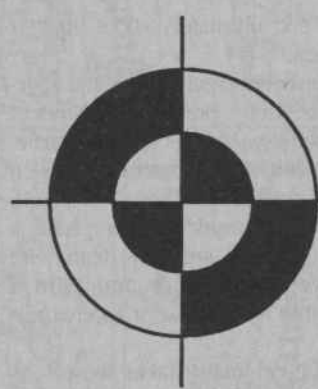


Viewpoint



CROSSFIRE

Were the self-imposed sanctions on the men's basketball team sufficient?

PRO

ANDY BORGERT

USC's self-imposed sanctions on the men's basketball program are enough to satisfy the NCAA violations committed.

The violations involved no current players, while the assistant coaches guilty of the acts will be released at season's end. Even Steve Newton, who was not implicated directly by the investigation's findings, has been "reassigned" to the position of assistant athletics director.

As it stands now, the basketball team is limited in its number of paid recruiting visits allowed next season. Equipment distribution will be directed by the equipment manager instead of the coaching staff. Also, the Roost will have periodic checks for unauthorized residents.

While USC is accused of minor violations, what about our country cousins to the north, Clemson? In the past few months, Clemson has been accused of, among other things, altering the grades of Wayne Buckingham, one of their better players, in order to maintain his eligibility.

Violations of this nature are among the most heavily penalized by the NCAA. But, as the season progresses, Clemson remains unaffected by the NCAA, and Buckingham is still eligible.

I don't mean to trivialize the infractions committed by the Gamecocks, but for no action to be taken against the Tigers while we are chastised makes the NCAA hypocritical.

Do we really need any stronger penalties levied against us? What purpose would it serve?

The sanctions placed by the university rectify the problems. If anything else were done, the only people it would hurt would be next year's returning players.

The purpose of the NCAA is to help the student-athlete, not hurt him. I say, punish the guilty parties and then get back to the business of playing basketball.

CON

MARK NEWGENT

These so-called "self-imposed" penalties by the university are merely a slap on the wrist for violations more serious than we think.

Let's start with the reduction of paid recruiting visits. The basketball program has now been allotted 12 paid visits, a real "severe" drop from the original 14 paid visits. Maybe this reduction in visits will lower USC's chances of finding players who stab their girlfriends to death.

Distribution of practice clothing and footwear will now be handled by the athletic department's equipment manager rather than by the coaches. Does this really guarantee the elimination of the illegal use of equipment?

Random periodic checks of the Roost will be conducted to detect any unauthorized residents. The checks will be conducted by the athletic department's security coordinator and the manager of the Roost. How can a legitimate check be conducted by paid university officials? What's to stop them from turning in a bogus report?

The university is also requiring all coaches it employs to attend a compliance seminar on all NCAA regulations concerning the recruiting and housing of prospective student-athletes. Will this seminar be taken seriously by the coaching staff?

Another ramification of this scandal is that Steve Newton will become an assistant athletic director. Why should the school keep him and pay \$105,000 to a lame-duck coach who will end up pushing pencils in the athletic department office.

Michael McGee's report to the SEC about the violations states that Newton had no knowledge of the infractions. How can a coach not know about a recruit living in the Roost? That is hard to believe. It seems assistants James Holland and Craig Morris are taking undue blame.

It looks like the athletic department found a painless way to drop an ineffective coach while also dodging stricter penalties from the NCAA.

Where is the NCAA in this matter? USC's infractions are too serious not to have their direct involvement.

Responsibility

Administration should provide assistance to fire victims

Sunday morning's Columbia Hall fire left a few students literally homeless and penniless. For some, all of their possessions were ravaged by the fire apparently caused by an electrical short in an overloaded power strip.

The only clothes one student has are the ones she wore during the building's evacuation. Some lost everything from textbooks to jewelry to their stereo systems.

And what has the USC administration done to help them? Not much. The university has held a few meetings with the sole purpose of ducking any responsibility to help, while local businesses and student organizations have provided extensive assistance to the victims.

The University Bookstore, a privately-owned business, supplied free T-shirts and sweatshirts and even replaced textbooks ruined by the fire.

Marriott Food Services, which runs Pizza Hut, gave students free pizzas and snacks throughout the night, while the Red Cross offered some clothes and monetary compensation to those most needy.

SGA leaders pulled together in support of the students by representing them at meetings with insurance agents and holding a drive to raise funds and gather clothing. In addition, the student senate Wednesday allotted \$3,000 to the students.

The USC community responded well in helping these students. Everyone except the university itself.

USC President John Palms never bothered to survey the fire site and has not met with students to discuss their situation.

After Hurricane Andrew wreaked havoc throughout southern Florida, President Bush promptly visited the area to talk with the victims.

Even if this were only a symbolic gesture, it was well-appreciated by the victims and at least gave the impression of a caring government.

Palms' inaction gives the appearance he doesn't care.

Columbia Hall residents were never specifically told where meetings would be or what their purpose was. They had to rely on word-of-mouth to find the meetings.

It is true USC has no legal financial obligation to students who lose their possessions to fire or other disasters. Such costs would be too high.

But, ethically, USC has a responsibility towards its students and should offer some assistance and moral support to those who have lost everything.

We are talking about eight students who need help because of some unpredictable and unfortunate circumstances.

The United States has the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help its citizens in the event of a disaster. USC should have a similar type of program in case of future crises.

The administration should follow the example of student government and business leaders. USC is a community, and when emergencies occur, everybody must pitch in to help. That includes the administration.

Baird should not assume Attorney General spot

The honeymoon is over, or at least things won't be as smooth for President Clinton as he was hoping.



