

The Daily Tar Heel

93rd year of editorial freedom

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Worth coming home for

Carolina Athletic Association President Mark Pavao's decision to award Teague dormitory the Homecoming crown won in 1983 by Teague resident Yure Nmomma is the first sign that this year may see a revitalized Homecoming. And it's long overdue in coming.

Nmomma's victory was a statement of apathy toward the whole concept of Homecoming at UNC. But the idea of electing a male Homecoming queen angered more than a few individuals, was crucial in a bill restricting the use of pseudonyms in campuswide elections and generally shook up those sleepy-heads too stupid to recognize the motive behind Nmomma's gesture.

Let's face it, folks: Homecoming has been about as exciting as yesterday's news here at UNC for as long as we can remember. At best, it's been a passive activity surrounding a football game scheduled against a second-rate team UNC is virtually certain to beat (It is easier some years than others to accomplish this, certainly). Homecoming badly needs a fresh approach; acknowledging our past mistakes is a vital first step.

Joe Stewart and Marc Wright, CAA co-vice presidents and Homecoming organizers, have taken several steps more. They talked to Class of '35 alumni Charlie Schaffer and Tom Bost in the Development Office to get some "new"

ideas. Not all of them were possible, according to Stewart; there's no place left on campus for a bonfire, for example.

But they've made up for that in other ways. On Oct. 23, a sports figure of national prominence will kick off the celebration with a speech in the Great Hall. Thursday night promises an all-campus party sponsored by a united Greek system, black and white. A headliner concert (and no, it's not James Taylor) is scheduled for the weekend, as well as the still-traditional parade. Oh, and there's a game as well: On Oct. 26, the Tar Heels will face No. 3 Florida State University. A victory against them would be something to savor.

And this year's contest for Homecoming queen is no joke. Nominees must be sponsored by campus organizations and will be narrowed — via essays and interviews — to five for an all-campus vote. Both the Homecoming queen and Mr. UNC will receive in-state tuition for the spring semester.

Stewart and Wright deserve praise for their efforts. Certainly a Homecoming tradition cannot be built from scratch in one year. But if their efforts are successful — and this is where we all come in — future Homecomings may be worth coming home for.

Genuine freedom fighters

Most of the world's self-proclaimed "freedom fighters" have sleazy pasts that discourage the support of Westerners concerned about human rights and liberties. In Nicaragua, the contras battle an increasingly leftist oligarchy but are stained by the torture and murder of civilians and by the high-level involvement of former members of Somoza's National Guard. In western Kampuchea, Khmer Rouge guerrillas harass Vietnamese occupation troops. But memories linger of their genocide of urban dwellers in the late 1970s.

Civil wars offer few white knights. One nationalist movement of genuine freedom fighters does exist, however. Struggling in obscurity, these forgotten patriots resist a brutal, bloodthirsty campaign of repression to rival Adolf Hitler's savaging of the Yugoslav partisans. Among the difficult foreign policy choices the United States faces, one should be easy: support for the Afghan rebels.

American awareness of the crimes committed in Afghanistan is minimal. Threatening long prison terms, the Soviets have discouraged journalists from walking in from neighboring Pakistan and taking an objective look around. The very respectability of the Afghan cause makes it less controversial. And without public debate, few bother to inform themselves on the issue.

This is unfortunate, for though the resistance receives significant military

aid, sustained international outrage is essential for any hope of Soviet moderation. Only public ignorance can explain the disinterest. Consider the atrocities suffered by Afghans: unprovoked invasion and conquest by a superpower, the extermination of entire villages in reprisal for guerilla attacks, the use of poison gas, the distribution of brightly colored, delayed-action incendiary pellets sometimes swallowed by small children...

Today, Afghanistan is prostrate. Nearly a quarter of the population battles malnutrition and disease in Pakistani refugee camps. Virtually every pre-occupation technocrat and intellectual is dead or in exile. Bright children are taken to the Soviet Union to be raised. Budding collaborators with the Soviets join guerilla units to betray their more patriotic countrymen. No economic life remains, save the natural gas inefficiently pumped out as fast as possible and sold to the Soviet Union for an abnormally low price.

