

Brown Joins UNC in Labor Skirmish

Brown University and Nike Corp. are ensnarled in a labor contract dispute to reform the apparel industry.

By GAVIN OFF
Staff Writer

A dispute between Brown University students and Nike Corp. over Nike's labor practices has caused the company to claim it is a victim of scapegoating by protesters.

After Brown's Jan. 28 letter to Nike, asking the company to revise its code of conduct, Nike responded on March 30 with a threat to terminate the university's contract with the men and women's ice hockey teams.

Larry Carr, Brown's bookstore director, said Carr had found that the contract dispute between Brown and Nike represented a larger disagreement over

unfair labor practices.

"I think it's a big deal because eventually the goal is to reform the apparel industry, and obviously Nike is a big player in that industry," Carr said. "It's really important that even though we have disagreements with companies like Nike that we keep the large goal of improving the lives of workers."

He said the school was affiliated with both the Worker Rights Consortium and the Fair Labor Association, two competing labor monitoring groups.

But Carr said Brown only asked Nike to comply with the university's own existing code of conduct, not the code of either monitoring group.

While Carr said surprise inspections were key to determining the labor practices of an industry, he said the university's prime goal was to eliminate sweatshop conditions altogether.

"Our code of conduct acknowledges announced and unannounced (visits)," Carr said. "I recognize the legitimacy of

some surprise inspections, but our larger goal is to fix the problems."

UNC also recently joined the WRC while continuing its membership in the FLA for another year.

Todd Pugatch, a member of UNC's Student for Economic Justice, said he had firsthand experience at a factory in Mexico where announced visits gave employers time to conceal any evidence of child labor.

Pugatch said surprise inspections of an industry's working conditions were vital in determining its true practices. He also said Nike's unwillingness to comply with Brown's wishes showed the true character of the company.

"I think this demonstrates Nike's lack of commitment to combating sweatshops," Pugatch said. "I think this demonstrates their fear of students and universities coming together to improve labor problems - it suggests Nike has something to hide."

But Simon Pesridge, Nike's labor

practices manager, said the only reason Nike threatened to end its contract with the university was because Brown wanted to change its contract with Nike before it expired next year.

Pesridge said that over the past few years Nike had revised its labor contract to combat the use of unfair labor practices. "What we're committed to is improving workplace conditions," he said. "We believe we have a lot of experience in improving these conditions."

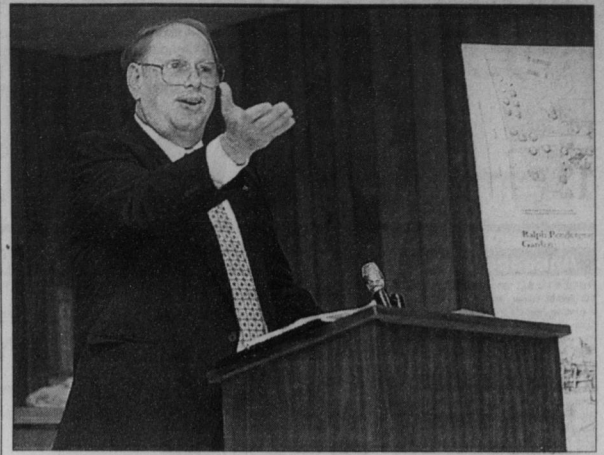
Pesridge said Brown was unfairly singling out Nike. He said universities' complaints about labor issues should be against all companies.

"It's a tough (situation)," Pesridge said. "What we've always asked for is a consistent policy. We should be treated as everyone else."

"Every factory around the world can be improved."

The State & National Editor can be reached at stntdesk@unc.edu.

A LEAVE OF DUTY



DTH/JEFF POULAND

Retiring Chapel Hill Police Chief Ralph Pendergraph addresses well-wishers Sunday at the American Legion. Town leaders and friends spoke at the ceremony honoring Pendergraph's 27 years of service.

Council Decision Puts School Resource Officers in Jeopardy

By KEVIN KRASNOW
Staff Writer

Chapel Hill-Carrboro Board of Education members, shocked by a recent Town Council decision, are worried that funding for school resource officers could come up short.

Four resource officers are employed at Culbreth and Phillips Middle Schools and at Chapel Hill and East Chapel Hill High Schools. The federal grant originally funding these positions will expire in the fall, leaving the town and school system responsible for the money.

Under a plan devised by Chapel Hill Town Manager Cal Horton and the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City School System Superintendent Neil Pedersen, the town and school system would have split the \$222,000 cost. However, last week, the Town Council advised Horton that the town would only provide 25 percent of the funding.

