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The Daily Tar Heel

88th year of editorial freedom

The symbolic bag lunch

As much as students generally and *The Daily Tar Heel* in particular complain about the relentlessly repressive University administrators, things could be a whole lot worse. Most of us have only to recall our years in high school—and high school principals—to realize how much less stubborn the wrong-headed UNC administrators are.

Consider, for example, the action taken recently by the principal of Raleigh's Athens Drive High School. Some students at Athens Drive were distressed that there the school's lunch period had been cut from 50 to 35 minutes each day; principal Marion G. Batey contended that the shorter lunch break didn't give the students time to get in trouble. Presumably he thought students couldn't smoke as much or drink as much or get as far away from campus in 35 minutes, and he may be right.

Nevertheless, the principal's edict aroused the student body, and several students organized a protest of the new lunch-time policy. They boycotted the school cafeteria and brought bag lunches instead. That, the principal decided, was going too far.

Administrators took names in the lunchroom and suspended six students who admitted they were protesting. It is not normally against the rules at Athens Drive to eat a bag lunch, so the administrators had a difficult time figuring out who was protesting and who was just eating lunch. That makes Batey's lame contention that the students violated school board policy by disrupting the school even more ridiculous.

It is difficult to imagine how a student eating a bag lunch could be using "passive resistance, noise, threat, fear, intimidation, coercion, or any other form of conduct" to disrupt "any lawful function or process of the school." About all they were passively resisting was the cafeteria food, and that is an intelligent choice in most cases.

Batey suspended the students not because they were eating bag lunches, but because they tried to attach political significance to that act. That, for the record, is called symbolic speech, and principal Batey was treading on the free speech guarantee in the First Amendment. He argued that not to suspend the students would make him a "weak administrator who should be replaced." He is right, but for the wrong reason.

Any administrator who would feel threatened by a bag-lunch boycott over a school policy and would so misconstrue Raleigh school board policy is weak, and should be replaced. Ask a First Amendment law scholar, or a student at Athens Drive Senior High.

The Klan

In the hills of northern Alabama, a commando unit of the Ku Klux Klan is training for a race war. An obstacle course has been set up, and, as the 10 men and one woman cross a log bridge and run through tires, they fire at a human silhouette target 100 yards away.

The Klan is preparing to provide "security" for its members at rallies and to kill black people in "the race war that's coming," their leader said in Alabama. With important court cases involving blacks and whites pending in Decatur and Birmingham, the Klan has pledged to protect white people in any riot or disturbance after the verdicts. "We won't stand for them killing white people," said Roger Handley, Alabama's Grand Dragon of the Invisible Empire. "The Klan special forces will wade through the blood to retaliate."

It is difficult to ascertain how many of these commando units are training in the country; one Klan leader claims teams are located in Mississippi, Georgia, Tennessee and two northern states. But it is inconceivable how even one of these groups could be justified. North Carolina already has paid a price for the actions of armed Klansmen when five people were shot in Greensboro on Nov. 3. And despite claims by Klansmen that their future actions would be taken only in defense, their preparations for war and their past actions clearly indicate their eagerness to fight at the slightest provocation.

Apparently, the lesson of this summer's riots in Miami, when men and women were wounded and killed, has been lost on the Klan. Perhaps even more distressing, the success of Klan candidates in state primaries, like the strong showing of Harold Covington in the N.C. race for attorney general in the spring, shows that the violence and blatant racism that the Klan represents is gaining more followers daily.

In many ways it is fitting that the commando team in Alabama chose the name My Lai for their camp—in honor of Lt. William Calley, the man who carried out the destruction of a civilian village in Vietnam. If the Klan takes its violence to the streets of Decatur, Birmingham or even Greensboro to "prevent another Miami," the real victims will not be a cursed black enemy but rather fellow human beings, the same civilians Calley annihilated.

Grand Dragon Handley is not active in the unit because he is temporarily disabled, but he is not discouraged. "I have a lot of time to think and plan for the white race," he said. If Handley and his friends had kept their prejudice to themselves we could only pity them, but their turn to active militarism demands utter condemnation. This country has indeed made strides in combating racism during the past 20 years, but there can be no question that racism, even in its most pronounced and violent form, is far from dead.

The Bottom Line

Surprise

We all have troubles rolling out of the sack these days, especially when we don't know what's ahead of us.

Imagine what Richard Melton of Columbia, S.C., felt like, though, when he got up last Friday and found his 43-year-old wife Ursula giving birth to a baby that neither of them expected.

"I thought I was passing gallstones," Mrs. Melton said. The gallstone weighed 7 pounds, 10 ounces.