Afghanistan is not a Soviet Vietnam. It is much, much worse. The Soviet Union has flattened Afghanistan and now rapes the country of its scarce natural and human resources. The provision of full moral and military aid for the resistance, together with economic support for the helpless refugees, is a policy not just compatible with but demanded by every fully developed human conscience.

'The Senate Zone'

Scene: An over-the-hill, partially bald, perfectly monotone, dutifully enraged gentleman stands in an empty chamber, resting his arm on a copy of the U.S. Constitution, and drones on about the wisdom of this country's forefathers and how he, in his own humble yet inspired way, is keeping their dream alive against the forces of evil.

"And I say to you now, even though no one's actually here to listen, that I am now, and forever will be, a supporter of the U.S. Constitution. I am pro-American. I am pro-democracy. I am pro-freedom. I am pro-baseball. I am pro-apple pie. I am anti-slavery. I am even... anti-crime!"

Not exactly the Gettysburg Address, huh? And certainly not, as the media big-wigs like to say, good television. Yet these are the kind of speeches we've all become accustomed to from our substance-shy politicians, especially during campaigns. And it's also the same stuff we'd be seeing on our boob tube day in and day out if the Senate decides to let the TV cameras roll on its proceedings.

The Senate, in its own mind-numbing way, is debating the merits of televising its floor "debates", as the House has done for the past 6 1/2 years. Though

it sounds like a good idea to have our nation's leaders held accountable through the immediacy of live television, we have certain reservations about the real value of it all.

First of all, how many of us can honestly admit to harboring any great desire to spend an afternoon watching a few long-winded, oratorically stunted Senators ramble on to a crowd of tourists about something that has already been hashed out and decided in a hearing or back room somewhere?

Better yet, how many of us have ever watched the House "in action" these past 6 1/2 years? Be honest.

Uh-huh, we thought so. Also, in the House there's a five minute limit on all speeches. Keeps the conversation lively, you know. But in the Senate they can talk all they want. And though the days of attention-grabbing debates are a thing of the past — gone with the turbulent '60s and McCarthyism before that — there's still somebody willing to hear their echo.

Probably the best thing that can be said about *The Senate Zone* is that it just might give the statesmen a reason to hone their speaking skills and maybe, just maybe, learn to bring debates, real debates, back to the floor of the Senate.

READER FORUM

Taylor's rhetoric uses one-liners for analysis

To the editors:

Reading Allen A. Taylor's column on the close relationship between the Soviets and American liberals ("Liberals play right into the wrong hands," Sept. 24), I am saddened at how effective this "real patriots don't question authority" approach has been in fueling the arms race. His column uses two tactics that have become increasingly popular with Reagan-style conservatives in defining American foreign policy.

The first is that he reduces even the most complex issue in international affairs to a simple "us versus

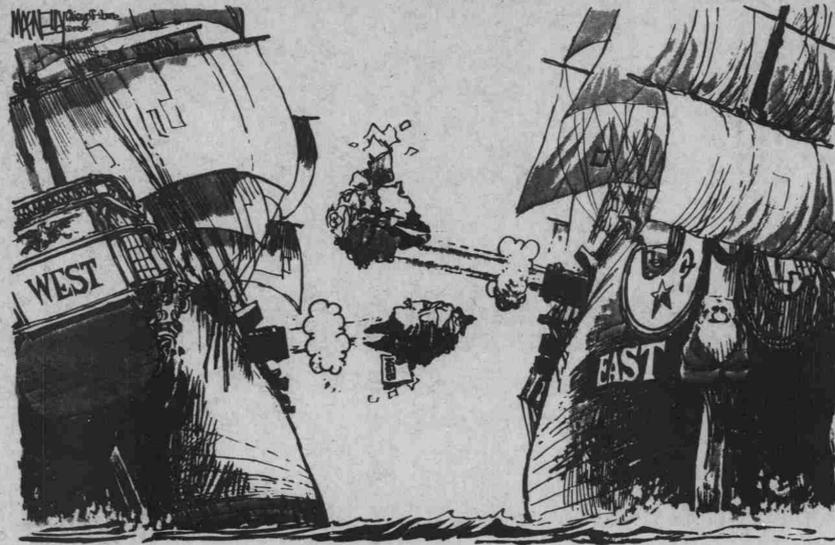
them" confrontation. It doesn't matter that the situation in question may not be a part of American-Soviet conflict. Just ignore its historical and cultural background, label it Moscow-directed, and jump right in. A quick reading of the history books should remind us that such responses eventually backfire, making us look bad and the Russians better by default. Nicaragua is becoming an example of such a policy.

