wasn't sure how I felt about taking a bus, but I found myself reassured by the commercials. You've seen them. Happy, calm people board a clean, spacious bus and sit among other happy, calm people. They arrive at their destinations with smiles on their faces and not a hair out of place. Lulled by this scenario of heaven on wheels, I decided to forget the airlines and travel by bus. What I got was a road trip to hell.

In fact, the trip was so unpleasant, I think the bus companies need to modify their commercials a little. They could show angry, tired people screaming at ticket agents and pulling out their hair as their overcrowded buses arrive several hours late, causing them to miss changeovers. But then, no company has ever stuck to absolute truth in advertising.

"Why, Jenn," I'm sure many of you are saying in genuine concern, "was your bus trip really that bad?'

No. It was worse.

I've already mentioned late buses and missed changeovers. Not only was my first bus out of Raleigh two hours late in showing up at the station, but none of the agents in the terminal seemed to know where it was. Nothing is more unnerving than sitting in a bus terminal late at night for a bus that may or may not exist. I felt like I was starring in the 1990 version of "Waiting for Godot."

That isn't to say I was bored. One irate passenger coming off another bus decided to entertain us unfortunate souls by stomping up to the ticket counter, pounding a fist down, and demanding in a voice that rattled the window, "WHERE'S MY BAG?"

The woman at the counter was in on the act, too. "WHERE'S YOUR BAGGAGE CLAIM?" She screamed in response. "I DON'T HAVE IT!"

"WELL, I CAN'T GIVE YOU YOUR

BAG! "WHY NOT?" "BECAUSE I NEED YOUR BAGGAGE

The man pointed to a suitcase behind the

Jenn Layton

Just Work Here

counter. "THAT'S MY BAG!"

"NO, IT ISN'T!" "YES, IT IS!"

The bus commercials never mentioned anything about this.

The woman picked up the phone. "GET OUT OF HERE, OR I'M GOING TO HAVE

TO CALL THE POLICE!" "GIVE ME MY BAG, OR I'M GOING TO

CALL THE POLICE!" I tried to envision two policemen showing up. One would arrest the ticket woman, the other would arrest the passenger, the prisoners would be dragged away in handcuffs, and the suitcase would be impounded by the courts as evidence in both trials. I didn't get to see it happen, though, because my bus mercifully showed up.

The bus was crowded, and I sat next to a girl who had packed enough food to feed all the passengers for weeks just in case our bus mysteriously vanished from civilization again. From a dufflebag on the floor by her feet, she pulled up bag after bag of pretzels, cupcakes, chips and candy, washing it all down with assorted cans of soda. She was nice to me and even offered me some nachos covered with something green and goopy. I politely declined.

Shortly thereafter, I glanced across the aisle just in time to see a fellow passenger light up. The sweet aroma that immediately filled the bus clued me and everyone else in to the fact that this was no ordinary cigarette. There I was on a crowded bus at two in the morning in the middle of nowhere, while one of the passengers was preparing to enter another dimension. The bus driver pulled over, stopped the bus and stood up.

"I smell that! Who's got it?" he yelled.

I watched in disbelief as the man with the joint quickly swallowed it. The bus driver, unable to find the evidence, pulled back onto the road. The rather ill-looking passenger stumbled to the back of the bus and spent a great deal of time in the bathroom.

The girl next to me offered me a squashed Hostess Cupcake. Again, Ideclined, and I curled up and leaned the seat back in hopes of escaping this horror ride by going to sleep.

The people in bus commercials never seem to have any trouble sleeping on a bus. I guess that's because they don't ride the same buses I do, in which a very much awake and opinionated man sitting in the front row is trying to carry on a conversation with a rowdy supporter in the back.

"She tol' me she wanted more freedom. I done tol' her already she's free to do all the cookin' and cleanin' she wants. Hawhawhaw!"

"Hell, you tell 'er, Jack!" "Don' know what she's complainin' 'bout. She better have my breakfast ready when we git to St. Augustine!"

"Hell, you tell 'er, Jack!"

It's hard to sleep when I'm too busy trying to figure out why Jack's woman doesn't just smack a frying pan upside Jack's head and take off for an evening out with the girls. It's also hard to sleep when two children are chasing each other up and down the aisle. Or the kid behind me starts kicking my seat. Or the bus driver gets carried away with his little intercom system and gives us a running commentary of every sign. tree and blade of grass from Raleigh to Daytona

And those damn South of the Border signs kept me up, too. I just had to see what the next one was going to say. Not one of those stupid signs was worth staying awake for, but once you've read, "Pedro say weather report ees 'Chili today, Hot Tamale!" and an upsidedown sign saying, "Pedro feex eet later," you can't help but wonder what weak attempts at humor the next sign will bring. I staved awake for an entire hour as Pedro carried on with sign after sign. And when we finally passed that glorified amusement park, there were more signs with Pedro saying, "You meesed eet! Turn around, next exeet." Like anyone could miss an enormous sombrero sitting on top of a 500-foot pole, surrounded by flashing lights and firecracker stands.