Mrs. Melton, a heavy-set woman who said she visited a physician one month ago because of swollen feet but didn't have a complete physical,

said she had no idea she was pregnant. She had thought she was having gall-bladder problems for the better part of a year, but the pains would come and go.

She said of her reactions to the incident of last Friday, "I felt a pressure and then another big pressure and there was the baby."

For Mr. Melton, who had risen early to help his wife deliver the Columbia *State* newspaper, it was the surprise of his life when he found her in the bath tub with their third child, a girl, whom they named Shirley Irene. She and her suprised mother are fine.

And that's the bottom line.

Murphy's Law was written in line

By BUDDY BURNISKE

It's 12:20 and you're waiting in line. Class starts in 10 minutes. You desperately need food to stay awake so you've wandered into the newly named, universally acclaimed, Fast Break to grab a quick bite and slip into class right on time.

You scope the scene. Two lines work their way back from the counter that separates customers from those frenzied automatons called ARA employees. The other line is much shorter than the one you're in. A female customer turns away with a trail of five suitors with lost appetites in her wake, shortening the line even more. You step into that line. Good move, kid.

Slowly you're nudging up to the counter. You mumble obscenities when the girl dressed in leotards decides to go on an eating binge that would humble an offensive guard at the Ehringhaus training table. But then you look behind you and smile with satisfaction when you see that the guy who arrived at the same time as you and chose the other line is nine people back while only two people separate you from a quick culinary treat. You make a fatal mistake, though—you congratulate yourself for having done well in this bout with the "waiting game."

That's when the french fries really hit the fan. The ARA automaton screeches when her electronic register shreds the laminated card that those people are forever stuffing into the mouth of those machines. VOID starts to blink across the register in bold neon letters. A manager comes out



Waiting in line again... things always go wrong

with his master key and calms the belligerent automaton down.

The guy you "outsmarted" is now a few people back and gaining momentum while you stand motionless in line. You watch with remorse as he passes, then orders his fish sandwich, grabs a napkin and straw and turns away. It's 12:31 and you want to eat badly. Class has started. The teacher probably is taking roll. The only roll you want is the kind you eat. Why do you always stand in the wrong line?

I've made a habit of standing in wrong lines for as long as I can remember. I'm not talking about long lines, but wrong lines. Lord knows we all wait through our share of lengthy lines around here, be they scholarship, basketball or book-buying lines. What I'm griping about are the lines that parallel others, often longer ones, and seduce you with a deceiving brevity that breaks down indefinitely to ruin a day.

In grade school I always seemed to fall into the one crooked line that had to wait while all the quiet, straight lines filed past into the lunch room. We weren't trying to be crooked, honest. But Mrs. Breor, our principal, wouldn't have anything to do with that nonsense. We were crooked, that's all that mattered, and until we straightened out we wouldn't eat lunch. I've straightened out, but I still can't eat lunch—or make other purchases without finding the slowest line.

Friends have said it's all psychological. Everyone thinks their line is moving slower than it actually is, especially when they have things to do. But then why is it that when I have nothing to do store cashiers take it upon themselves to give me something to do—namely, wait. I've lived through overruns, underruns, cashiers running out of change or going on break as I step to the counter. Customers with life-supply purchases, bad checks and plastic money that takes 10 minutes of telephone verification also manage to get in the way. All the while, the adjacent lines that I bypassed for the gem I stand in shuffle along without a hitch. It happens all too frequently.

I thought my luck with the wrong-line nemesis was about to change when they introduced "Express Lanes" at supermarkets. It didn't. I quickly learned that these lanes were a vicious deception, conceived to further frustrate me and my unsuspecting cohorts of the waiting game.

I was at a local supermarket recently, standing in the express lane, when two elderly women pushed in front of me as though I was made of the cellophane that ordained half the produce in their small hand baskets.

"Uh, ladies, excuse me," I said. "But are you getting in line?"

"Yes," said the first. The second one just threw a metallic stare at me.

"Well, I'm sorry but I was here."

"I know," said the first. Again the second looked coldly at me.

"Well if you know, would you mind letting me get in front of you?"

"No, I'm sorry, but I can't let you do that," said the first. Another menacing look came from No. 2.

"Look, I don't know what's going on here but I'd appreciate it if you'd go to the end of the line like most people. I've got a lot to do and..."

"You've got more than 10 items there."

"What?"

"You've got more than 10 items there." It was old steel face speaking.

"What are you talking about?" I asked.

"Oh, don't give me that young man. It's young people like you who are ruining America," she said. She spoke crisply, opening her pursed lips like a piranha then closing them shut with satisfaction when they were finished. "You're undermining the American way. The entire system. Everyone of us has the right to sit on you for trying to cheat the system."

