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The Daily Tar Heel

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Grow Up

Tee Pruitt's latest Cabinet firings were immature and an abuse of his power. All the CAA bickering means students lose out.

After two years full of questionable decisions by our beloved Carolina Athletic Association President Tee Pruitt, the suspect firings of two CAA cabinet members last week shouldn't have come as a surprise.

The latest blunder by Pruitt was the firing of Tiffany Black and Devyn Spence, two former members of the CAA Cabinet who openly supported Michael Songer's failed CAA president campaign.

Pruitt claims that Black and Spence were dismissed because they violated a CAA policy that states that Cabinet members should reserve public criticisms as a last option to express their frustrations within the group.

While Pruitt's contention that Black and Spence's column directly criticized the CAA is valid, he seems to be overlooking that they did in fact go to the media as a last resort. They

clearly felt their voices weren't being heard within the CAA, so they voiced their displeasure publicly. Black and Spence were well within their rights in doing so and their dismissals were nothing more than a shameless abuse of power that served no clear purpose.

Furthermore, if Pruitt is so interested in protecting "the best interests of the organization" by firing Black and Spence, he should act as he speaks and put an end to all the petty bickering.

For the second straight year, the CAA president election reeked of shadiness, with Pruitt and Songer's personal feud clouding the election process. The end result this year was a CAA president campaign that more closely resembled a circus than an election, pitting Songer against "anybody but Songer," the Pruitt-supported CAA president-elect Reid Chaney.

While watching the politics play election is entertaining, the student body comes out as the big losers. With all the bickering, who actually has the time to perform the duties assigned to the CAA?

Now is the time for the CAA to move past all of this childish nonsense and remember whom the organization exists for. Grow up, guys, and stop taking yourselves so seriously.

Painful Cuts

In light of a federal budget surplus, Bush's tax cuts seem arbitrary, especially when North Carolina is faced with a huge shortfall.

While President George W. Bush is enjoying the prospect of a multi-trillion-dollar budget surplus, N.C. Gov. Mike Easley is being forced to make some painful cuts in the state budget.

Easley's cuts, though some of them are targeted at seemingly necessary programs, are understandable, but Bush's are arbitrary and unnecessary and look as though they're aimed only at securing a tax cut.

Easley ordered \$1 billion in spending cuts to help North Carolina close a projected budget shortfall of at least \$700 million.

One of the ways law enforcement is saving money is by cutting back on gas usage. State Highway Patrol troopers are turning off their cruisers for two half-hour periods each shift. While they do still go on service calls, they just don't patrol during those half-hour stretches.

The fact that the Highway Patrol has to make such small cuts in the hope they will add up to enough of a budget cut to help the state meet its shortfall demonstrates there's not really any pork to cut in the state budget.

Ernie Seneca of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources told the News & Observer his department is feeling the budget crunch in the form of a loss of staff. "Right now we have 56 vacancies out of

502 positions. Our workload was already very demanding," he said.

At the same time many of North Carolina's agencies are hurting from budget cuts, Bush is making cuts, many of which seem arbitrary, on a national level.

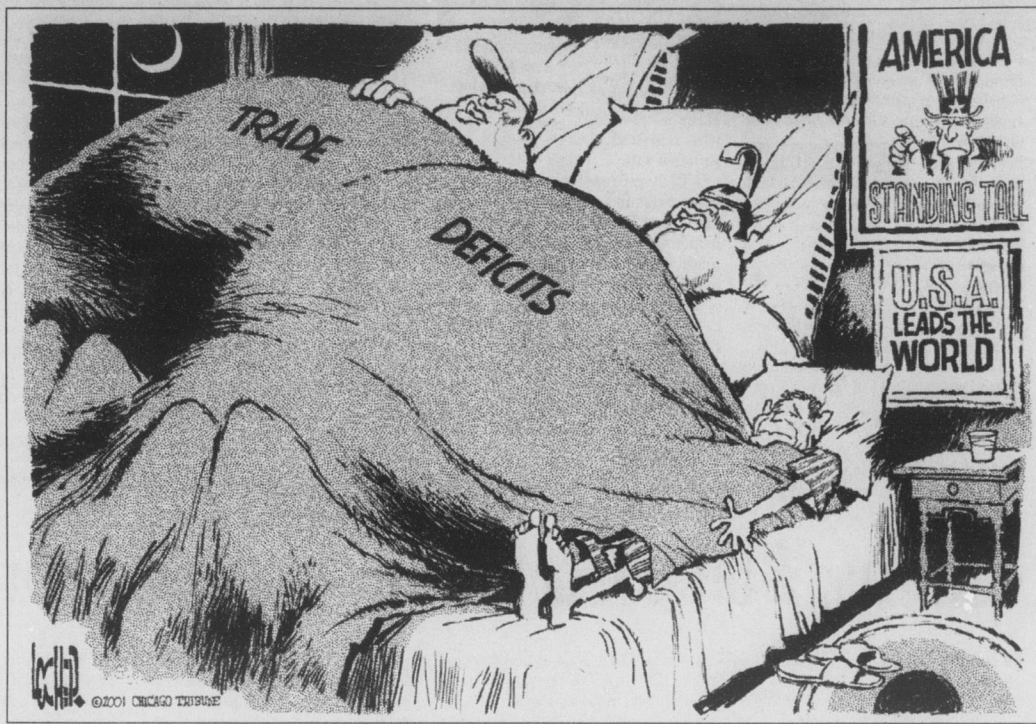
North Carolina will almost definitely feel Bush's plans for the disaster relief budget.

