

Editorial

# Reflections on the 'Death' of Mao

Considering Chairman Mao Tse-tung's death on September 8, one has to pause to acknowledge the quiet passing of an era in world history, and to say with John Donne that "every man's death diminishes me." All the great leaders of Marxism and its variations are now dead - V.I. Lenin, Joseph Stalin, Sun Yat-sen, Ho Chi-minh, Chou En-lai, and now the greatest, Mao Tse-tung. Though Marx had warned against the "cult of personality", no other man in modern world history has inspired such a wide and fiercely dedicated following. Thus, the quietness of his death is deceiving, for beneath the pall of mourning lies a smouldering struggle over which direction Mao's revolution will take.

Yet we are not primarily concerned in this short discourse with specific events of the past or of the future. Instead, we wish to evaluate the legacy of Chairman Mao, the legacy of "revolutionary immortality." Mao Tse-tung was not a perfect man. To survive in China and to ensure that Maoism would be accepted by the masses, he had to be ruthless; that is an historical fact of life. Below that cruel exterior, however, lay a truly sensitive man -- sensitive to not only the physical but the spiritual needs of his people. Perhaps the greatest thing about the man, though, was that he was never satisfied with the way things were. Robert J. Lifton says that "Mao's extraordinary achievements over the years as a death-conquering hero and realizer of his people now contribute to his deification." Although we would not deify Mao we would be blind to history if we denied the power of his idealism.

The greatest lesson to be learned from Mao Tse-tung's life is easily demonstrated by the fact that, at 70, he did not retreat to conservatism and contentment with the established order but continued to lead his people in trying to accomplish the goals of the revolution. Too often, idealism is interpreted as a malady of innocent youth. When one gets out in society, it is assumed that he will give up his fancy notions about changing the world. The life of Chairman Mao is proof to the contrary. May Mao's spirit live on in our minds as evidence of his "revolutionary immortality."

## The Hilltop

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From his poem "Return to Shaoshan", Mao writes, "So the sun and moon were asked to give a new face to heaven./In delight I watch a thousand waves of growing rice and beans,/And heroes everywhere going home in the smoky sunset."

## Reconsidering CSM

### Editors' Note:

Mr. Qualls' letter to the student body is being run in lieu of our regular letters to the editor column, Feedback.

As President of the Christian Student Movement (CSM), I would like to share with you personally what CSM is really all about, what it has to offer you, and a challenge for every student to accept and put into practice on this campus.

First of all, I feel it is very important that all students realize that the CSM is far from being a select organization of perfect people. Sure, there are students who see it as that, but now I want to set them straight and say that CSM is for all and every student. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise either. Plus, it is more than an organization; it is a movement to do what is good and pleasing in the eyes of the Lord our Creator. Although in the past CSM has been labeled an organization of pious, Holier-than-thou, exclusivists, let me state our commitment and ministry: to embody the whole campus and every student, not just a few.

Secondly, I know a lot of you are asking yourselves what does CSM have to offer me? Briefly, let me share our activities, hoping that you will find your place in one and use your talents to minister to others and glorify Jesus Christ. Monday night,

CSM Choir, 7:00pm; Wednesday night, FCA meeting, 6:30 pm; Thursday night, Joy Explosions, 6:45 pm; Saturday, Swannanoa, 1:30 pm; Sunday morning, Oteen/Black Mountain, 9:00 am; Weekend Revival Teams; New Beginning Coffeehouse; Bible Study Groups; Retreats and Conferences.

Finally, I must share with you a very real problem and concern at Mars Hill College. In John 3:17, Jesus says, "For God did not send his Son into the world to judge the world but that the world should be saved through Him." Are we following the example? It is time that some of us stop condemning and judging each other and start this year restoring one another in love and care. For some strange reason, some students see in CSM a group of judges presiding over the campus. That is why so many are turned off! There must be a change of attitude, not only the students outside the CSM looking in, but among the members in CSM. This is the need of the campus and a big one!

In closing, I am led to issue you a challenge: stop judging and start restoring, loving, and caring for all our fellow students. I am confident you will accept this challenge not because I said it but because God said it!! Thanks for your interest and concern.

Your friend,  
David Qualls

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