

Flags don't fly on campus

Columnist finds lack of red, white, blue puzzling.

A few weekends ago I was driving down by Charlotte on an absolutely perfect Saturday morning. While cruising along, I passed a car dealership that was flying perhaps the largest

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American flag I have ever seen, and that image has stuck with me ever since.

The sight was truly majestic, as the stars and stripes waved in the wind against the crisp blue autumn sky. The colors were so bold and so bright and were just absolutely radiant. As I drove by, I was instantly filled with patriotism, and I thanked God for allowing me to be an American.

I started thinking about how beautiful the American flag really is and all the wonderful things for which it stands. I passed that same huge flag on my way back to Wake Forest, and again, I was similarly affected by its massive size and awe-inspiring presence. Once I got back to Wake, however, I realized something quite disturbing: Our campus is almost completely devoid of the American flag.

I am sure liberals are jumping for joy after reading that, but don't get all excited yet. There are some flags on our campus.

From what I can tell, there is one tiny, faded flag outside Benson; there is one in the ROTC offices, and there

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are those proudly displayed by students in their dorms. Needless to say, I am greatly disappointed and upset by this poor display of the flag that symbolizes this great country.

Why aren't there more flags on our campus? At first, I figured the administration did not want to put them in our classrooms for fear that the professors would conduct flag-burnings as part of their lectures. No group of people anywhere, save the Middle East, has such a hatred of the American flag and the nation it represents than the academic elite. I figured this could not be the real reason, however, so I moved on.

I thought about the financial aspect of buying flags for all our classrooms, but with the money we spend on futile events like the "Moroccan Film Festival" and the "Ice Cream Social," I figured that could not be the reason either. Unfortunately, I came up with nothing. I have no idea why there are no flags in our classrooms.

I know damn well we would never go back to the good old days of elementary school, where we said the Pledge of Allegiance each morning.

Such a salute would ally our professors on the side of America and acknowledge God at the same time. That would most certainly cause the professors in the "People's Republic of East Tribble" to storm President Hearn's office.

I'm not saying we would have to "salute the flag" each morning, though that would certainly be a wonderful thing. I simply want to see the flag under which we are all working displayed in our classrooms, lest we forget we are actually in America.

Based on the propaganda lining the halls of the departments of english, history, political science and philosophy, one might expect to see the flag of the Soviet Union flying on campus. Moreover, the material presented by some of Wake's professors would lead one to believe he or she was actually in an Al Q'aeda training camp. I guess professors can only speak from experience, though.

Liberals foam at the mouth if you question their patriotism, and they inevitably recite to you in cult-like fashion that dissent is what true patriots do. Of course, they never actually provide concrete evidence that they are on the same side as America, let alone patriots.

If we are going to be fed the *Communist Manifesto* and the like in our classrooms, can we at least provide a beacon of hope for students who are proud to be an American? Can we provide a reminder to our faculty that, as much as they hate to admit it, they are reaping the benefits of this wonderful country?

We see liberals making every effort to remove God, basic decency, law and order, and common sense from our society, and now they're after our flag, too.

If a car dealership can proudly display the American flag, shouldn't an alleged American institution of higher learning do the same?

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The strain of being right all the time in Britain

Tony Blair's recent actions indicate a loosening of his grip on the political right.

The strain is obviously getting to Tony Blair. Physically as well as politically, he is no longer the man he was. And that is not entirely surprising, for of late he has been experiencing increasing difficulty in squaring the

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It would appear that Blair went to war as the consequence of his own hubris and rhetoric. He trapped himself, and the UK, in a policy package from which escape was impossible without cost. As long ago as April 2002 he began to play wide receiver to the Bush quarterback: arguing that Saddam Hussein was too dangerous to be left alone, and that an Afghan-style multilateral coalition was needed.

place. Boxed into a logic from which he could break only by retreat – so running the risk of emboldening the very dictator he had demonized – Blair in the end had to cross the Rubicon. He had talked himself into a corner and went to war because there was no way of avoiding it without losing face.

