

Campus liberals push to ensure conformity

Sen. Joe McCarthy would be proud. A generation after the politically motivated blacklists and censorship of the 1950s, a new group — campus leftists — is adopting his age-old tactics.

According to the Dec. 24 Newsweek, the new vogue on campuses nationwide is neo-McCarthy proclamations of "politically correct" speech. At all costs you must avoid speech which might offend homosexuals, women, African Americans, Asians and Hispanics.

Accompanying this movement is an attempt to purge "Eurocentric" influences from campuses — the writings of "dead white males."

The ban covers not only blatant attacks, but anything vaguely resembling criticism of a protected group. The University of Connecticut, for example, outlaws "inappropriately directed laughter" and "conspicuous exclusion of students from conversation."

When someone proposed an alcohol-free All-American Halloween Party at Madison last fall, the majority faction in the student senate rose up in protest: masked students might take advantage of their anonymity to inflict "poking, pinching, rude comments" and other oppressions on minorities and women.

Last spring, students at Mt. Holyoke responded to the campus Lesbian/Bisexual Awareness Week by staging a Heterosexual Awareness Week. They promptly were chided by the college president for "violating the spirit of community."

Politically correct terminology applies to almost every encounter one might make on a college campus. A Smith College handout lists 10 different kinds of oppression that can be inflicted by making judgments about people.

These include "heterosexism — oppression of those of sexual orientations other than heterosexual ... this can take place by not acknowledging their existence;" "ageism-oppression of the young and old by young adults and the middle aged;" and "ableism-oppression of the differently abled by the temporarily abled."

We also must avoid oppressing unattractive people through "lookism" and avoid making judgments about the superiority of the human life form through "speciesism." I dearly wish I was making this up. There is even a movement afoot at Sarah Lawrence and a few other politically correct institutions to change the spelling of the non-male gender to "womyn" (without the "men").

These politically correct campus proclamations are demonstrative of the lengths to which liberals will go in the name of the elimination of prejudice. They are of the opinion that tolerance of people of different orientations must



Larry Cox
Columnist

be imposed rather than taught, even at the expense of the Constitutional right to free speech.

Interaction among students is really a secondary target of campus speech police. The primary bull's eye is on Western society's dominance in the classroom — especially the "dead white males" alluded to earlier.

Politically correct curriculum made an appearance in a big way last year at the University of Texas at Austin. Instructors in a freshman composition course previously had been free to assign readings on a number of topics. From now on, readings will come from a text called "Racism and Sexism: An Integrated Study," a collection of politically correct thought.

Politically correct opinions come from Marx, Farrakhan and others of their ilk while Shakespeare, Plato and Jefferson are reviled as racists and sexists.

Minimizing the contribution which Western writers and thinkers made to our civilization is a critical mistake, just as the imposition of a set of speech standards on a generation of college students is a critical intrusion into the university environment.

