

As We See It

Capital Punishment: An Unsavory Leftover

SAN QUENTIN, Calif., April 12—AP—Policeman-killer Aaran Mitchell puffed nervously on his last cigarette, moaned loudly twice, walked out of his cell, collapsed and was carried the last 13 steps to his death Wednesday in California's gas chamber . . .

Outside, jammed against the main gate of the prison, were about 500 protesting sign-carriers, howling almost continually, "We Shall Overcome." Many had been there all night.

PEORIA, Ill., April 15—AP—Richard Speck was found guilty today of the step-by-step slaughter of eight student nurses in a Chicago town house last summer. The jury of seven men and five women ruled that the languid blond drifter die in the electric chair for the slayings . . .

Spectators who were crowded outside the courtroom cheered loudly when they heard the verdict and sentence.

RALEIGH, April 18—AP—The House Judiciary Committee Tuesday gave a favorable report to legislation aimed at abolishing the death penalty in North Carolina. Several committee members, however, indicated they will oppose the measure once it reaches the House floor for debate.

Under current North Carolina

law, the death penalty may be given on conviction of first degree murder, first degree burglary, arson and rape.

That's how it's gone this past week with the death penalty: one execution, one sentencing and one move towards making the death penalty just an unpleasant memory.

Although the tragedy of the first bothers us and the ghouliness of the second turns our stomach, it is the third—the ray of hope—with which we are most concerned.

The death penalty is an abhorrent left-over from an earlier age which did not possess the general sophistication and respect for Man's dignity as does this area.

It is a method by which Society self-righteously rids itself of its deviants, erasing what are in many cases its own failures much as a surgeon might unsympathetically remove a cancer.

And it has been accused—too often justly, especially in the South—of being a systematic tool for the killing of Negroes who violate the White Man's laws. This can be borne out by statistics showing the high percentage of Negro criminals executed as opposed to the low rate of white men who draw sentences for similar crimes.

But it is now time to change all this.

A bill to get rid of the death penalty in this state has passed the House committee. It will reach the floor as undoubtedly one of the most important pieces of legislation the General Assembly will entertain this session.

And because of its importance—and because of the opposition which it is sure to encounter—it is of great urgency that effective support for this bill be mobilized immediately.

It is a well-recognized fact that the University at Chapel Hill is a great political force in this state. From atop this red clay Piedmont knoll shoot out rays of influence which penetrate throughout the whole of North Carolina.

And now is a time when all this influence must be brought to bear on the General Assembly in Raleigh.

Now is a time when this University must take action on a statewide issue of highest importance, or else the tradition of what this University stands for—the belief that Man is a higher and dignified being requiring respect, education and humanization—will ring as empty as the clanging of a prankster's false fire alarm.

We would like to see a petition favoring the bill signed by every student, faculty member and administrator on this campus and delivered to the General Assembly jointly by Chancellor J. Carlyle Sitterson and Student Body President Bob Travis.

We would like to see letters endorsing this bill sent to every in-state student's representative and state senator, telling them that the people who elect them—or soon will be electing them—want this legislation passed.

And we would like to see influential alumni—such as former President Frank Porter Graham—join in a united crusade against the inhumanity of the death penalty.

These things need to be done, and this University—its students, faculty, administrators and alumni—must do them.

For if this bill is defeated and North Carolina retains the death penalty, the death knell will be tolling not for crime, but for the progressivism this state has become known for.

The Times They Are A-Changing???



UNC Drunken Drivers Fail Aesthetic Evaluation

Dear Fellows, Strange as it may sound, there are some persons who try to sleep at three o'clock in the morning, even Saturday and Sunday mornings, even in Spring. This effort is courageously thwarted in the vicinity of Scott College (you know, down yonder in South Campus) by a group of (presumably) young drivers of the mature TCG type, (presumably) accompanied by dates and (not so presumably, but acutely) suffering from either a low degree of natural resistance to beverages with alcoholic content or a high degree of the same in their blood-streams, or both.