But the bigger question is why did he allow himself to be so trapped in the first place? After all, the bushwhacking of New Labor in this fashion involved a sharp break with the multilateralist policies of his first Foreign Secretary – the very man whose resignation from Blair's cabinet on the eve of war signaled the depth of opposition to Blair's policy within the governing Labor party.

Blair allowed himself to be so trapped because he is, in foreign policy terms at least, more Old Labor than New.

When all the rhetoric about 'newness' and 'third ways' has been set aside, Tony Blair is as Atlanticist and as imperialist in his instincts as was Ernest Bevin before him. Pride and overconfidence may well explain how Blair conducted foreign policy in the run up to the invasion of Iraq; but they do not explain why he chose to put that pride at the service of a Republican President. To find why that was his choice, you have to see the degree to which, even in New Labor circles, old British ambitions to be a world power remain as strong – and as ridiculous – as ever.

David Coates, professor of political science, and Joel Krieger's study of Blair's War will be published by Polity Press early in 2004.



Senate's delay raises questions of partisan motives

Senator's individual politics potentially rise above democracy.

The federal judiciary, with the Supreme Court at its apex, is a critical part of our democracy while at the same time being the most undemocratic in form and function. As the Rehnquist Court begins hearing oral argument this fall, it will be a

for divisive ideological decisions, failing to establish clear precedent through 5 – 4 rulings with scathing dissents.

However, with the establishment of judicial review by Chief Justice Marshall in *Marbury v. Madison*, it is exercising a review function which has become increasingly necessary in our litigious society.

I doubt few of the Founders after writing the acutely short Article III would imagine the wide scope of the Court today.

Yet as the Ninth Circuit Court continually demonstrates, the second tier federal courts have become increasingly worthy of attention.

The vast majority of Supreme Court cases come directly from these courts, and circuit issues can quickly become national ones.

The now infamous Ninth Circuit decision declaring the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional is being reviewed this term by Rehnquist and Company. Thankfully, the Ninth Circuit had enough oversight to overturn their decision that would have postponed the California recall election.

If the courts are becoming increasingly critical, the selection

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process for judges must become equally rigorous.

However, it is here where the true undemocratic nature of the courts is revealed. The rigor of nominating and confirming qualified candidates has turned into an ideological struggle for power.

So much for the notion of impartial judges – the current process seems designed mostly to increase partiality and ruining the notion of a judiciary above the everyday qualms and disputes of politics.

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Clauses pertaining to appointment appear in Article II, yet confirmation power is certainly a Senate function, perhaps showing that the process was meant to be one of close cooperation between the two.

However, the current Senate knows it has the technical upper hand in this relationship, regardless of Constitutional power sharing. The nominating power of the President in fact has no weight without the consent of the Senate.

Yet Senate procedure has taken this technicality to the extreme. The presidential nominee must pass through the judiciary committee before the full Senate is even consulted; not only that, but at either level, a single senator has the power to indefinitely postpone a vote.

This process is only adding to the questionable undemocratic tendencies inherent in an unelected judiciary. Not only are the judges in place due to indirect democracy, but now single senators may thwart the mandated

constitutional processes that legitimate these possible democratic questions.

Though stark contrasts have always marked party ideological differences, Hamilton in the Federalist Papers made clear the need for a wise, un-ideological judiciary beholden only to the Constitution.

It only seems logical that an appointment process marred by ideology would produce judges of an equally ideological character.

Not only is the current process doing a disservice to democracy, it is doing a disservice to the judicial needs of American citizens.

Federal judgeships remain constantly unfilled, for the Senate refuses to consider Presidential nominations in a timely manner.

Fewer judges with ever growing dockets lead to either haste or the rejection of legitimate complaints. Americans deserve more from the judiciary, but the Constitution calls upon both the President and Senate to provide it.

Because of the technical superiority of the Senate, let us hope they do not shirk their Constitutional responsibility.

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OLD GOLD AND BLACK COLUMNIST

record 10th straight year with the same justice corps – Ruth Bader Ginsburg was the last appointee in 1994.

The justices grow older, yet continue to rule on important issues affecting this nation's social, political and economic framework.

Is this bad? Not necessarily. The current court can certainly be faulted