His proposed budget would cut the federal portion of disaster-mitigation projects from 75 to 50 percent. Those are the projects that help communities prepare for and limit the damage from disasters.

North Carolina might not have had any major hurricanes last season, but given history it probably won't be long before another Floyd or Fran lands in Wilmington. And considering the painful budget cuts Easley has to make, it's doubtful the state could afford another disaster let alone with the federal portion of mitigation projects being cut.

Yes, there is a federal budget surplus, but Bush seems to be forgetting that just because the federal government isn't facing a budget crunch doesn't mean the states aren't as well. Bush's cuts will hurt the states that, like North Carolina, are struggling to make ends meet this year.

Perhaps Bush could send some of the surplus from budget cuts Easley's way.



Duke Game Unites UNC Campus

Wow, some game yesterday, huh? Though I am not the most die-hard Heels fan, I couldn't help catching the fever going around. Today, I'd like to share some of my thoughts on this epic game.

What an amazing chance for all of Carolina to come together. There we all were, filling the Smith Center, the bars on Franklin Street and the residence hall rooms fortunately furnished with big-screen televisions. I cannot help but remark on the strength with which this basketball game unites so many different people.

Not since the Vietnam War have so many Heels been mobilized around a struggle like this contest between the troops of coaches Doherty and Krzyzewski.

Most importantly, it was every senior's capstone experience. We've all been going to school here for four years, pining for a chance to earn those tickets. Because of our class status, we surely deserved to be in those bleachers more than anyone else, to participate directly in the culmination of our involvement in this community.

I sat sipping my Coca-Cola and watched the teams and crowd prepare for battle. The audience seemed fairly normal. There were lots of middle-aged, white, business-type alumni in sweater vests with their wives and beer-drinking buddies down by the court. The student section also appeared per form, a unified mass in standard uniform: "Doherty's Disciples."

I was somewhat puzzled, however, as to how a sky-blue piece of apparel could not include our beloved swoosh, the symbol of UNC athletics.

From the tip off, the players amazed me. I mean, I'd seen Brendan Haywood and Julius Peppers around campus, but I'd never actually been able to talk to them, or even make eye contact. I had no idea B could send one back to the third row like that or that Peps could throw down hard enough to get thousands of fans on their feet yelling. These guys are



LINDA CHUPKOWSKI UNFORTUNATELY REVOLUTIONARY

already deserving of all the money they're going to get later in life! And you know, I've never seen one Carolina guy cry in my four years here, and the whole row in front of me was sobbing excitedly over Forte's sweet touch.

All the television timeouts, though, did get frustrating. But those of us at the game were lucky enough to have better entertainment than 30-second messages from a bunch of corporations trying to sell us stuff. At least we got to see our Carolina cheerleaders and the dance squad. My friend Peter, mouth hung wide, exclaimed, "Wow! You could do a load of laundry on that girl's stomach!" It was then that I noticed that my popcorn was a little too buttery for my taste. I put it down on the floor at my feet - somebody gets paid to pick it up.

It was also really great to see the big male cheerleaders supporting the girls as they swooshed through the air and collapsed in their arms. We've come a long way since the days when only girls were allowed to be cheerleaders.