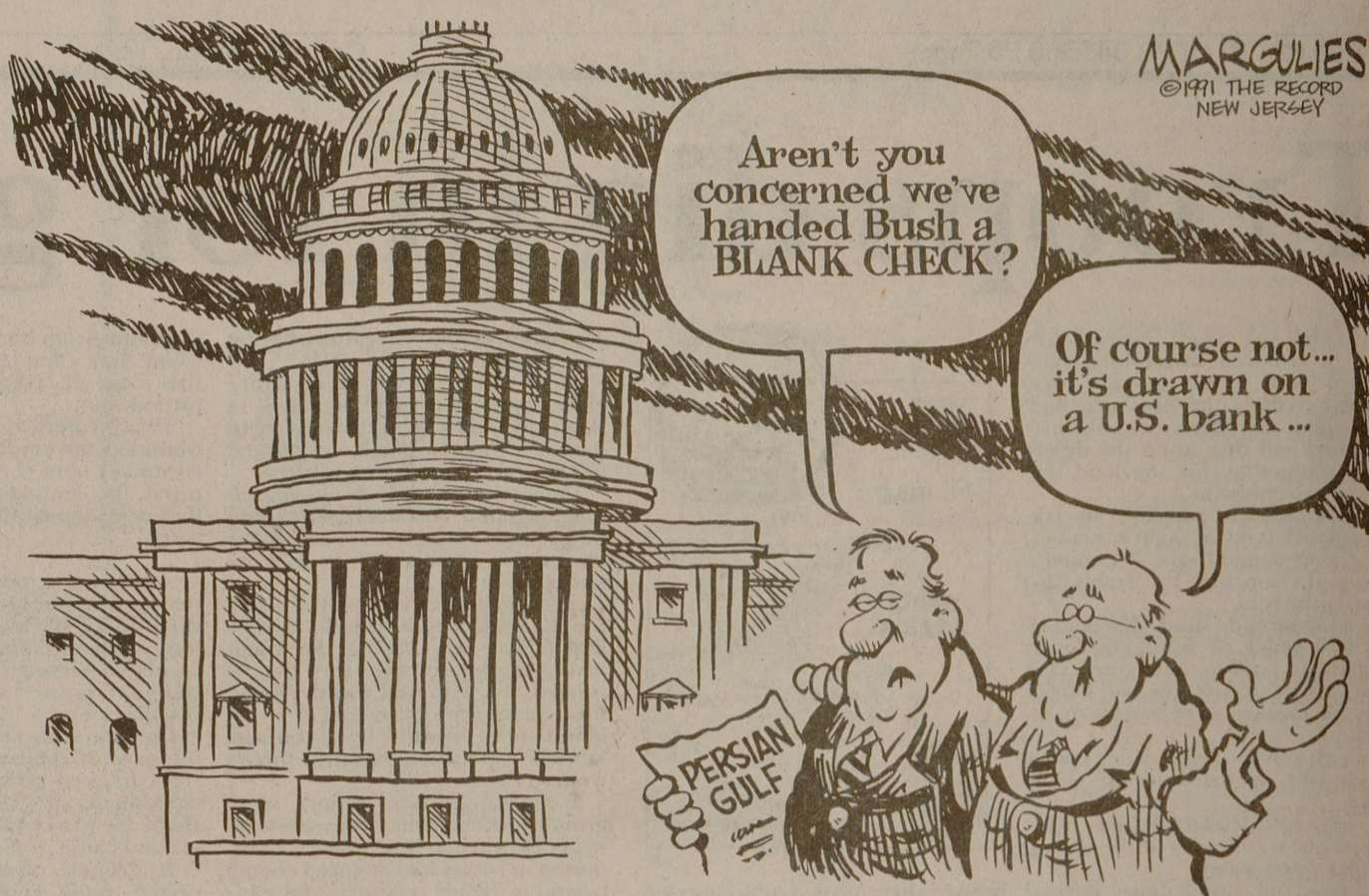
Marx — whose name is in the title of about one of seven books in the political science department — according to Duke professor James Barber, was not the classless idealist which he is made out to be by American liberals.

Marx said of his one-eighth black son-in-law running for office in a section of Paris that housed the Paris Zoo: "Being in his quality as a 'nigger,' a degree closer to the animal kingdom than the rest of us, he is undoubtedly the most appropriate representative of that district." Of Jews, Marx said the Exodus was "expulsion of leper people from Egypt."

If Marx is politically correct, so too should Hitler be. Both should be studied because of their impact on the world, but asserting the primacy of such writers over the teachings of men such as Locke and Jefferson is ridiculous.

Jefferson once said, "Error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it." Pretty smart for a dead white man. Too bad this view is quickly falling from grace on American college campuses. Let us hope it doesn't spread to our own little corner of the world.

Larry Cox is a graduate student in range science.



Mail Call

Fighting for freedom

EDITOR:

I am writing in response to Brian Sullivan's article from Jan. 18. First, let me explain something to you: until the U.S. Congress enacts a draft, it is not the responsibility of students to drop out of college to fight. That is why the United States of America has professional soldiers in regular and reserve forces.

I was not one of the conservatives at the rally you wrote of in your article, but I wish I was. If Congress starts the draft I will leave school and go where my country needs me. I don't have to explain my actions or beliefs, but I will.

When the United States goes to war to liberate a nation which has been taken over by a tyrannical dictator, we are fighting for freedom. Does anybody remember Mr. Hitler taking over Poland? Oh, that was a long time ago? When we fight for freedom, we are fighting to protect things such as freedom of speech.

I did not agree with any of Sullivan's comments, but I am willing to give my life so he can be free to say them. So Brian, if the draft is reinstated — do me a favor. You and your radical friends send me some postcards from Canada. I will be fighting for your freedom.

Scott A. Finfer '91

Protesters feel called to act

EDITOR:

Regarding Matt McBurnett's diatribe against war protesters in the Jan. 22 edition of The Battalion, this learned scholar might be correct when he states that such protests will have no effect on the "reality" of war.

However, to say the protesters are only doing it for self-righteous self-promotion is ignorant. These people know that to live consistently with their admittedly idealistic notions of conscience and morality, they must take action. Not to do so would be hypocrisy.

