

The Daily Tar Heel

91st year of editorial freedom

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Mirror image

The one bright spot in the nomination of Edwin Meese III for the Attorney General post, is that he will bring no surprises. No political analyst will work hard to predict what stands Meese will have on legal and civil rights matters. As one critic said, Meese is President Reagan's conservative California cowboy.

He will be filling the shoes of William French Smith, shoes that have proven to be extraordinarily clumsy and forever pointing to the right. Smith took this position of upholding justice and used it as a political tool to attack freedom of information legislation while strengthening government secrecy. He effectively halted progress on busing and affirmative action programs, even cases involved in important litigation. And perhaps more noteworthy, he attempted to win tax exempt status for private schools that racially discriminate.

Meese matches Smith on every one of these stands, perhaps even more fervently. As Smith did, Meese favors capital punishment and relaxed rules for evidence in trials. He is the prime architect of the Reagan administration's effort to re-arm the Civil Rights Commission, making it anti-civil rights, yet more in line with present administration.

To be fair, Meese will bring to office law experience that has stretched 26 years from when he first applied for a position in the office of a California district attorney. Since then, he has served as the director of the Center of Criminal Justice Policy and Management at the University of California San Diego Law School. And for the past three years, he has worked in the Reagan White House.

But even if he hasn't been actually riding the range, he still brings to office the cowboy mentality typical of the Reagan administration, a mentality that can simplify complex issues into right and wrong, right and red, right and immoral. To him, the ACLU is a criminal's lobby. A progressive income tax is "immoral" and James Watt was a first-class Secretary of the Interior. Meese even devised a way to rid the United States of its hunger problem — he simply decided that there wasn't one.

It's likely that Meese and his law-and-order approach to judicial conflicts will win confirmation from the Republican-controlled Senate. For Reagan that means a sharpened weapon in a strategic position. With Meese in the saddle, the president may be able to completely undo much of the progress made by this country in the last 30 years.

Importing ideas

A resolution most likely made by many Americans earlier this month was to "buy American" in 1984. Sure, the U.S. economy is on the upswing — or at least the experts tell us it is — but we know of the hard times which persist in such areas as Detroit and Pittsburgh, where the automobile and steel industries flounder in a sea of foreign, especially Japanese, competition. We, the buyers of Toyota cars and Fuji cameras and Sony stereo components, feel guilty, and we feel patriotic about that guilt.

It is that guilt, however, that blinds us to the lessons to be learned from the very nations who threaten the survival of certain U.S. industries. We are a narcissistic people, quick to assume that any fault in the American economy can be remedied from the inside and solved in accordance with traditional American ways of doing things. Instead of recognizing the miraculous way in which the Japanese have rebounded from the devastation of World War II, many Americans have responded to Japanese competition in a frighteningly xenophobic fashion. Such a reaction ignores the reality behind the how and why of Japan's new-found technological supremacy.

The Japanese owe much of their success to the model provided by the United States. Humility and a curiosity about new ideas characterized post-War Japan, and those qualities instilled in the nation both the motivation and the means to achieve prosperity. Much of Japanese schooling concentrated on understanding what made the U.S. economy work. This attention to American culture may be precisely what makes Japanese producers so adept at marketing products in the United States.

Now, however, it is our turn to look at the Japanese model. Guilt and loyalty alone on the part of U.S. citizens won't go a long way; sooner or later, we will all succumb to purchasing foreign products which are better-made than their American counterparts. Moreover, patriotism will do little for American products competing in foreign markets. What we all need to do is shed a bit of our cultural vanity and pay serious attention to the methods of Japanese success: cooperative management, improved quality control, and a heightened dedication to education, for example. We must realize what our forefathers did — that an examination of the successes and failures of methods already employed elsewhere is the best formula for success.

The Bottom Line

"An apple a day keeps the doctor away," or so the saying goes. But what about a pot of liquor? Perhaps not for an 8-year old, but at least one doctor — and one sheriff — in Nevada think some elderly folks can improve their health by tipping a spoonful every night.

Nevada County Sheriff Julius DeLaughter has taken to redistributing the alcohol wealth in his county, confiscating open liquor in automobiles and doling it out sparingly to those of the older generation who say their doctor recommends a few drops every day. Dr. Charles Avery supports such a prescription, saying that small doses of alcohol help circulation and increase appetite.

