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# The Daily Tar Heel

87th year of editorial freedom

## 'Abandon all hope, ye who enter here'

By BILL DURHAM



swimmer's goggles over his eyes.

"Down here we have a special show," he wheezed. "Please come zis way."

We followed him over to the side of the room, where the clatter was loudest. Dimly, I began to discern the forms of people talking on telephones and then rushing off. There were long lines for the telephones composed of even more dancers gesturing excitedly and taking notes.

"Zis is ze 'Smoke Filled Convention Room,'" coughed the maitre d'. "We have, at specially-designated places in ze room, people who smoke three packs of cigarettes per hour."

"Don't you think they're overdoing it?" I asked, breathing through my tie.

He didn't bother to reply, stepping hurriedly to the side as two performers sprinted in step past him from the telephones. They stopped and gesticulated feverishly to a girl sitting on top of a desk, and then all three walked away on their hands while clapping their feet.

"Follow me please," croaked our host, staggering toward a door marked "Honors Reading Room." "In here zere will be less smoke." He was right; as we pushed open the door and stepped into the dimly lit room there was a noticeable ease in breathing. There were but few people in the room and, squinting into the gloom, I noticed that they were engaged in deeply passionate activity. We stayed only long enough to take several deep breaths, then opened the door and sprinted to the top of the stairs.

"Ze top floor has pure air and is much more subdued," gasped the maitre d'. "Let us proceed."

We walked carefully up the stairs, keeping close to the rails to avoid the dancers pirouetting down the center. As we neared them we heard the rhythmic one-two-three pop-fizzing of diet soft-drink cans, keeping time. My roommate grabbed his girlfriend and waded into the fray; as we watched them disappear the maitre d' tugged at my elbow and said, "For those who do not dance we have a special show. Please come zis way." He led me over to the wall where there was a pencil sharpener and water fountain.

Suddenly there was a whistle and eight or nine dancers charged toward the wall from all directions. In a whirlwind of carefully choreographed activity they

swarmed the pencil sharpener and water fountain. Some tugged violently at the handle of the sharpener, creating a jagged roar. Others battered the water fountain, slurping noisily. Still others lounged in line, giggling and pointing.

"Zis occurs every 30 seconds, with slight variations each time," lisped my host. He looked at his watch and exclaimed, "Oh, no. It is almost midnight. Quick, down ze stairs or we will miss ze widely acclaimed 'Dance of the Baggers.'" As he saw me peer into the now shagging dancers he said, "Do not bother; you will never find them now." Grabbing me by the arm he hustled me downstairs.

Just as we reached the ground floor there was a sudden silence, and then a fanfare of pencil sharpeners and Coke cans. The floor cleared, and into the space minced three lines of dancers wearing identical costumes, each carrying one thin spiral notebook. They reached the middle of the floor in step, then spun off into three groups, fluttering their notebooks. They then regrouped and linked arms, hopping rapidly in circles. Then dropping to their knees and tossing away their notebooks they did somersaults, rolling in a complex formation.

"In just a moment zey will do zeur famous 'Libation,'" the maitre d' whispered, his eyes alight with anticipation.

The Baggers were now hopping on one leg with their fingers in their ears. As if by magic, they suddenly stopped and reached into their capacious pockets to pull out 16-ounce beer cans. Pulling the tops off with one practiced flip of the wrist, they held the cans aloft, and to the gasps of the crowd I looked up to the upper floor, where there was the heavy pop-fizz of the disco rhythm. Wisps of smoke were drifting up from the murky melee below. The incarnation was complete, and I walked through the doorway into the cool night beyond.

Bill Durham, a sophomore English major from Athens, Greece, is a staff writer for The Daily Tar Heel.

## The Kemeny report

In an attempt to give its members time to study the 44 changes recommended in the Kemeny report, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has declared a moratorium on granting licenses to nuclear power plants. The NRC's decision will stall the construction of seven plants at a cost of \$8 billion, but it is the only acceptable decision the NRC could make in light of the findings of the presidential commission that investigated the Three Mile Island accident.

Although the Kemeny report neither favored nor opposed the continued construction of nuclear power plants, it did recommend the implementation of numerous changes to keep the risks of nuclear energy within "tolerable limits."

