

STATE AND NATIONAL

Food Lion supporters call for 'accuracy in reporting' laws

By John Davies
Staff Writer

Two organizations supporting the Food Lion grocery store chain pushed for new legislation to govern media ethics in a trip to Washington D.C. last

week. The groups made the trip March 24 in response to a Nov. 12 segment on ABC's "Prime Time Live" news program that challenged the employment and sanitation practices of Food Lion stores. "We don't want to censor in any

fashion," said Maxine Phillippi, chairman of Food Lion's Pride, a community support group for the Salisbury-based supermarket giant. "We just want guidelines for truth in journalism."

The groups said "Prime Time Live" had not been objective in its report. "This sleazy tabloid programming is not reporting," Phillippi said. "They should state that this is 99.9 percent entertainment. They must admit that the majority of this is fiction."

"Prime Time Live" ignited controversy after it placed hidden cameras in 20 Food Lion stores and sent undercover reporters to seek work there.

While in Washington, the groups met with all of North Carolina's congressional representatives, as well as U.S. Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., and Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan.

"We were very well received," said Sandra Watson, chairwoman for Save the Lion, another Food Lion advocacy organization.

The groups, which said they had received no support from Food Lion, presented the members of congress with

two petitions signed by the corporation's employees. The petitions said media coverage of alleged Food Lion sanitation violations had been "frivolous and unsubstantiated" and outlined the need for "truth in reporting" laws.

"ABC must be held accountable for the damage they have caused us, and laws on truth in reporting, similar to laws on truth in advertising, must be written," the petition stated.

U.S. Rep. Bill Hefner, D-N.C., plans to propose legislation in Congress reinstating the fairness doctrine, which would require broadcasters to present both sides of controversial issues, Sandra Latta, Hefner's press secretary, said.

"The fairness doctrine wouldn't have stopped the airing of the 'Prime Time Live' show, but it would have allowed Food Lion time for rebuttal," Latta said.

Latta noted that Hefner had owned a radio station in Kannapolis, N.C., and therefore understood the mass media's perspective concerning such legislation. "It isn't First Amendment restriction," she said. "It's a question of fairness. It's important for people to see both sides of

an issue." Rena Terracuso, publicist for "Prime Time Live," said the show had acted properly, and cited host Diane Sawyer's on-air statement, "We want to make it clear that 'Prime Time Live' staged nothing; that what you saw on the hidden camera was as it happened."

Brian Peace, manager of public affairs for Food Lion, said "Prime Time Live" had collaborated with the Union of Food and Commercial Workers — a union with which the company had been engaged in a lawsuit concerning hiring practices — to establish contacts that would allow reporters to pose as Food Lion workers. In addition, he cited what he called "creative editing" of video tapes and voice-over commentary from Diane Sawyer as contrived efforts to fabricate violations that never occurred.

Watson said the future was uncertain for Food Lion's Pride and Save the Lion but added that her group would continue to pursue its goals. "As petitions continue to come in, we will channel them to Washington and let them know that we're out here," she said.

The groups also sent petitions to ABC both before and after the show aired. A Food Lion's Pride petition, circulated before the show, stated the group's hope that coverage of Food Lion stores would be "fair and honest."

A petition sent to ABC by Save the Lion following the airing of the show stated that Food Lion "adhered to ... policies of working off the clock, sanitation, and employment of minors."

Phillippi said the Food Lion petitions were part of a trend sweeping the United States. "The people are saying that they're sick and tired of tabloid journalism," he said. "It's a general feeling across the nation."

Currently, the groups have not endorsed any specific legislation. "We only went there and asked Congress to help us," Watson said. "All we ask for is truth and fairness in journalism."

Food Lion's profits dropped 9.5 percent during the four weeks following the show, Peace said. The most recent figures have shown an upward trend, with sales rising 4 percent since Dec. 1992.

Russian official says relations with some neighbors improving

By Stephanie Greer
Assistant State and National Editor

A counselor with the Russian Embassy to the United States outlined the direction of Russia's new foreign policy and disparaged snags in Russian relations with other Asian countries at a luncheon seminar in Hamilton Hall Wednesday.

"Russia inherited all of the successes and failures of (former Soviet) policies in Asia and the Pacific," said Vladimir Rakhmanin, who is stationed in Washington, D.C.

Rakhmanin spoke as a guest of UNC's East Asian Studies Curriculum.

He said the fall of communism in his country had opened Russia to heavier Asian influence and that as a result, the nation was becoming more concerned with its activities in the region.

While Rakhmanin said that he was "cautiously optimistic" about relations with India and that there was a "totally new understanding" between Russia and China, he conceded that Russian relations with Korea and Japan still were tenuous.

Rakhmanin dismissed concerns raised by recent reports of Russian arms sales to China and said the articles were "making sensations" about the sales.

"The first country to be concerned about Chinese military potential is Russia ... we're acting cautiously," he said.

He cited a new border agreement between China and Russia and the slow growth of trade between the two countries as signs of improving relations.

"Trade is really growing," he said. "It's not booming, but it's growing."

But Rakhmanin said Russian relations with Japan were "less fortunate," noting that the cancellation of a proposed visit to that country by Russian President Boris Yeltsin had not helped alleviate tensions.