But Nevada prosecutor Kirk Johnson says the sheriff's medical practices violate state law that says all confiscated open liquor containers are to be emptied into sinks. A report stating Johnson's complaints listed no criminal wrongdoing, however, and DeLaughter continues to ladle away.

A Pack of PACs

Some critics have said that political action committees are getting out of control, but Richard Grayson seems not to agree.

Grayson, an unemployed English teacher from North Miami Beach, Fla., has registered more than his fair share of PACs. Among them: "Citizens Who Think Nancy Reagan Should Eat More;" "The Committee to Make El Salvador the 51st State;" and "Absent-Minded Professors for Something or Other." His PAC "The Committee for Immediate Nuclear War" has offered a solution to the problems of boredom and soap operas.

Although Grayson has two humor books to his credit, the royalties from them are not enough to make ends meet. So between trips to the unemployment office, he registers PACs with the Federal Election Commission. A recent PAC whose name satirizes anti-abortionists is called "The Right to Be the Life of the Party."

Grayson does more than register committees; he's running for president as a Democratic candidate. His preferred choice for a running mate? Jane Wyman.

"She has experience dumping Reagan," Grayson told *The Wall Street Journal*.

But like all politicians, Grayson has ulterior motives for running.

"When I go down to the unemployment office I have to prove that I'm looking for work," he said. "I figure that the presidency is a good job."

And that's the bottom line.

Checking some facts

By STEVE GRIFFIN

Right to Life demonstrations held this past week make it obvious that abortion is still a controversial issue, 11 years after *Roe vs. Wade*. In addressing this issue, as with any controversial issue, it is imperative to keep an objective and open-minded stance. Facts concerning this issue should be presented accurately and in a documentable manner. David Fazio and Tracey St. Pierre's "Walking for life," (*DTH*, Jan. 20) does not follow these guidelines.

Fazio and St. Pierre state that science confirms the uniqueness of human life from conception. Though each fertilized egg carries a unique genetic composition, this does not acknowledge that each sperm and egg cell is alive and unique before conception and that their fusion does not necessarily represent the formation of a new life. Whether life begins at conception is a matter of semantics and personal opinion that science cannot address.

The authors also claim that by the eleventh week of development, the fetus needs nothing other than nutrition, and then the authors state that babies as young as 18 weeks have survived outside the womb. By our calculations this is almost a two-month difference, indicating that there is more than simply the adding of nutritive substances going on.

In addition to this, we were able to uncover the following discrepancies with some research.

Fazio and St. Pierre's "fact": Pregnancies from rape and incest are extremely rare (none of 1,000 rape victims who received immediate medical attention became preg-

nant) and provide the rationale for less than 1 percent of all abortions.

Reality: Rape Crisis Center Director Mary Ann Chap quoted FBI estimates that less than 20 percent of all rapes are reported. In light of these statistics, St. Pierre and Fazio cannot assume that all women impregnated by acts of rape or incest will admit this as the reason for their abortion.

To prove their point, the authors glibly pointed at the study indicating that rape victims who received immediate medical attention didn't become pregnant. In doing this they simply betray their ignorance of medical practices and reproductive biology. The medical attention to which they refer nearly always involves the administration of DES, a drug that causes any conception that may have occurred to abort.

Fazio and St. Pierre's "fact": Five thousand N.C. couples wanted to adopt children in 1980 but had to remain childless.

Reality: Joan Silvey of the state adoption services said Tuesday that "what we have is families waiting for healthy, white infants. We have many babies each year who are not adopted." Again our authors have oversimplified a complex issue. They conveniently ignore children whose racial composition or state of health impairs their chances of being adopted.

Fazio and St. Pierre's "fact": There is no world population problem. The world's population could all live within an area the size of Texas.

Reality: This contention is too ludicrous to consider.

At this point we would like to say that we are members of Protestant churches and do not feel that our pro-choice stance is at odds with our religious creed. An-

parently we are not alone, because a 1980 Gallup poll reveals that only 18 percent of Americans favor totally banning abortion. Unless only 18 percent of Americans belong to the Judeo-Christian tradition, Fazio and St. Pierre's claim that abortion is wrong from such a perspective is false. They state that "he (God) recognizes the unborn as human beings." We don't personally claim to know how God views abortion, so we find it surprising to learn that two people right here in Chapel Hill have their own hotline to him.

We have other reasons for endorsing the pro-choice position. There is no infallible method of birth control. Most methods achieve a success rate of 90 percent or less in practice. A couple who desires sexual relations and practices birth control should not be forced to unwillingly assume the lifelong obligations of parenthood due to an unavoidable, unexpected birth-control failure.