Among the most important changes suggested were: abolition of the NRC and establishment of an executive branch agency with a single head; formation of a presidential oversight committee to monitor performance of the new agency and the design, construction and operation of future nuclear plants; a requirement that the federal government approve and all local and state emergency plans before giving any utility an operating license for a nuclear plant; and increasing the training and education given operators, for human error has been the cause of many nuclear accidents.

While many opponents will say the report highlights the shoddy operating procedures of the present nuclear system and ignores the danger of high level nuclear waste, proponents will maintain that the report cites no overriding public risk in the continued development of nuclear power. And even if the NRC takes to heart the changes recommended in the Kemeny report, there still will be no guarantee as to the future safety of nuclear power.

In the meantime, as the pros and cons and changes are debated, the energy situation in this country continues to deteriorate for lack of direction. The changes advocated by the Kemeny report might make nuclear energy safer; they might not. Unfortunately, it seems apparent that many in this country will not actively pursue alternative energy sources which, after all the haggling is over, would be safer, cheaper and more efficient.

## The 'crash' of '79

Is America's economy in a recession? Some say yes, some say no. One group of analysts asserts that the country took on recessionary traits last spring; another group says that America only now is crossing that fine line between prosperity and poverty. There is much disagreement over just what kind of shape the economy is in, but most analysts agree on at least one point: few similarities exist between economic conditions today and the catastrophe of the great stock market crash of 50 years ago.

The years following the Wall Street disaster of 1929 were frightening. The gross national product fell by almost a third; nonfarm unemployment spiraled to 36 percent. People who had lived in penthouses and rowhouses found themselves together in hunger marches parading the cold streets of America's cities. Veterans advanced on the White House. Thousands of vagabond children roamed the countryside. There was no unemployment compensation, no social security, no old age insurance; even government aid for the unemployed was prohibited by social mores. And as conditions grew worse, no one knew what had gone wrong, for the national leadership seemed unable to take command of the situation. There was even talk of armed rebellion and establishment of a new economic order.

In retrospect, the great crash of 1929 seems to have passed comfortably into the history books. Observers agree that October 1979 was a tough month for investors, even though it did not nearly approach the catastrophe of October 50 years ago. Events of October 1929 sent the whole country into an almost unimaginable frenzy; events of October 1979 merely separated the long-term investors interested in a sound economy from the short-term speculators looking for quick profits.

## Welcome change—maybe

The days when the FBI used derogatory information to combat advocates of unpopular causes have long since passed. We are out of that business forever.

—FBI Director William H. Webster

It has been almost two months since the FBI conceded that its agents sought to discredit actress Jean Seberg because of her support of black nationalist causes in the early 1970s. And since FBI Director William H. Webster's acknowledgment of the bureau's counterintelligence efforts against Seberg, attempts to reform the atmosphere in which the bureau once operated have become apparent.

For example, the bureau's proposed new charter, now under review by the Senate Judiciary Committee, would give agents administrative subpoena power to request financial records from banks and other institutions—in addition to outlining more clearly the bureau's functions. This attempt to delineate the agency's operations is commendable; as Webster himself said, any organization not certain of its mission is likely to exceed permissible bounds simply because it doesn't know what those bounds are.

But the new charter may turn out to be little more than a rubber stamp condoning the bureau's past notorious behavior. The chief witness testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee two weeks ago, University of Illinois Professor David Linowes, pointed out that the proposed charter, as it now stands, contains "several ambiguities and conflicts, which if not corrected, could result in effectively reducing some of the existing privacy protections in the law." Linowes recommended that the charter require FBI agents to obey the Right of Financial Privacy Act, notify an individual of a pending investigation of personal records at least 20 days before the probe begins, and restrict the information that agents can make available to other government agencies.

Enactment of some set of guidelines is necessary; but the proposed charter as it now stands, might be a step backward. History has illustrated painfully that the FBI never lets trifling documents such as The Bill of Rights impede its zealous quest to get its man. We hope that the proposed charter, with appropriate changes, will be an exception.

For those of you who spend hours on the sidewalk in front of Purdy's under the stern gaze of the imposing doorman, pitifully panting for a glimpse of the legendary Top Step, the news that there is a new hot spot in town should come as a welcome surprise.