Relations between India and Russia are even more strained, he said, adding that while ethnic differences made communication difficult, India's store of nuclear weapons made relations with that country one of Russia's top priorities. "It's impossible not to deal with India," Rakhmanin said.

He said a recent article in The New Yorker magazine revealing that nuclear war almost exploded between India and Pakistan in 1991 had prompted demands from Russia that India give up its nuclear weapons.

"We are trying to persuade India to look at proliferation," he said.

Nuclear arms also are a major problem in North Korea, where the country's attempts to arm itself have worried Russia, Rakhmanin said.

"If North Korea will get this nuclear bomb, then I'm sure we'll have a domino effect in Asia," he said. "That's why we're watching the situation in North Korea very closely."

Rakhmanin added that Russia supported the possible unification of North Korea and South Korea but said his country would leave the final decision to the Koreans. "I think the Koreans are very proud people and they do not want external influence on their relations," he said.

Rakhmanin also discussed Russia's plans for taking advantage of unused Far Eastern resources and said Russia's goals could not be accomplished without a "well-balanced" foreign policy.

"Of course, our policy will be aimed at cooperation with the United States ... but it will be balanced among other relations," he said.

Rakhmanin said his ultimate goal was a "multilateral arrangement" that would deal with global security and environmental concerns.

He said, "The idea is how to make all these things comply with each other."

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Defense Department ordered the destruction of a draft study in the late 1980s showing that up to 200,000 of the two million people then in the military were homosexuals, a former Pentagon manpower chief during the Reagan administration said Wednesday.

Testifying at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on gays in the military, Lawrence Korb said the numbers surfaced as part of a broad-ranging review of manpower security issues. He said officials at the time considered the finding to be extraneous to the purpose of the study.

Korb's revelation came amid questioning by committee members after he said he could find "no convincing evidence" that lifting the ban on homosexuals would undermine unit cohesion. "In fact, this change is likely to have less short-term impact on cohesion," than racial integration or broadening the military opportunities for women, he said.

The testimony from Korb, who was assistant defense secretary for manpower, marked the first time a witness before the Senate Armed Services Committee spoke out in support of the president's plan.

It also marked the first time a one-time Pentagon official had supplied

numbers quantifying the extent of homosexuality within the military's ranks.

Korb also said the studies by the Personnel Security and Research Education Center in Monterey, Calif., "basically said, you have no empirical evidence for keeping the policy (banning gays). We suggest that you consider changing it."

By Korb's account, the study put the homosexual population in the military — despite the ban — at 10 percent. That is virtually the same percentage that many social scientists say applies to the general population.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., said the report focused on security issues, rather than a broader study of homosexuality in the military. "You're being a bit disingenuous," the senator told Korb.

The former Pentagon official said Craig Alderman, who was then acting deputy undersecretary, rejected the earlier drafts of the studies. "He sent them back and he said, you covered an area I didn't want you to cover. Throw this stuff away," Korb promised to supply the drafts for the committee's record.

Questioned whether the draft studies were destroyed or suppressed, Pentagon spokesman, Lt. Col. Doug Hart, said the report was never accepted by the Defense Department and never released. "To the best of my knowledge, there is no place where the Defense

Department has even attempted to find the answer to the question of how many gays are actually in the military," Hart said.

The panel, led by Sen. Sam Nunn, D-Ga., an opponent of ending the ban, resumed its hearings on the issue, focusing on the impact of changing the policy on unit cohesion and morale.

While several members of the panel remain strongly opposed to any policy change, Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., invoked the names of Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr. and his own brother, John Kennedy, and urged the panel to follow their lead in fighting prejudice.

"If we do not end discrimination wherever it exists in our society, then

America is not America," Kennedy said.

The senator said the purpose of the armed services "is not simply to defend a piece of geography but to protect a set of ideas and ideals. A military that denies those ideals defeats its own most basic purpose."

In his testimony, Korb said that it was difficult to create unit cohesion with a dissimilar group of people but that strong leadership and training would enable the military to overcome any problems.

Korb likened the current situation to the questions the military faced two decades ago when it switched to an all-volunteer force and later allowed women to assume greater responsibilities of military service.

Ex-chief: Military destroyed report on gays

Seniors

That remains to be settled is how the senior class will be recognized for their gift, he said.

Mitchell said the senior class had raised \$26,000 before the phone-a-thon even started. The rest of the money was raised after the Dec. 8 kickoff of the official fund-raiser.

The senior class asked each senior to give \$200, Mitchell said. The pledge for the endowment was set up in an increasing payment plan that asked each senior to pay \$20 before graduation, she said.

from page 3

Seniors will make their first post-graduation payment in September 1993. The payments will increase each year, ending with a \$50 payment in 1997.

"This method allows the seniors to pay their \$200 but doesn't require them to pay it all in one lump sum," Mitchell said.

Even though the Feb. 28 deadline is past for seniors to get their name on the plaque for donating their \$200, the senior class still is accepting donations, Paty said.

CRITICAL ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Race, Gender & Radicals

"The aim of education, as many of our campuses now see it, is no longer truth, but political transformation."



LYNNE CHENEY

Today, April 1, at 8:00 P.M., Lynne Cheney, former chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities, will speak on university speech codes and their effect on the American system of higher education. Cheney will speak at UNC's Gerrard Hall.

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