In summary, St. Pierre and Fazio claim membership in an organization called the Chapel Hill Sanctuary of Life Committee. If human life is to be truly sacred and sanctified, we feel that some minimal level of quality of life must be assured. In short, no child should be subjected to a home environment in which he is neither wanted nor properly provided for. Until pro-lifers are willing to provide for infants after their birth, instead of merely allowing for their birth, the primary beneficiaries of a right-to-life stance are those who wish to soothe their own consciences.

Steve Griffin is a senior zoology major from Fayetteville. Seniors Chris Beard and Larry Doochin also contributed to this column.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Speaking his 'pieces' of mind

To the editor:

In response to the two letters concerning the movie *Pieces* ("Spare yourself," *DTH*, Jan. 23 and "Violence against women," *DTH*, Jan. 24), I think the point has been missed. Horror films have almost always depicted women in violent acts. Remember the shower scene with Janet Leigh in *Psycho*?

The real problem with *Pieces* is not the typical violence, but the fact that the film is terrible both as horror and as a movie in general. The plot is stupid and the acting atrocious. The dialogue has been redubbed, and the film quality is muddy-looking. I think the script was written by a third-grade class from Fuquay.

Teresa Lynch says, in an earlier letter, that "a high percentage of men who came

alone to the movie, sat in the front rows, and were mesmerized by the power depicted on the screen." Give me a break! What power! *Pieces* makes *Friday* the 13th look like an Academy Award-winner. Laughter from the audience is the only power felt, as it bounces off the screen and walls of the theater.

Lynch also says the movie "plants the seeds in the minds of the maniacal." She is right. I had to be crazy to pay to see the worst film of my life!

So let it be known that *Pieces*, like other horror films, is not uncommon in its depiction of violence against females. It is, however, uncommonly bad as a film.

Tyler Glover
Stacy



Picky, picky

To the editor:

I really hate to make a big deal out of nothing, especially since that is precisely what Charles Brewer did in his letter to the editor, "Get a calculator," (*DTH*, Jan. 22). During my years as a

math major and teacher's assistant at UNC, I fell victim to more than my share of rudimentary arithmetical errors. No big deal. Somehow I managed to land myself a real job upon graduation, and guess what? The people at work make

mistakes, too! That doesn't mean for a minute that they are lacking in common sense.

When Brewer enters the job market, (which we in the workaday world await eagerly with bated breath), he should

keep in mind the following sum:

Arrogance
+ Superior Attitude
Poor Job Interview
= Scott Haviland
Vauxhall Pl.

In the midst of student apathy ...

SEEDS offers concrete proposals

By MARSHALL MILLS

Student government is a meaningless waste of effort in the eyes of the students it supposedly represents. In last year's elections for student body president, 40 percent of the mere 20 percent who voted supported a joke candidate, "Hugh G. Reckshun," who practically promised to close down the ostensibly crucial Executive Branch. The tragedy of this disdain is that it was rarely justified and remains so.

Admittedly, student government does perform important service functions. The legislative branch, the Campus Governing Council, allocates a portion of our student fees totaling \$290,000 to campus activity groups and to establish services such as Student Legal Services. The ponderous Executive Branch bureaucracy struggles to voice student concerns in administrative decisions of the University, such as mandatory meal plans for some students in the dorms. Yet these functions are almost entirely managerial or reactive in nature.

This emphasis on management and reaction necessarily narrows the base of participation in student government. These detailed, involved tasks, while of benefit to students, are, in actuality, of little interest to the general student body. An unfortunate consequence of this lack of participation is that a small, close-knit group tends to operate student government, making representation of broader student concerns difficult. In fact, this measure of isolation makes it easy for those individuals involved to advance primarily their own interests — gaining experience and padding resumes — which is all too prevalent now. As long as student government limits its role, there is no attraction for widespread involvement.

Yet immense potential exists for a student government that takes an active, progressive role in the world around it. A democratic system is only as effective as the individuals who comprise it. In an America in which only half of those eligible to vote do so, the democratic ideal is very far from realized. But a university community, rich in diverse ideas and in informed, searching minds, is fertile ground to strive for this American ideal. The contributions of student activism to the social advances of the '60s illustrates this seemingly forgotten democratic opportunity.