Second, Taylor plays loose with the facts, knowing that for every 10 people who hear your "official source" version of the story, only three or four may find that rebuttal

or retraction buried in the back pages two days later. For example, the arguments against Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative can and have filled several books. Taylor tells us the Russians don't support SDI, but does he tell us about the defense contractors who do? According to the Sept. 14 edition of *The Nation*, four of the top six companies who have begun receiving the first of billions of Star Wars tax dollars are already among the top five recipients of Pentagon contracts for offensive nuclear weapons such as the MX, the cruise and the Trident missiles. Heads I win, tails you lose.

This letter's purpose is certainly not to defend the actions of the Soviets or even the liberals. Nor is it my purpose to refute Taylor's misleading statements, since the issues are too complex to address in a sentence or two. Rather, my intent is to encourage individuals not to accept such one-line analyses of foreign policy as fact, but instead to consider deeper understanding of such issues as part of their college education. The strength of a true democracy increases as its people become better informed.

Bruce Alexander
Graham



Taylor must be wowing 'em at the Kremlin

To the editors:

Allen A. Taylor ("Liberals play right into the wrong hands," Sept. 24) has thrown us a curve ball. He sets up liberalism as the fall guy, knocks it down, and then hopes that we embrace conservatism — no questions asked. A smokescreen if I've ever seen one. No doubt his red masters in the Soviet Union are pleased with his column.

Taylor tries to lull us into a false sense of security with some half-hearted anti-communist statements and then slips in comments such as "there are still common goals between the two countries (the United States and the Soviet Union) ... international trade, containment of terrorism..." Why should we spend our hard-earned Ameri-

can dollars on Soviet products their own people don't even want? If we followed the Taylor/Soviet position on terrorism we'd have to stop our funding of the contras in Nicaragua and the Cambodian rebel coalition (of which Pol Pot's group is a part). We'd also have to dismantle terrorist training camps in the United States, where fine young men learn to become mercenaries for our right wing friends and breed terrorists such as the two Sikh brothers suspected of blowing up the Air India flight. Taylor's proposal is just a sneak ploy to prop up the Soviet economy and imperil the terrorist arm of our national security apparatus.

Taylor is very clever in his attempt to cover his trail from Moscow. He urges us not to have human rights as a foreign policy priority with our right-wing authoritarian allies.

So far so good, but then he wants us to accept their eventual evolution into democracies. As we all know, countries don't peacefully evolve, they simmer and then explode. As soon as our right-wing allies grant the slightest freedoms, ingrates can stir up trouble, and the people revolt. Just look at Iran, Nicaragua, and now El Salvador, South Africa, Chile and the Philippines. Misery for the subjects of our right-wing allies is but a small price they must pay for our fears, safety and comfort.

Allan Rosen
Chapel Hill

Pardon us, the liberal contingency

To the editors:

In response to Allen A. Taylor's column "Liberals play right into the wrong hands" (Sept. 24), allow me, for the benefit of the liberal contingency of Chapel Hill and the rest of the world, to elicit a neglected pardon from Taylor.

Pardon us, sir, for allowing blood-soaked human hearts to pulsate within our breasts, instead of wringing them dry so that

mechanisms and circuitry could be installed.

Pardon us, for seeking to ensure the happiness of other nations by showing them our better side — our compassion, our trust and our undying belief that peace is the foremost necessity of global politics.

Pardon us, for finding beauty and love in the world and seeking to spread it everywhere, instead of grouping nations and their econo-

mies and policies into two weapon-ridden football squads, each hell-bent on the touchdown and trusting no one.

Pardon us, finally, for realizing and embracing our ultimate innocence, which no human lives long enough to outgrow, though many succeed in neglecting its lesson.

We're soooo sorry.

