

'Successful' dissenters accomplished nothing

Thursday, January 16, 1975, was a sad day in the history of UNC. On that day a capacity crowd in Memorial Hall and a Union-sponsored speaker were deliberately and forcefully denied their constitutional rights. For almost an hour there was utter chaos in the main auditorium of a university whose motto is light and liberty. And we have no one to blame but ourselves.

Our fellow students were responsible for stealing our rights that evening. We were our own worst enemies. The administration, the community and the state watched as we failed to preserve our own civil liberties, much less protect those of our fellow man.

It makes no difference that the speaker was a Klansman, or that the majority of the protestors were black. Stokely Carmichael, Yasser Arafat, or the Devil Incarnate could have been at the podium, and still our actions were criminal. We share group responsibility for the complete breakdown of order, restraint and communication.

On the surface, the efforts to disrupt David Duke's speech were successful since he could not be heard. But our violence really accomplished nothing. The attempts to shout down Mr. Duke only backfired because we showed more racism, hatred and intolerance than the Klan. Mr. Duke did not even have to speak to be victorious.

And the saddest fact is that we should have known better. Our lives have been crowded with past examples of criminal close-mindedness. The speaker-ban crisis of the 1960s, the civil rights marches in the South, and the witch hunts of the McCarthy years seem to have taught

us little. "Liberal" speech is not the only kind of free speech that is protected by the First Amendment.

We learned to detest discrimination and intolerance, but not reverse discrimination and intolerance. David Duke has the same right to speak as Ralph Abernethy. And red-neck legislators are not the only people who would like to censor speakers and ideas on campus. As we saw on Thursday night, all too many students would like to do the same thing.

We must learn that all people have a right to express their opinions openly and peacefully, however disgusting, subversive, or absurd those attitudes may be. Moreover, no group has the right to control the flow of those opinions, to play God for their fellow man. This degree of freedom is hard to maintain, but it is most essential when it is most difficult.

Students can still protest within this framework and have everyone's liberties preserved. We can strike, picket, or boycott, but we cannot resort to force or violence as we did on Thursday and even hope to preserve our own freedom. We must be far more careful with our methods of dissent.

As students, we are used to seeing ourselves as victims instead of culprits. But we were all damnably guilty on Thursday night. And our youth, our inexperience and our sheltered existence are no excuse for our behavior. We know better and therefore we should act better. Soon we will all be in our parents' positions and our actions will have far greater consequences than they do now. We must do better than the generations before us and not repeat such tragedies as Thursday night.

Letters to the editors

Black demonstration was justified

To the editors:

The disorders surrounding David Duke's attempted speech Thursday night in Memorial Hall raise several important questions. I will not presume to judge the propriety of the tactics employed by blacks to silence this speaker. However, as a member of the dominant Caucasian majority, I would like to address the white students, especially those voicing rage at an abridgement of one man's freedom of speech. It seems to me that the freedom of blacks has in the past, and continues to be abridged to a far greater extent than any miscarriage of justice Thursday. I feel it to be everyone's responsibility to protect and defend human rights. In this light I feel that the invitation should not have been extended. I make this statement in the context that David Duke was billed as a KKK speaker, an avowed position of the KKK being a violent vicious abridgement of the freedom of numerous minorities. I do not believe that the rewards of any mental exercise in dealing with this man's prejudices warrant the degradation which blacks must feel in the face of public support, indeed paying, for this man to speak. I request that those chosen to represent me in future decisions of this nature reflect, at least in part, this position. Further, I would hope that a sense of perspective would grow up concerning these issues and that the protest of black students be viewed as a reflection of their justified outrage at white insensitivity.

David Schwartz
Carboro

Free speech—no double standard

To the editors:

Racist attitudes such as those of Klansman David Duke must be deplored and protested against. To be objected to also, however, is the behavior of the students Thursday night who refused to allow him to speak. The Carolina Forum says it attempts to present a wide spectrum of viewpoints to those of the student body who choose to listen by inviting a variety of speakers. Whether it is doing its job adequately is certainly debatable (one may legitimately question the expenditure of \$800 of student money on the likes of David Duke and what he represents), but this is not the major question in this issue. The fact is that the man was invited to speak and should have been allowed to do so, however objectionable his ideas.

As one who was a student at UNC during the period of the Speaker Ban Law in the 1960s and supported the efforts by the students of this institution to remove that threat to freedom of speech, I find this attempt by my fellow students to silence ideas of which they do not approve distressing. We cannot have a double standard on the issue of free speech. Episodes like that of Thursday night will only serve to play into the hands of those in this state who would wish to curtail free and uninhibited inquiry at this and other state institutions.