C.E. HOLMAN

Zoe Baird, Clinton's nominee for attorney general, has come under fire because she hired illegal aliens as nannies and then withheld their Social Security taxes. By doing so, Baird has violated a federal law.

The violation, which has stirred controversy and made her confirmation hearing with the Senate Judiciary Committee very difficult, raises the question of her credibility.

Why would a woman who makes over \$500,000 a year as the general counsel for Aetna Life & Casualty go out and hire someone and then withhold their Social Security taxes?

She paid her unlicensed Peruvian baby sitter and her husband \$2,000 a month, in addition to giving them free room and board. Broken up over a month, with them working 24 hours a day, the hourly salary for each was \$1.49.

Taken as a normal 40-hour work week, the hourly wage for each was \$6.25. So, Baird was either violating the minimum wage law, or she was severely overpaying them.

On average, a licensed day-care facility in Columbia charges \$75 per week, or \$1.88 per hour. I would suspect day-care prices are proportionally adjusted across the nation. Not only is Baird violating federal civil law, but she is overpaying for a legal service which would be cheaper in the private sector.

Baird's excuse to the Senate Judiciary Committee was, "I was acting... more as a mother than as a person who would be sitting here designated as attorney general."

Regardless of the fact, "acting as a mother" does not change the fact she has violated a federal statute.

Committee chairman Joe Biden, D-DeL., browbeated Baird into admitting her reason for paying the \$2,900 fine as purely political. Had she not paid it,

her nomination would be threatened and would reflect badly on the Clinton Administration.

Yet, this whole fiasco reflects badly on the Clinton Administration and now places it in an awkward spot.

Baird told the committee that the only reason she

hired the illegal aliens was because another lawyer said it was O.K. As a qualified attorney, she should have known the law, or at least she should have double-checked her colleague's information. This action, or inaction, as the case may be, speaks poorly of her abilities as an attorney.

Baird knew her actions were illegal and knowingly violated the law. She broke it. Baird is a criminal and should not become the country's top lawyer. Nor should she be allowed to get off with a slap on the wrist. She, like many other high-ranking officials, must realize they are not above the law.

Several congressmen have called for the removal of Baird's nomination out of concern for the new administration. Clinton, however, cannot afford to withdraw her nomination without appearing to be bowing to congressional pressure. To be an effective leader, he needs to appear strong and in control of Congress.

Congress is likely to approve Baird, even though she will be the laughingstock of the administration. For an administration that wants to be "tough on crime," the appearance of having a criminal in charge of the Department of Justice is embarrassing. Conservatives would enjoy nothing more than to embarrass Clinton.

We need cooperation in these tough times. If Congress wants to do a service for America, they should reject Zoe Baird.

If Baird wants to do a great service for Clinton and America, she should withdraw her nomination so someone with more integrity can serve as attorney general.



Letters to the Editor

Replace Sparky with Dan Reeves

To the editor:

In USC's never-ending struggle to achieve some semblance of national sports prominence, it would seem so many opportunities are squandered away. In my years at Carolina, 1987-1991, I watched the routine faltering of an athletic program regarded as one of "major league" proportion but is run more like a truck stop in Traveler's Rest.

When will the management, and I use the term loosely, alumni and Gamecock Club stop settling for the bridesmaid and work towards becoming the bride? In case no one has noticed, we have not set foot inside the church lately.

Frustration culminated last season when the football team mutinied, calling for Sparky Woods' resignation, a valiant move on the part of the team to take control of their own destiny when it seemed no one else would. Enter a lucky rookie quarterback with a four-leaf clover tucked ever so precariously under his shoulder pad, and a few unimpressive victories, including a victory over an abnor-

mally weak Clemson team in their own barn, and, suddenly, the entire Midlands forgets about USC's NCAA-leading losing streak midway through last season.

Perhaps our small-town athletic department could muster the courage to contact former USC-great Dan Reeves. The ex-Bronco coach ruled the AFC in the '80s, had an illustrious career with the Dallas Cowboys and could surely recruit more talent than Sparky "With the App State Connection" Woods. And moving back to college football is certainly a move not unprecedented by other NFL coaches.

Scott Saunders
1991 USC graduate

Bush years should be appreciated

To the editor:

For the Republicans, those were the days. Remember when Reagan was president and the world twitched at the military and economic might of our country? Remember when Bush led the

world against the forces of evil of Saddam? Bush had the highest approval rating of any president, and his re-election was assured.

What went wrong? That's a good question, but most Republicans are already saying the party will win back the White House in '96. But why are they forgetting George? There are plenty of good memories of the Reagan-Bush era they can brag about. Bush did a fantastic job abroad.

The GOP should learn how to stand by their man. Since Nov. 3, Bush said, "Until Jan. 20, America only has one president," and he was right. But the Republicans didn't support him the way they should have supported their leader. Just because he lost does not mean he should be thrown in the gutter to be forgotten. Bush was a great man, and he always did what he thought was best for the country. He and First Lady Barbara brought the White House and the presidency down to earth and added a human touch to the job. Bush, as did Ronald Reagan, showed us that we can still be proud of ourselves, and to be an American is still something special. History will

remember Bush as the world leader and the bringer of the New World Order.

But the truth is: Bush lost, Clinton won. The Republicans will have their chance in '96 to bump him out of the White House, but it will not come until then. For the time being, they will have to sit back, watch the calendar and argue why Bush lost.

To George and Barbara Bush, as well as to the Reagans, thanks for reminding us what it means to be an American.

Carson Bush
Freshman

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