This somewhat obnoxious breed of young gentlemen (and - or young ladies) apparently believes that the latest thrill available in this dull world (except, perhaps, for the mellow - yellow) is to gun the cars downhill at top speed, loudly screech the tires against the pavement and loudly play prolonged horn concerts while trying to negotiate the 90-degree angle at which the South Campus Road (whatever its name may be) meets Ridge Road

directly in front of Avery's main entrance.

All these assorted noises, engine grunts, exhaust gasps, screeches and so forth, are not infrequently aided by the sort of blood-curling yell one used to associate with certain inferior forms of animal life, or, at the most, with that notorious Tarzan. But, after all, the poor fellow had an excuse, being the ward of a female gorilla and all that. Anyway, even without female gorillas in sight, it's getting increasingly difficult to sleep around South Campus. Perhaps it would be convenient at this stage to politely remind the young, dashing drivers that so daringly select the wee-small hours of the morning to assert their true weltanschauung and personality, that sleeping still is a human need. Also, that drinking is bad, very bad, when one unfortunately lacks that most gracious of human gifts that is sometimes called alcoholic culture. For, you see, only people that possess alcoholic culture can drink; the rest just get drunk. As they would put it around North Carolina, you really

have to know your ABC's in order to drink (as distinguished from getting drunk.) And please, do not misunderstand me; I have neither the inclination nor the authority to condemn drunkenness on moral grounds. It's just that it is so unaesthetic. (But then, we all know that some dates' peculiar aesthesia responds favorably to feats of drunken drinking as well as drag-strip driving, even though both take place on public roads.)

Besides, think of all the trouble we'll have to go through the day one of you just barely misses the road and crashes head-on against Avery Dorm's red brick wall which, I'm told, is fairly hard. If the residents and authorities of Scott College decide (again, on aesthetic grounds) they don't like that kind of pop-art collage spashed all over Avery, it's going to take quite a little bit of time to pick up the remainders with a tea-spoon and get them into some sort of envelope, preferably made of heavy paper. Maybe some scrap iron will be left, you see.

Huascar Toscano (h)
89120

In The Mail

Harris Vs. Dondi?

To the Editor: Each morning I am greeted by another trite little pseudo-philosophical homily by Mr. Peter Harris, parading under the guise of the philosophy of the future. It is difficult to say whether they are best characterized as arrogant or puerile, but, in any case, they are dreadfully boring. If you must resort to this to fill your editorial page, I would suggest instead reprinting some of Dondi's more risqué adventures.

Sincerely,
Mike Byrd
430 Avery

A DTH Goof?

To the Editor: I have been very impressed with your presentation of the news and especially with the excellent editorials in the past weeks. Wednesday's paper, however, contained one grave error.

The letters to the editor section is supposed to be an open forum. Yet you captioned the letter from David Holland about the Cone Mills strike with a "Starving, self-righteous grade grubber blasts striking beggars at Cone Mills."

Granted, his letter indicates that he is starving, self-right-

eous, and a grade grubber, and that he has little understanding of the situation at Cone Mills; but he should have the right to say what he thinks without derogation, or even comment from the powers that control the printing.

It's a trap if you write a letter to the editor or even a news story, and find your character maligned in the headline. Might discourage people from writing letters.

Mike McGee

(Editor's note: The headline was not meant to derogate the character of Mr. Holland. We apologize if it appeared too harsh. We do feel that the paper remains a public forum and we promise in the future to insure a more comfortable platform on which the forum may be expressed. We encourage members of UNC to continue writing letters and columns.)

Which Is Which?

To The Editor: I am enclosing an editorial from the April 12 DTH. There are several confusing errors in it.

The first one is in the heading. The initials SUI stand for State University of Iowa, located in Iowa City, Iowa. Iowa State is located in Ames, Iowa.