But even the cheerleaders got old after a few minutes, and I got antsy to see the real action again. Our men soon retook the court, ready to go. They had rested a bit and looked so impressive in their baggy Carolina uniforms and matching Nike shoes. I started to think to myself, "That's some good-looking gear they've got on! I wonder if the people

who made the UNC uniforms were lined up outside the factory doors, hoping to be able to sew 'Haywood' onto a jersey? I would be!"

The ref blew the whistle, and the battle was on again. You know, I was a little surprised, though, when there weren't more fouls called - especially on Duke. At one point, it just seemed like whatever team could plow into the other harder would be the one who ended up ahead. But I really loved all those great steals! And our Carolina fans were so supportive - everyone cheering and getting riled up to taunt our rival.

Then all of a sudden something hit me. I thought, "Not only is this the most exciting experience of our Carolina careers, but the University is going to get so much good publicity from this! I mean, gazillions of young, intelligent students are going to see this and want to come to school here! It's like two hours of prime-time commercials for UNC, worth billions, and all for free! And it gives lots of kids good upstanding role models! I mean, our players are clean-cut and respectable - they're not like Allen Iverson or someone."

I almost kicked myself! I missed some of the game while I was thinking about all that. That's OK, though. We all know how the game really ended: Nike, Coca-Cola and all the other corporations got their money; the University got its plug; the women were pushed off to the side, lending support and decoration for the men who, of course, did the "real" work, duking it out in a war for power and dominance. All the while, we the fans enthusiastically and reverently lent legitimacy. We watched, cheered, and tossed our popcorn in unison. We came together happily, intoxicated by this dose of soma, much to the delight of the Big Boys at the top.

Linda Chupkowski will not respond to angry, attacking e-mails. If you have any honest, constructive critiques of her column, e-mail her at lichup@email.unc.edu.

READERS' FORUM

CDS Management Needs to Recognize Black History Month

TO THE EDITOR:

In 1926, Carter G. Woodson, "the father of black history," established Negro History Week. Later, in the 1960s, the celebration of the achievements of African-Americans became Black History Month, celebrated in February. African and black Americans have striven to commemorate their history and importance of their achievements during this month.

In the past, Lenoir Dining Hall celebrated different holidays by presenting different foods from various cultures. However, during the month of February, the administrative directors of CDS neglected to celebrate black history. They did however make an effort to celebrate President's Day, Valentine's Day and Mardi Gras.

The purpose of my letter is to highlight neglect on the part of Carolina Dining Services. As a campus community, we should all be just as proud and eager to celebrate the culture and achievements of African Americans as we are other holidays.

Why were no efforts made to recognize the contributions of Africans

and African Americans to America culture and cuisine? Was it too much trouble to hang up posters with faces of prominent civil rights leaders? Surely CDS did not intend to suggest that African-American contributions to America, the South and the University were in vain or unworthy of recognition.

In the future, management at Carolina Dining Services should increase its efforts to highlight the cultures of other ethnicities in its special programming. The history of various ethnic populations is fast becoming a part of American History. They too should be celebrated as such.

Shawn Brooks Co-Chairman, Sonja H. Stone Freestanding Black Cultural Center Junior Communications and African-American Studies

Using Toilet Paper Involves Thickness And Not Surface Area

TO THE EDITOR:

Student body president candidates this year displayed humor and resorted to gimmicky platforms to entice the

otherwise passive student to take concerns to heart. There is no need to rehash the most important issues, as these are the ones dealt with each year.

I have concerns about a Feb. 19 editorial entitled "Two-Ply Platform." The statement, "Because two-ply is twice as thick as its inferior counterpart one-ply, it stands to reason that you only need to use half as much," lacks in all realms of logical reasoning.

When one uses toilet paper one is implementing surface area. The larger this surface area, the greater the wiping potential.

One square of two-ply is the same size as one square of one-ply, thus possessing the same wiping potential. Knowing this, two-ply then uses twice as much paper!

In addition I am relieved to know SHIT (Student Heels In Need of Toilet Paper) will be addressing rape and safety on campus and increasing the usage and efficiency of the mass transit system by allowing only one more parking deck. So SHIT, my ASS (Area Seeking Softness) thanks you!

Charlie Trakas Freshman Computer Science and Classics



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