The removal of racism in our society deserves our involvement and efforts. It is

depressing to observe, however, that one of the few visible manifestations of student activism on this campus this year on any issue deserving of our attention should have taken place in the manner in which it did Thursday night.

David C. Atwood
100-C Bernard St.

Protestors help promote racism

The behavior exhibited by the protestors of Ku Klux Klansman David Duke and his scheduled speech of Thursday night better served to promote racism than any racist appeal Duke could possibly have voiced. By drowning Duke's attempts to be heard with their howling, screaming, and absurd chanting, the predominately black protestors proved themselves "worthy" of many of the Klan's claims — claims of black superiority — in this case with respect to moral consciousness. The disrupters' total disregard for a man's fundamental right to free speech contradicted and negated their own demands for, as they so cleverly put it (with clenched fists), "Freedom! Freedom! Freedom!" Travesty of travesties. Unnatural joke.

Those who entered Memorial Hall Thursday night with preconceived ill feelings toward the outspoken racist Duke and the organization he represents probably left the building with a somewhat different attitude — that of sympathy for David Duke and a mixture of disgust, embarrassment, and contempt for the small group of protestors who denied the rest of the audience the privilege of hearing this controversial speaker. Perhaps some even found themselves harboring racist sentiments which they had not held before. Later that night, David Duke no doubt slept the sleep of a man well satisfied with himself.

Alex Standefer
206 Aycock

Education denied Thursday night

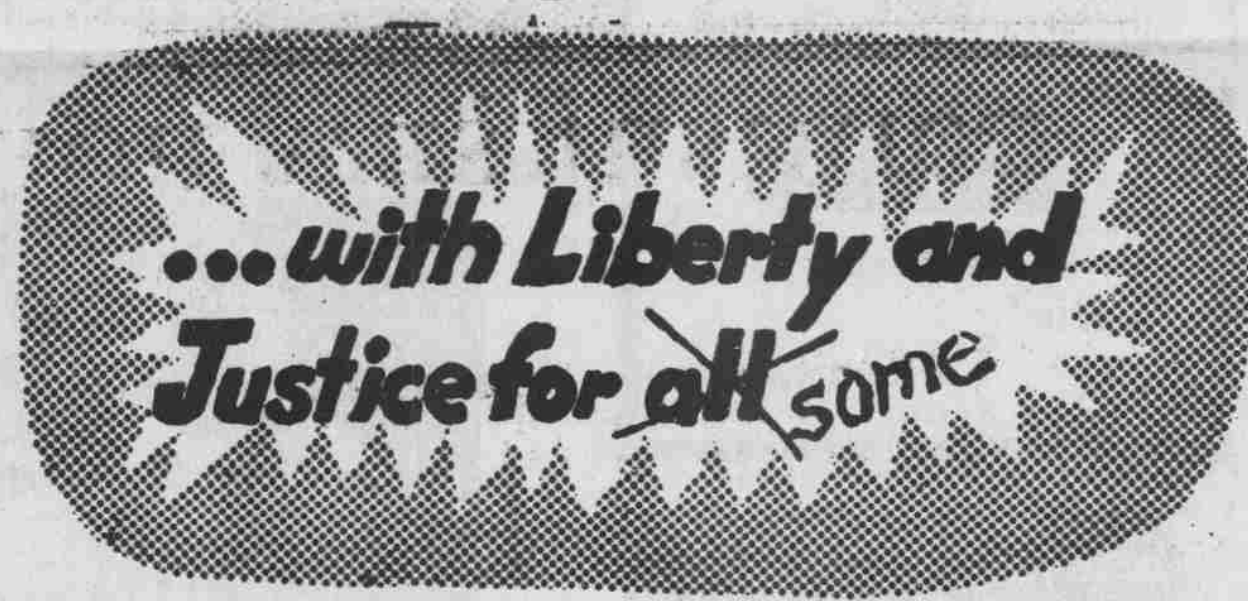
To the editors:

I came to the "Southern Part of Heaven" from Kansas City, Mo., expecting to have the total resources of an institution of higher learning. Last semester I took advantage of the services and the opportunities open to me. However, on Thursday night a group of students elected to set back my education and that of many others. Not only was the education of the people at David Ernest Duke's presentation set back, but freedom of speech was denied to an American.

I hope Student Government and the Carolina Forum will continue to enrich our education with various points of views and not be discouraged by the disgusting display Thursday night.

Brad Lamb
835 James

Editor's note: Because of the heavy volume of mail about David Duke, some letters may not be printed. However, we will continue to print letters throughout the week.



Editor's note: The following was written by David E. Duke after his appearance here Thursday night.