I finally did make it to Daytona and back, and I will never, ever ride another bus. I hereby embrace the airline industry again like a prodigal daughter returning home after going astray. No more gas fumes. No more waiting in terminals for phantom buses. And no more Pedro and his stupid signs.

My apologies to you, airline industry. I'll see

Jenn Layton ees a senor Eenglish major from Ontario, Canada.

Editorial Policy

The Daily Tar Heel's board opinion editorials are approved by the majority of the editorial board, which is composed of the co-editors, opinion editor, forum editor and three editorial writers. Signed editorials do not necessarily reflect the entire board's opinion.

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The Daily Tar Heel has three regular staff columnists who write once a week. Their opinions also

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READERS' FORUM

Letter's arguments oversimplify issues

To the editors: As a proponent of the "infectious" liberalism that D. Stephen Norton claims is threatening "to engulf our state" (Nov. 8, "Important issues won state for Jesse Helms"), I hesitated to write this letter, wondering if perhaps I was unworthy to reply. But then the devil (i.e. Walter Mondale) appeared to me and threatened to repeat all his campaign speeches if I didn't, so I had no choice (I would enjoy hearing that line of his about presidential candidates who say they won't raise taxes and then do

anyway, though). So let's discuss some "important issues," Mr. Norton. Let's talk about abortion, which you say is decided by the Supreme Court. Actually, the Supreme Court will decide whether it can be decided by the state legislatures, and I suppose the Congress might get into the act if Roe v. Wade were overturned. Thus it might be important what our senators think about the issue. And doesn't the U.S. Senate confirm nominees to the Supreme Court?

You say that the "proper prosecution of felons" is a more important issue than funding artists with tax money. I would agree, although our ideas on "proper" prosecution of alleged felons would probably differ. And wasn't it Jesse Helms who was spending a lot of time discussing the funding of art-

ists in the midst of the debate about what to do about the federal deficit, which you say is an important issue? And what would you do to reduce this deficit? I hazard a guess that you don't favor higher taxes, nor do you want to cut the military budget. Cutting the NEA's budget won't quite do it. That leaves, mainly, cutting social programs. Fine, but only cuts in all programs, including defense, and increases in some taxes, not a capital gains tax cut, will reduce the deficit. That's the unfortunate reality. But the government really

shouldn't be in the business of aiding the less fortunate at all, should it? The homeless, the poor, the unwed mothers who get so much help from those who purport to be pro-life, those who lack the resources to get a better education (our education is being subsidized by "legislators who spend too much of our tax money," isn't it, Mr. Norton?), a better job, a better life, will just have to make do as best they can, won't they? That's survival of the fittest, after all, the great principle of the animal world. If Jesse Helms would add a little more compassion or even thought to his conservatism (but perhaps those are more things, Senator No, "than are dreamt of in your philosophy"), maybe I wouldn't mind him representing me in the Senate.

I'm glad you're thankful that he won, Mr. Norton. And to tell the truth (and even liberals do once in a while), in a small way I am too. Harvey Gantt is not nearly so funny to listen to. I wish everyone were fortunate enough to be able to afford to laugh about it. AARON BUTLER

Graduate English

Attack on Farrakhan critic not productive

Christopher Bracey's letter to the editor ('Critic of Farrakhan

To the editors:

didn't know the facts' Nov. 19) was perhaps the most condescending, self-righteous piece of work that I have ever read in my three years at this University. Bracey only manages to make himself and his "cause" look rather childish in his personal attack on Andy Carter.

Bracey's three "lessons" in themselves were quite interesting reading, to say the least. To call Carter's statements "asinine" and to state that he is "ignorant of his own topic" does nothing to show that Bracey is correct in his defense of Minister Farrakhan; he is merely trying to discredit Carter. Minister Farrakhan's views about racism are highly controversial, and while some of is points are valid, a race can not attribute all of its problems to another. The dilemmas that are faced by African-Americans today are a combination of problems that are both internal and external to the race. Working on only half of the problem will not lead to an effective solution. As far as history repeating itself with regard to the "history of atrocities," I do not think that the condemnation of

Carter based strictly on his letter will help avoid history repeating itself. Have you, Bracey, spoken with Carter in order to clearly understand what Carter meant by his letter without "allow(ing) a silly little article to mis-educate and manipulate" you? Calling another person ignorant does not prove your own intelligence, Bracey. If indeed Carter was mistaken in what he wrote, would it have not served a higher purpose to accurately state what Minister Farrakhan's views are, instead of launching into a redundant, senseless attack on Carter?

In presenting his "lessons" about tackling an issue as complex as racism, Bracey seems to believe that he will win his argument by simply slurring Carter into submission. My issue with Bracey is not one of racism, but with his total lack of consideration for another person's train of thought, however different from his own it may be. It Bracey truly desired to promote an atmosphere of understanding and tolerance, as well as convince others that Minister Farrakhan's views are indeed accurate, he should begin to take off his own blinders, and stress the positive features of Minister Farrakhan, instead of sharing his "lessons" with the student body. In the long run, he will find that his own opinions receive a much warme. acceptance.

JONATHAN M. McKINNON Junior **Business administration**