Edward Roberts
Chapel Hill

Dorothy Moore
Business Administration

Rolling Stone

Interesting reading, no?

To the editors:

How ironic that the current issue of *Rolling Stone* contains an article about how Bruce Springsteen's music has transcended time and how much it has been misunderstood. You might find it interesting reading, Tonkinson ("Rolling Stone" sells out to the Yups," Sept. 25).

John Sherer
Hinton James

Anger and fear — this is the New Right?

By RICK ROBINSON

I was "born again" the other day, but not in the way you so often hear about these days. "Politically awakened" might better express it. It's a rude slap in the face to wake up and realize that your world may change radically, and soon, if you don't do something about it. I feel that I'm an open-minded person, and I want to address this letter to other open-minded people who may share my concern — and my fate — if we don't begin to take seriously what is happening around us.

I'm talking about the so-called New Right, that radically conservative fundamentalist Christian faction that is so in vogue right now. Perhaps you haven't met them. They go by strange and often misleading names: Students For America, the Congressional Club, the Moral Majority. They certainly sound harmless enough, don't they?

Why so afraid?

They're not. It seems that there are a number of people for whom they don't show an unusual amount of respect: blacks, women, homosexuals, non-Christians. Why? That's a question I have been asking myself recently. It would seem as if they are afraid of people who think, act and look differently than they do. Why? They think that they have found "the truth" in a book, admittedly a very important and good book: the Bible. So why are they so afraid? If you believe you have found the truth, that's great; possessing the truth ought to make you feel secure, content and happy.

But security, contentment and happiness are

not hallmarks of the New Right. Rather, they seem consumed by anger and fear. Perhaps they decided that other people would not be able to find "the truth" on their own, so they had to start advertising "the truth." They spent a lot of money telling people about it. Through television, radio and magazines, they spread "the truth" as they saw it. But that wasn't enough. I guess they felt that not enough people had gotten their message, had adopted their "truth." So what do do next?

Well, perhaps they realized that they would just have to impose "the truth," legislate "the truth," make it the law. And then people would have to live by their "truth."

I don't want to live by their "truth." I don't want my children to live by their "truth." I'm not a Christian, but they seem to feel that I ought to be, that I must be. My children ought to be entitled to make free choices about their religious beliefs, but they feel otherwise. A woman ought to be entitled to make certain very personal decisions about her body; again, they don't agree. And how about sex? A person ought to be entitled to choose a lover of his or her choice; but again, the New Right definitely does not agree, for if you are so misguided as to choose a partner of the same sex then your very right to exist is questioned.

The 'truth' in action

Let's look at an example of "the truth" in action. H. Keith Poston ("Wallace's pleas for moral unity can't be serious," Sept. 16) was fortunate enough — and I mean that — to be allowed to express his opinions in a public forum. Referring to an opinion expressed by Patricia

Wallace ("Dual morality lost on Students For America," Sept. 10), he said: "her plea for moral unity cannot be taken seriously, when juxtaposed with her support of homosexuals and lesbians. If Wallace knew anything about morals or Judeo-Christian teachings, she would realize that homosexuality is a sin and abomination in the eyes of the living God. By upholding and supporting these groups, such as the Carolina Gay and Lesbian Association, we are inviting not only the further moral decay of the country, but indeed the wrath of God."

Poston, why does your "truth" make you so angry, so intolerant and so fearful? Why are you not content to experience the personal blessing that you believe your version of "the truth" confers on you, and leave to your wrathful God the fate of those whose views and lifestyles differ from yours?

It's time to act

I don't hate the New Right; I disagree with them. I think they are wrong, but who am I to say? I only know that I don't want them to impose their opinions and values on my life. I want to encourage other people who share my concern to act. Don't let yourselves — and me — be forced into a way of life with which we disagree. Sure, the New Right has a lot of money and power, but the ways to fight them are cheap. All you need is your pen, your voice, some time, and most importantly, your vote.

Thanks, Students For America. You finally got me involved.

Rick Robinson is a senior American studies major living in Chapel Hill.

Letters . . .

to the DTH are always welcome, and must include the writer's name, address, and phone number. Deadline is 1 p.m. daily.