It's been a long day and I am exhausted. The always-inefficient airlines have lost my suitcase, it's a quarter to twelve and I can't even brush my teeth. But I feel that I need to sit down before and escape of sleep, an put down my feelings toward a student body, before which I was rudely not permitted to speak. A small black and Marxist group had taken it upon themselves to be the "mother and daddy" of 20,000 college students and decide what they would and would not see and hear. By any means necessary, this self-appointed censorial body was determined to permit "easily corruptible" college "brats" to hear such a "nasty" speaker who might poison their infantile minds. Everyone is certainly aware that the college student is only intellectually mature enough to handle "non-controversial" speakers like Jane Fonda and Angela Davis—speakers who reflect the opinions and admirations of the average student like John Egan (of the Young Socialist Alliance, a group which thousands of UNC students are waiting in line to join).

Certain Marxists and blacks used all sorts of rhetoric to supposedly justify their suppression of civil liberty. Suppression of civil liberty is precisely what they accuse me of doing, yet I know of not one case where I have suppressed anyone's civil liberties, for contrary to popular opinion, I've never lynched a black, or gassed a Jew, or advocated the same—nor do I recall one instance when I tried to stop Communists (whom I detest) from

When the present Student Government Constitution comes up for final ratification this Tuesday, a lot of things other than the Campus Governing Council (CGC) will be involved.

That is, if the Constitution goes — if CGC is abolished — then the present Honor Court system, the Residence Housing Association (RHA), and even the student FM radio station, now being planned, will go with it.

Article VIII, section 4 of the present Student Constitution provides that "if, by two-thirds vote of those voting, the student body expresses its dissatisfaction with the changes made in the Constitutional referendum of November 14, 1972," (i.e. the Constitution in its present form) "then all of the provisions of said referendum and all referenda made between November 14, 1972, and the date of the referendum provided for in this section" (the ratification on January 21, 1975 — italics mine) "shall cease to be effective after March 1, 1975, and automatically replaced with the immediately preceding Constitutional provisions."

The present Honor Court system and the RHA were both incorporated into the Constitution by referenda after November 14, 1972. Neither is provided for in the old, pre-1972 Constitution.

Therefore, both would be abolished if the referendum fails.

The decision to apply for an FM license for WCAR, the student radio station, was also approved by a referendum after November 14, 1972. No specific provision to establish an FM station was incorporated into the Constitution at that time, but neither was any radio station mentioned in the old Constitution.

If ratification failed, a question concerning WCAR-FM's constitutionality would probably arise, and its final completion (currently scheduled for this fall) would be blocked up for months or prevented entirely.

Why are these organizations important?

The new student judicial system, provided for in the "Instrument for Student Judicial Governance," was

Ben Steelman

More at stake than CGC

approved by referendum last spring. It incorporated several major changes in the old Honor Court system.

For the first time, students were admitted into the appeals process, through the establishment of a joint Student-Faculty Review Board. Previously, only professors had reviewed appealed cases.

Separate Undergraduate and Residence Courts were set up. Thus, for the first time, the system recognized a difference, at least in jurisdiction, between cheating on an exam, and say, throwing firecrackers out a window during a panty raid.

The Instrument included a Code of Student Conduct, which specified and limited the types of offenses for which a student could be tried, and the types of punishment he or she could receive.

Has all of this made any difference in how the Honor Court works? It's hard to tell. The new system has operated less than a year, and has not really proved itself either way. At the same time, though, a number of its provisions, on paper at least, provide for more student participation and control.

The RHA was established to replace

the old Residence College Federation. By involving several of the independent dormitories which belonged to no residence college, it was supposed to give dorm residents more bargaining clout with the Administration in housing matters.

By most indicators, RHA has been a disappointment. Despite its opposition, the Administration ordered a stop to room-by-room coed living on second floor Winston, and proceeded with the controversial room-by-room search of McIver last summer.

At the same time, though, RHA has undoubtedly encountered more Administration hostility than any other student organization.

Returning to RCF would only divide dorm residents and weaken the students' voice in the housing system. One can only wonder what the dorm situation would be like today, if there had been no RHA at all.

CGC probably needs to be reformed, and students can achieve these reforms themselves — by amending the present Constitution.

Ben Steelman is a member of CGC.

Dave Gephart

SL was clumsy, but representative

The institution of the Campus Governing Council to replace the Student Legislature, when students voted in 1972 to change the system, brought with it no noticeable improvement in Student Government. As of recently, the CGC is still being defended on the basis of its potential — witness the column in the DTH last Friday by Johnny Kaleel.

The reason there was no drastic improvement with CGC is that there was no drastic increase in Student Government — more interest by students is the only thing likely to improve Student Government here. CGC does not have the potential to do this — no system that concentrates governmental action in a few hands will arouse general interest.

