

## Unsolvable debate raged on last night

By Chris Bouneff  
Emerald Associate Editor

It began Wednesday night with two men who agreed to debate the merits of opposing economic systems.

Appropriately, on the left sat *The Student Insurgent's* Kevin Hornbuckle, who represented the socialist point of view. On the right was economics professor Henry Goldstein, who defended capitalism.

The purpose: persuade the audience to believe in either capitalism or socialism and solve the world's problems.

The winner: Well, that depended on who you talked to. In reality, the debate was best summed up by an elderly man who let each side know what his position was during the question-and-answer section of the program.

"I think you've been beating a dead horse or fighting a strong man," he said to Hornbuckle and Goldstein about resolving the argument.

In the end nothing was solved, but an open exchange of ideas did occur, which is something both debaters said was the primary purpose of the forum.

"The open debate always achieves something," Goldstein said after acting as the lone capitalistic voice for a crowd of about 80 people, most of whom sided with socialism.

"This was about what I expected," he said. "I think a great majority of people that vaguely support capitalism on campus are out doing other things."

For Hornbuckle, it was an opportunity to spread the word of socialism.

"I think what I may have achieved is letting people know that there is an organized struggle against capitalism," he said. "The debate educated people to the fact that capitalism is putting profits before people."

The debate started with a series of three-minute speeches where each man raised new issues and tried to answer accusations from the other side.

"It isn't enough just to announce these inequities that exist between the rich and the majority of the people," Hornbuckle said. "It's also necessary to understand the connection between them."

Hornbuckle said socialism could offer several benefits to the masses that capitalism could not, including free health care, housing as a basic human right, full employment and an unexploited environment.

Goldstein countered with a 5.3 percent national unemployment rate and the fact that environmental disasters are not unique to capitalistic countries.

"There are jobs available for anyone who wants to work," Goldstein said. "I've accused socialism of much, much greater pollution. We have our problems but the Chernobyl accident, the air in Moscow, the air in Krakow — there really is no comparison."

***'I think what I may have achieved is letting people know that there is an organized struggle against capitalism.'***

— Kevin Hornbuckle

Hornbuckle also accused the capitalistic system of being racist, which helps the elite class keep the masses from organizing and turning against the status quo.

To exemplify his position, Hornbuckle pointed to an article written by syndicated columnist James Kilpatrick that warned against freed black activist Nelson Mandela because of his communist sympathies.

Hornbuckle said this warning about the South African resistance leader demonstrated the racism that permeates a capitalistic system.

"Racism does certainly play a part," he said. "It's a justification for capitalist exploitation."

Goldstein said Kilpatrick criticized Mandela and the African National Congress for being communists and not for being black.

Moreover, he said racism is a problem in the United States, but events over the last 40 years such as desegregation and the election of blacks to prominent political posts demonstrate great improvement.

During their five minute closing remarks, each man reiterated their main points and introduced new arguments.

Goldstein said real wages are up nationally and in every industrial country across the globe, and he used recent events in Eastern Europe to show that societies favor a free market system.

"West Germany is one of these capitalistic economies that Kevin derides. The situation there is so bad ... that the West Germans had to build a big wall to keep their unemployed workers from going to East Germany," Goldstein said sarcastically.

Hornbuckle, though, stuck to his guns and pointed to American and international corporations that put profits before laborers.

"Goldstein extols the profit rates — profits for who?" Hornbuckle asked.

Hornbuckle said Eastman Kodak corporation laid off workers two years in a row, despite the fact the company made a substantial profit each year.

"Of course profits rose," Hornbuckle said. "Kodak is in business to make a profit. Kodak is not in business to help people out."

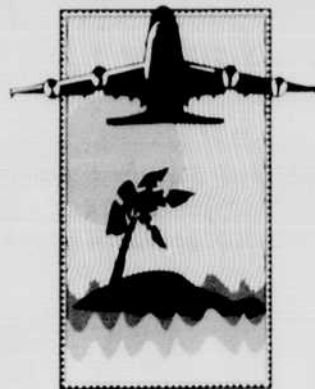
And in the end, as the dust settled to the ground, both sides agreed the debate could rage on for years — and it probably will.



Photo by Andre Kanier

*The Student Insurgent's* Kevin Hornbuckle (left) and economics professor Henry Goldstein argue the pros and cons of opposing ideologies in Wednesday night's debate.

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