Has McBurnett ever taken a philosophy or ethics class or read any literature? This was the genius who only had the mental capacity to learn about ("oh, it's so hard") electrical engineering (December editorial), not about life.

Michael Biek
graduate student

No one knows the answer

EDITOR:

I would like to comment on an article entitled "Activists use protests for personal reasons," in the Jan. 22 edition of The Battalion. In this column, the writer derided war protesters as being ridiculously unrealistic and having ulterior motives for participating in rallies (i.e., they just want to be seen). It is not my intention to contest these assumptions, nor will I support them. What I would like to address is his reaction.

Recent events in the Persian Gulf have forced many of us

to reconsider our positions. War suddenly has become very real, and no one wants to see people needlessly killed.

Some believe it is a necessary sacrifice, while others (e.g., protesters) see it as a waste of human life. We cannot decide absolutely who is right — there are far too many questions for that. But we can try to understand one another. We can ask questions, openly discuss and empathize with one another. No one took their position in this crisis haphazardly. These are very difficult, and often very painful decisions, and they should not be ridiculed. We can do better than that.

Kory Spencer Sorrell '94

Overstepping boundaries

EDITOR:

On Jan. 21, a distasteful comic strip appeared in The Battalion. In the strip, "the itch," by Nito, a young girl was depicted inquiring her mother of the possibility of six-year-old girls becoming pregnant. The child later is shown rejoicing at the news that they can't.

The next day, Jan. 22, Nito had the following to offer in his offensive strip: The same little girl was seen walking into her parents' bedroom only to find her father lying on his stomach with a naked woman kneeling beside him on the bed. Not only was the woman (obviously not the child's mother) holding a whip, she wore a swastika band on her leg!

I realize The Battalion is an open forum for all students' expressions and opinions; and I am not a mega-conservative prude, nor do I promote censorship. However, when the boundaries of good taste and decorum are overstepped, someone must be compelled to speak out.

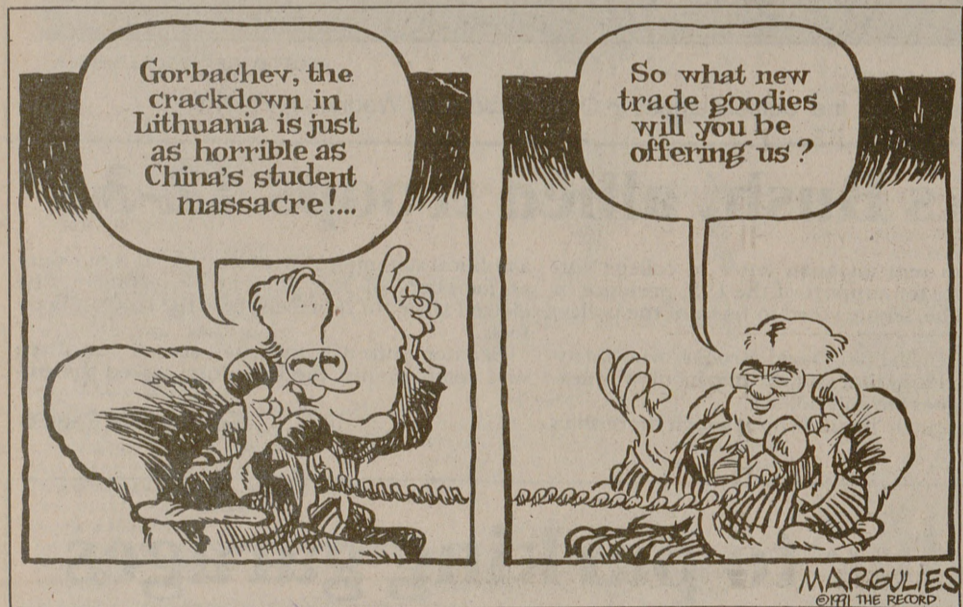
I was not amused after reading the two comic strips. In fact, it pierced my heart to see serious subjects reflected in such an obnoxious and disgusting manner. Child sexuality and extra-marital and/or violent sex are not laughing matters, but very real problems.

This cartoonist has made it bluntly clear that he has no respect for people, particularly females, regarding sexual topics. On my part, I am astonished that The Battalion would stoop so low as to print this "trash" that belongs in Playboy. But must we be subjected to this individual's sick, twisted humor? I fail to understand Nito's humor or intentions with this material. But I don't care to comprehend it, either. The question I pose is this: Will we be opening this publication in fear of being bombarded with one person's gross interpretation of "funny"?

Misty Avila '94

Have an opinion? Express it!

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the itch



The Battalion

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