For proof of this, we have only to look at the low voter turnouts in recent national elections. A government run by a few powerful men will invariably end up preoccupied by silliness, and eventually, dangerous loss of perspective, as in the Nixon years.

SL was indeed clumsy. It was also representative. It provided a method for influx of widely varied opinions to reach Student Government. Unlike CGC, the 55-member SL was able to retain its experienced members while constantly admitting new ones. The people in SL who were really into the SL trip constantly had to justify their motives and opinions to other members who were new, and therefore, critical. The new members, on the other hand, were able to receive the benefit of a lot of practice at student government by the experienced members.

The CGC just isn't big enough to provide such a forum.

If only three or four votes will elect a representative to determine how one-third of a million dollars is to be spent, it is better to have a large number of representatives. If there is a large number of representatives, individual students are more likely to know a representative. And people from a club or activity that needs help or money support are more likely to find a member interested in their cause — and more likely to find other representatives ready to criticize the cause if it is wrong. It is simply easier to know the representative if they represent 350 people instead of 1,000.

This writer has been involved with both forms of Student Government, and has seen how under CGC it is possible for Student Government to be run by a handful of people or a single person (as the others are inexperienced). I urge the return of the contentious, clumsy, Student Legislature — which is also the large, representative, wide-open, well-known SL. It will take two-thirds vote, so all votes are important.

Dave Gephart is a former student who served as Speaker Pro Tem of SL. He supported passage of the CGC in 1972.

David E. Duke

Protestors ignore human rights

speaking. They suppress me and the students' rights to hear anything on the supposed basis that I wish to suppress others! Talk about the pot calling the kettle black!

Another argument "anti-Klanists" have used is "He says nothing of value." It's always unique to watch the Marxist dialectic at work. It is ridiculous trying to ask them how they know what I say is of nothing of value (sic) if they don't hear what I have to say. And, none of these "equality-minded individuals" would ever conceive that perhaps all people do not value the same things that they do. They overlook basic human rights. Apparently over 2,000 people thought they would find something of value in my speech, whether as a reinforcement of their concepts, or an open testing of them, or as an exercise in what they consider to be entertainment (I hold no illusions).

Finally, these scions of logic say that I shouldn't speak because of all the things that I and the Klan have killed. I could say that I'm one up on the patron saint, Angela, in that I have never even been indicted of the crime. And if they allege that the Klan as an organization has sponsored murder, I'll contest that and, you know, if that is a reason for preventing speakers from talking at UNC, then Angela Davis and Jane Fonda should have never (sic) been allowed to speak—for how many millions were murdered by Marxists and Marxist organizations? How many died in Russia? In China? What?—I don't hear any cries for banning Marxist speakers from the lovers of justice and equality and freedom!

So there they were, the masters of freedom, armed sufficiently with their proletarian battalions, and there, alone,

was a fellow from Louisiana: me. I wonder how those (people) felt with their loud, mindless mouths, doing their part to end prejudice by pre-judging me before hearing me out. Did they feel smug in their efforts to end bigotry by espousing it? Yes, probably.

I don't really feel sorry for them, but I do feel for Chapel Hill students. When you think about it, they didn't stop my right to speak as much as they stifled your right to hear.

As a prominent speaker on the college tour I have traveled all over the United States and Canada and spoken to many, many major universities. This is the first appearance where heckling has prevented the audience from hearing me. I also know of no case in Chapel Hill's entire history when a speaker on the podium was prevented from speaking by hecklers.

I want to assure you of two things. First, I want you to know that I do not blame the student body for the treatment I received on stage by (sic) a hate-filled, bigoted and prejudiced minority. I blame only those who participated. I want to say also that the Carolina Union Program Committee treated me respectfully and courteously throughout the entire time I was in Chapel Hill.

I tried very hard for 45 minutes to enable you to judge for yourself the ideas the Klan represents. Later, I talked to a small, select group of mostly liberals, who will probably soon be picking apart my little talk to them and telling you what they think I would have said to you. Do you want to hear me for yourself? How hard will you now try to hear for yourself what I have to say?

I telephoned back to Baton Rouge as soon as I walked in this motel room (at

the University Motor Inn) and told my wife how things went and told her that if, over the next few days, any group at UNC wants me back, she should arrange my schedule accordingly, so that I could come back. A few students have offered some good ideas on how to get the speech heard. Those who wish to call may call (504)-293-4700, or write to Box 1234, Denham Springs, La., 70726.

If they can permanently prevent the student body of UNC from hearing my viewpoint, I wonder whose viewpoint will be next to be censored. Perhaps it will be yours?

Thanks for your thoughts, your commitment to true academic freedom and for reading this shoddy letter that is being finished at 2:15 a.m.

The Daily Tar Heel

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