Board member Nick Didow said he

and fellow board members were caught off-guard by the council's decision.

"Frankly, this caught us by surprise," he said. "It would've been helpful if we had known the council's intentions in January, because now we're in a new budget cycle."

Didow said he was still hopeful that the school system would be able to find the money to pay the officers.

Council member Pat Evans said she understood the importance of school resource officers but thought funding for them should come from the school system.

"If it's a high priority for (the schools), then they should fund it," she said. "These officers only work for the city 20 percent of the time, so at 25 percent we would actually be paying more than our share."

But council member Flicka Bateman said the town should pay an equal share, especially in light of recent incidents in schools.

"I think it's very reasonable that we split the costs," she said. "To me it is ironic that less than two months after the fight during lunch-time at East Chapel Hill High School we'd cut back."

Carl Moraven, the school resource officer at Chapel Hill High School, said he carried out many duties and was well-liked by the students.

"In a day's time, I am everything from a mediation counselor to a traffic director to an enforcer of the law," he said. "I have been received by the kids exceptionally well, and they know they can trust me."

Chapel Hill High School PTA President Kim Fahs said the school resource officers made her feel her daughter was in good hands.

"They are probably the reason I

don't feel worried when my daughter is at school," she said. "This is the one year anniversary of the Columbine incident - the council's timing is amazing to me."

Fahs's daughter, Emily Walter-Ryan, is a senior at Chapel Hill High School. She said Moraven took a proactive role as the school resource officer and was very concerned about the students.

Alton Cheek, principal at Phillips Middle School, said he was miffed as to why the town would limit funding that

affected an important demographic of the community - the students.

"Police are here to protect the people of Chapel Hill, so why not protect the kids?" he said. "A school is everything a community is. The school resource officers are a preventive measure that have been working. Why would we cut something that works?"

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WHAT PEOPLE WEREN'T LOOKING FOR ON THE FIRST EASTER.

Instead, they were looking for a body, a corpse. The man, Jesus of Nazareth, was publicly beaten, whipped, tortured to death by crucifixion, confirmed dead by a final sword thrust, and securely buried three days earlier. Not only that, but because of his notoriety, an entire guard of Roman soldiers was guarding his tomb, with an official Roman insignia on the two-ton boulder which sealed its entrance. This was a special precaution because Jesus stated that after his crucifixion, he would come back to life on the third day.

On that day, the boulder was found up a slope, away from the tomb. The guards had fled. And inside the tomb, Jesus' body was not there. But the cloths which had been mixed with gummy spices and wrapped around his body were still in the tomb, caved in like an empty cocoon. An official report was circulated stating that Jesus' disciples took the body while the guards slept.

The disciples, who had been in hiding fearing for their lives, were now out and about claiming that Jesus had risen from the dead—and had even physically (not spiritually) appeared to them on several occasions. Were the disciples indeed hiding the body of Jesus? If so, then it's hard to explain why each of them independently traveled to other countries, eventually dying a martyr's death. Who would give up their life for what they knew was a lie?

Paul, who had been one of the most vicious persecutors of the disciples and the early Christians, later became convinced that Jesus' resurrection was true. He was eventually beheaded for his faith in Jesus. How important is it if Jesus was raised from the dead or not? Paul put it this way: "If Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith."

During his life, Jesus healed people of diseases and disabilities and performed many miracles to verify his deity. Then he offered the biggest proof of all—he predicted that he would be crucified and come back to life three days later. That's why the Roman soldiers were guarding the tomb. Simple, straightforward. It's like saying, "You'll know if everything I've said to you is true by this: I will come back to life three days after they crucify me."

By the end of the first century, nearly one million Jews were followers of Jesus. What caused such an instant, explosive following? First, Jesus' body was indeed missing. If anyone could have produced the body, that would have put an end to it. Second, Jesus must have lived an amazing life to cause so many, so quickly after his death, to worship him as the Messiah. Third, as with the disciples, Jesus must have physically appeared to many people, confirming to them the reality of his resurrection, because individual after individual willingly endured persecution.

This Easter, investigate the evidence yourself. Read the section called "John" in the Bible. And, for a concise look at what convinced Jesus' disciples and the early Christians, see the feature article **BEYOND BLIND FAITH** at www.EveryStudent.com. Or get a free copy of the article by calling 1-800-236-9238 or emailing Articles@EveryStudent.com.

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