I looked down into my yellow hand basket to check the items it held. I've never been one to count items exactly, but figured if they weren't spilling out over the top of the basket I must be within the rules. Even so, I knew there couldn't be more than a dozen items in hand just then. But that wasn't what my elderly upholders of the American way saw.

According to them the supermarket ruled that items wrapped by the patron could no longer be counted as a single item in one plastic bag. I had a bag of six apples, another with four oranges and yet another with a bunch of grapes. At best approximation metal face said I had somewhere around 83 items in my basket and had no right to get in the way of those who obeyed the rules. Mrs. Breor had caught me again.

For the silent majority of wrong-line sufferers out there, I advise one of two tactics. Either stand and bear it as you do now, or switch lines the next time yours breaks down. But don't do it the way we've learned to do it, taking a sideways step. Walk to the front of the line, push the leader out of place and let everyone know that the breakdown lane regulars won't take it anymore.

Buddy Burniske, a junior English major from Hatfield, Mass. is editorial assistant for *The Daily Tar Heel*.

letters to the editor

Hall too restrictive for Anderson crowd

To the editor:

I just returned from an unsuccessful attempt to see John Anderson. I'm not complaining about my lack of success—I should have gotten there earlier. I would like to make some comments about crowd behavior and crowd control.

Apparently, the persons responsible for the event did not foresee the size of the crowds that turned out to greet Anderson. They must have predicted that only a few persons would appear. That is the only thing which can explain the total lack of any ushers or persons engaged in calming down the crowd. As I left, I heard the crowd at one of the entrances chanting, "Push! Push! Push!" in a vain attempt to enter the already-filled hall.

Surely there must be more reasonable ways to control crowds than by mob action. At the very least, an usher could be stationed at the head of each aisle to let people in if there were seats available and to stop people from entering the hall if there were none left (there were none left 20 minutes before the scheduled noon start of the event). The whole event was flagrantly against all fire laws that I am aware of and also smacked of just bad planning.

The second set of comments that I would like to make is directed against the crowd, or at least certain members. Apparently, some persons there were convinced that even though the hall was absolutely filled, with no room even in the aisles, simple physical force was sufficient to make more room. I was standing in the middle of the aisle, right at the door, and was verbally abused several times for my failure to move forward. I would like to express my regrets to all those who became perturbed about my lack of motion, but you can't squeeze blood from a stone. It's better to check first than just mindlessly push.

Paul Thompson
Chapel Hill



EXCLUSIVE EYEWITNESS ILLUSTRATION OF JOHN ANDERSON

On Moral Majority

To the editor:

In the article, "The New Right: Evangelicals Preach Chilling Word" (*DTH*, Sept. 26), William Durham, employing biased distortions, inaccuracies and scare tactics, implied that Christian voters are power-hungry religious fanatics who intend to wage a holy war on nonbelievers. As a Catholic who is *not* a member of Moral Majority, I would like to respond to his charges.

Moral Majority, whose members believe in Biblical moral principles, is a non-denominational, bipartisan organization that does not endorse any particular candidate. Because its membership is non-denominational, it was attacked by an evangelist for

fraternizing with "nonbelievers" instead of converting them. This ecumenical participation alone makes it clear that Durham's attempt to label the "New Right" as the self-styled "gateway to God" is merely a desperate effort to discredit its adherents.

Durham is afraid that putting the government into the hands of God-fearing people will result in the complete loss of individual rights. He apparently has forgotten that this country was founded by Christians and non-Christians who respected Biblical principles and that these principles are the basis of the rights and laws he now enjoys. No one need worry about being unable to practice his or her pet vices; immorality will always exist in the world, whether openly or privately. The

goal of the "New Right" is not to organize execution squads for sinners (otherwise we would all be under sentence) but rather to set the moral tone of the country in line with the Judeo-Christian principles upon which this country was founded through the election of responsible men of both political parties who believe and defend these principles.

Patricia A. Michael
Raleigh

Liddy speech

To the editor:

We would like to take this opportunity to express our concern over the occurrence of an event which we deem both an outrage and an embarrassment. The event to which we refer is the speaking engagement Wed. Oct. 1 of Watergate conspirator G. Gordon Liddy sponsored by the Carolina Union. In our opinion, the payment of student funds to a man whose appeal is based solely on his involvement in a political scandal that degraded the American system of government is a glorification and condonation of criminal acts.

Furthermore, the affiliation of the University with such an individual, whether through Union sponsorship of the event or through individual attendance, must be viewed as an embarrassment to the University community as a whole. Proudly, we can say that we took no part in this event though this alone is of little consolation. We hope to encourage the Union to be more responsible to the University community and the American people in the future.

Bill Crimmins
306 Mangum
Keith Brown
306 Wesley Foundation