The newspaper referred to in the fourth paragraph: The Daily Iowan is a publication of the student body at SUI and is not the publication of the campus at Iowa State at Ames, Iowa.

There was an article of great length about Don Smith in the magazine section of the New York Times April 9th. One thing that was stressed was that SUI was glad he was there but he was the problem of Iowa State at Ames, Iowa.

I am a graduate of the State University of Iowa and I can give firsthand knowledge of the rivalry between SUI and Iowa State. It is even stronger than that which exists between UNC and N. C. State because they do not participate in competitive sports between SUI and Iowa State. There was such a furor between the schools when it was done years ago that the idea had to be abandoned.

I hope this information will help to clear up the confusion about these two schools.

I enjoy reading the DTH so much that I've been a subscriber during this semester while away from campus. This fall my husband and I will be returning to UNC and Chapel Hill. I'm looking forward to being in closer touch with the campus.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Gretchen Linder

University Party Begins Revamping

By CHARLIE MERCER

Members of the University Party Executive Committee sat down Sunday night and took a long look at their party's future. The ten people present listened anxiously as Party Chairman Tom Manley discussed UP losses in the spring election and their implications for the party. Manley then announced his resignation as chairman effective immediately. Manley said he was resigning because he recognized the importance of giving the party "a new face" and felt a new approach to campus problems was mandatory. In making his parting remarks Manley urged that committee members give serious consideration to any plan of reorganization that would breath new life into the ailing party.

During the next hour and a half many possible plans were considered. Discussion revolved largely around how the UP could combat its image as the tradition-encrusted "fraternity-man's party" and how it could build up additional "grass-roots" support.

By the end of the meeting a general consensus of the party needs and goals seemed to have been reached. Most members agreed that:

- 1) the University Party is in an unhealthy condition and that drastic reorganization steps must be taken to insure that it does not remain that way.
- 2) the University Party is not a party run by and for the fraternity and sororities, and that this must be proved. While not denying the importance of this support, the committee stressed that it alone does not—and will not—compromise the bulk of the party's support.
- 3) the University Party is willing to propose progressive and dynamic programs for the advancement of the University and the welfare of its students—and must do so.
- 4) the University Party must incite its legislators to compile more concrete and decisive records of accomplishment.

Specific plans designed to accomplish these four goals were also discussed at some length. These plans included:

- 1) holding elections as soon as possible, not only to fill the office of party chairman, but to select an entirely new slate of officers and a new executive committee.
- 2) revamping the party structure to include both an administrative and policy vice-chairman and a men's and women's coordinator.
- 3) enlarging the composition and responsibilities of the executive committee, allowing, among other things, UP legislators to sit as ad hoc members.
- 4) abolishing the convention delegate system.
- 5) purging the membership rolls of "dead weight" and ensuring that all party members are aware of and dedicated to their party's objectives.
- 6) holding regular meetings—at least weekly and more often when necessary.

The UP will hold the first of these proposed weekly meetings this Wednesday night, April 19, at 7:30 p.m. The meeting will be in Gerrard Hall. Among the business to be considered are some amendments to the constitution expected to hasten party changes and accelerate party progress.

Party elections will be held the following week at another meeting in Gerrard Hall. This will be Monday night, April 24, and the exact time will be announced later in the Tar Heel. Anyone who is interested in holding an executive position in the party, including chairman, is urged to file at the Graham Memorial desk, according to Vice-Chairman Champ Mitchell. They are also invited to attend the meeting of the executive committee this Sunday night in the Woodhouse Room at Graham Memorial.

For some time certain members of the University Party have been concerned about their party's future. The losses in the spring election reinforced this concern and sparked the initiative in making the above plans.

Leaving last Sunday's meeting one member commented: "More than ever this campus needs a viable two party system. If it is to have one, the University Party must show that it is capable of effectively meeting the challenge before it and that it is a dynamic, forward-looking force."

Judging by the concern and enthusiasm of those present, the University Party is already on its way to doing just that.

The Daily Tar Heel

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