This "new" hot spot actually has been around for quite some time, but a recent resurgence of chic, elegant patronage, combined with a floorshow studded with mind-boggling exotica, has brought it once again into prominence.

This den of delights goes by many names. Some call it "Bizarre Bob's." Others, "The House that House Built." To freshmen and chemistry majors, unfamiliar with the mysterious rites of the socially elite, it is known simply as the "Undergraduate Library."

Never one to miss out on an opportunity to expand my horizons, I recently took my roommate and his girlfriend to the Thursday night show. It was billed as an extravaganza of spectacular proportions, featuring several acts with top-flight imported talent, all culminating in the haunting "Dance of the Baggers."

We arrived fashionably late only to find the place swarming with people clad in a variety of evening dress. As we stepped through the door into the spacious entry we were met by the maitre d', a short gentleman in tails. Flashing my student I.D. (no charge for students), I boldly announced that we would like a table for three near the dance floor.

"Ah, m'sieur," he oozed, "ze show, she goes on all around you. You are, in fact, standing on ze dance floor zis minoot."

Astounded, we looked around us only to discover that he was absolutely right; intermingled with the other guest were unmistakable showpeople, clad in wonderful costumes. "To the table," I announced.

As we followed the maitre d' through the crowd I marveled at the ingenious decor. Amid shelves of what looked like books were several carrel-type desks and flat-topped tables; this place obviously catered to the intellectual stratum of Carolina society. As if to prove my point, several dancers suddenly pranced out from behind a bookshelf, twirled in step and trilled, "We've been studying oh so hard! It's time for us to take! What comes for us on the half hour: Another STUDY BREAK." And with that they cartwheeled through the door to the applause of the other guests.

The maitre d' then led us to a stairway leading to an upper and lower floor, and stopped to ask, "Would you like to sit upstairs, downstairs, or on zis level?"

"Let's go downstairs," I suggested. "We've already seen most of this level."

As we descended the staircase we dimly saw through a thick haze a bustle of movement. Simultaneously we heard the excited voices of many people. Wading into the smoke, I began to make out the forms of people rushing back and forth, stopping to exchange rapid comments in shrill voices.

This certainly is a change," I exclaimed, my eyes watering. I noticed that the maitre d' had placed a pair of

### letters to the editor

## Cohen supported in mayoral elections

To the editor:

I viewed with dismay your failure to endorse Gerry Cohen for mayor of Chapel Hill. It was suggested that Gerry could not work well with others in the community. As a member of the Carrboro Board of Aldermen, I can attest to his proven ability to deal with elected officials. He has a close working relationship with most of our board members and has assisted the Carrboro Community Coalition for many years.

Gerry Cohen has been in the vanguard in establishing and defending student rights, and encouraging their participation in government. He has also shown himself to be versatile and concerned for all segments of the Chapel Hill community.

He has also been an ardent supporter of the public transit system, and has worked to make the bus system meet people's needs while still getting the most for the tax dollar.

Gerry Cohen is an able, capable leader for all the community and he deserves your support.

Doug Sharer  
 115 Pine St.  
 Carrboro

### More on Cohen

To the editor:

I'm a junior at UNC and a member of the Democratic County Executive Committee. My brother is Gerry Cohen, candidate for mayor.

I was surprised to read in Thursday's DTH that the paper would not support Gerry for mayor. The editorial failed to mention anything that Gerry has done for students or the community. When a group tried to stop student voting in 1978, Gerry hired a lawyer and helped research the brief the Supreme Court cited in expanding voting rights. When voters were challenged, Gerry mailed a memo to 2,500 voters explaining how to defend the challenge. In contrast, the DTH cited Joe Nassif as an advocate of student voting, when in fact, since 1972, the only election when registration was not allowed on campus was when Joe Nassif was on the Board of Elections.

Gerry Cohen was an advocate of the bus system long before it was popular. He helped get the federal grant to expand bus service this fall. The DTH is always writing editorials asking for more bus service, yet it endorsed for council Jimmy Wallace who led the fight to cut bus service 30 percent in 1976. Now, the DTH refuses to support Cohen for mayor. This makes no sense, and makes me wonder how the DTH has chosen its set of candidates.