The only way to solve problems and seize opportunities is to become actively

involved in them. This principle holds true for the individual student as well as for student government as a whole. Amazing as it may seem to us in Carolina Blue Heaven, problems do exist in our community and in the world around us. For example, the legacy of racism is with us at UNC in the low proportion of black students and their concentration in less-convenient housing on South Campus. The little consideration student government has given this problem became apparent when concerns and actions welling up from the student body as a whole were responded to in a belated and repetitive manner. In a broader context, the deepening poverty and unrest in the Third World, the growing dangers of nuclear technology, and the return to militaristic intervention abroad give ample reasons for students to participate in every way possible in order to democratically shape policy for the present and future.

For this purpose, Students Effectively Establishing A Democratic System (SEEDS) has established itself as a campus political party. In the upcoming student elections, SEEDS is running candidates for the Campus Governing Council in order to activate student government. As a start, SEEDS is drawing up a platform of concrete proposals on relevant issues to direct attention to such issues rather than on candidate personalities. The meeting to ratify this platform is this Friday at 2 p.m. in the Carolina Union. The proposals will involve student government's taking a lead on issues such as segregated housing, the University Endowment Fund profiting from business in racist South Africa and the protection of minority groups from discrimination on campus. Also SEEDS candidates are researching the possibility of including UNC in the evacuation zone in the event of a meltdown at the Shearon Harris nuclear power plant, twenty-five miles from campus. Additionally, the possibility of student government's supporting education on social issues beyond the campus, such as nuclear arms and military intervention, will be explored.

Essentially, the most apparent problem SEEDS is acting on is that of student government itself. Currently, its role is too limited and its participation is too narrow. An active political party concerned with issues can improve our democratic system. The diversity of SEEDS and the pledge of its candidates to maintain communication can broaden and therefore improve our democratic

system. If another group of students shares our concern for the world but disagrees with our suggestions for its problems, we would welcome the formation of another campus political party. It is through positive action and genuine political debate that student interest and awareness will grow.

Apathy is a vicious cycle. Not caring creates a situation in which caring is difficult. Let's break the cycle. The world faces enormous problems, and in a

democracy, addressing these problems involves everyone. To the '60s' exultant cry, "We can change the world," we in the '80s add, "and we must." SEEDS can blossom into a new social awareness on the grounds of UNC.

Marshall Mills is a sophomore international studies major from Charlotte. Ashley Osment, a junior peace, war and defense major from Sylva, helped with this column.

Elections are important

By JO ELLEN MEEKINS

Two of the most embarrassing facts I have ever had to admit about this university were the names of our 1983 Homecoming Queen (Yure Nnomma) and one of our student body president candidates (Hugh G. Reckshun).

Just as embarrassing, however, is the number of students who voted in those elections.

If anything has come out of past joke candidacies, I hope it has been student awareness — awareness of what can happen when students do not care.

The problem is not that students do not care about anything. We hear the protests in the Pit everyday. We read the letters to the editor. We complain to our roommates that Journalism 54 means \$54 worth of books. Everybody is concerned about something. When the time comes to do something about our complaints, unfortunately, the caring often stops.

The students who have not voted in past elections have something in common with those who voted for joke candidates: Either they do not care or they wish to make the statement that "nobody cares." "Nobody cares" is the statement of a serious problem. Those voters and non-voters forgot, however, that stating a problem does not solve it. Why does nobody care? What needs to be done that is not being done? Is there a candidate who shares our own concerns and will support what we want? If not, can we find someone who will? Would we be willing to run

for office ourselves?

I refuse to believe that "nobody cares," and I hope that the results of the upcoming campus elections will prove me right. Maybe by now students have learned from past mistakes. Maybe this year they care enough about what happens at this university to consider candidates carefully and knowingly vote for those who they believe will represent their views. "Eeny Meeny Miney Mo" is not a responsible way to determine what next year will be.

Now, just before elections, is a good time to start making improvements. There seem to be more candidates running this year, which is a good sign. Find out who they are. Listen to their campaign speeches in the dorm halls. Go to the debates in the lobby. Ask the candidates questions and let them know what students are most concerned about.

Every student owes it to himself to seek a candidate who supports his views, and if there are none, to tell the candidates what his views are. Voting is a privilege that carries power, and 20,000 students potentially have a lot of power.

The winners of the upcoming elections have the potential to affect university policy and, thus, student life. If students use their privilege and power of voting, these elections can be sources of pride rather than apathy or embarrassment.

Jo Ellen Meekins, a sophomore journalism major from Henderson, is a staff writer for The Daily Tar Heel.