Stephen Cohen  
 216 E. Rosemary St.

### RCP claim disputed

To the editor:

This letter is in reference to a letter published by Bob Sheldon on Oct. 30. I think it's great that he got press coverage for the RCP, but only because I feel this is a free country and believe in the First Amendment!

He speaks of "unbalanced coverage,"



'INTO THE WILDERNESS, I SAY, AND INTO THE WILDERNESS WE GO!'

"shoddy journalism" and an unbalanced negative coverage. If this is the case, why was his article published in the first place? After all, would a communist country be so liberal as to publish a "capitalism article"? Dubious indeed, Mr. Sheldon. Why is coverage of U.S. activities and western "capitalism" so limited and censored in communist countries? If Mr. Sheldon has heard any of the radio broadcasts from the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe, he should know that if this country were so bad as all of that, he would not only be deprived of media coverage, but would find himself behind bars without so much as an ounce of publicity.

What of the human rights issue? Take a look at what happens in Communist countries when anything is written which is derogatory toward the government. Is the media not under strict censorship in the People's Republic? It was even worse when Mao was dictator. Would his regime have published "shoddy journalism"? Of course not, but would they publish anything without political overtones and propaganda-saturated nonsense? Not in my opinion.

Your wonderful-sounding communist perfection sounds great on paper, yet none of the communist nations have been successful in producing true communism because this is impossible! Take a given situation: Wherever three people are placed together, one will dominate. This is dictatorship, and that is what Mao Tse tung was in the truest sense of the word. True communism isn't possible, because humans can't be reduced to the state that we find in lower animals.

I do feel Mao did much to alleviate suffering and hunger in his country. Yet Mr. Sheldon and his cronies fail to realize one fact: This IS not China and our

problems are as far from those of the People's Republic as the United States is from them geographically.

Bill Brown  
 Chapel Hill

### Life of Brian

To the editor:

Yeah! Let's hear it for religion. The same people who put the guilt in sex are now trying to ruin something almost as fun. Who needs censorship when we have the church? Monty Python's *Life of Brian* is not a comic pinko atheist plot to seduce good old American values. It is satiric entertainment; in fact much more entertaining, not to mention meaningful, than any sermon I have ever heard.

How many of these holy rollers have been to see the movie they so heatedly condemn? What is so threatening about *Life of Brian* that they must attempt to prevent its showing? Maybe it forces them to recognize, to think about for once, the blindness of their faith. Worse yet, maybe their parishioners start to think. Attendance and, still worse, contributions might drop off. Surely there is no difference between the great Shoe vs Gourd debate and the Fundamentalist vs Revisionist clashes. I heard somewhere that Christians were supposed to turn the other cheek. Are these the type of people who never cast the first stone? It seems like the Christians are playing the lions these days.

People who take themselves too seriously are always ripe for satire. Freedom of religion does not mean religious freedom to oppress. Whether or not the picture is sacrilegious is for the individual to decide. How can that decision be made if he can't see the movie? What is good for the majority is no

concern of an uninformed minority. That is a fact the Church has ignored consistently throughout its 1979 year history. The Romans thought they knew what was good for everyone and tried to stomp out Christianity. Maybe they were right.

Ashley Burnham  
 714 Morrison

### Y sponsors fast

To the editor:

The Hunger Action Committee of the Campus Y is sponsoring a Fast for a World Harvest on Nov. 15. In conjunction with this, Servomation has agreed to let all meal planners come by their office in Chase between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on this Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 7 and 8, and have as many meals as that person cares marked off for Nov. 15. Servomation will then send the money that would normally be spent preparing the food for these meals to the Y. We at the Y will then, in turn, send this and all other proceeds from the fast to Oxfam-America, a self-help developmental agency based in Boston.

For more information on this rebate plan, Oxfam or the fast in general, I would encourage everyone to stop by our table in the Pit this or next week. Servomation has been very cooperative in this project, and I would like to thank them publicly for this cooperation.

The problem of world hunger is enormous, but not unconquerable. I encourage all those on the meal plan to take this opportunity to help alleviate what is a way of life for one-fourth of the world's population.

Dan Stringfield,  
 Co-chairperson, Hunger  
 Action Committee