

The Carolina Review

UTILITIES. . . In what was less than a surprise move last week, Gov. Jim Hunt suggested the N.C. General Assembly might study the possibility of amending or even repealing legislation allowing state utilities' automatic fuel adjustment increases.

North Carolina power companies have come under increasing criticism in recent months over almost continuous rounds of rate hikes. The criticism has been directed, to a large degree, at the seemingly abnormal amount of "down time" of the state's nuclear electric generating plants. When the nuclear plants are shut down, then the power companies are forced to go on the open market to buy fuel for their oil and coal generating plants.

Since 1975, the power companies have had almost a free hand in passing their increased fuel costs on to the consumer via the fuel adjustment clause passed by the legislature that year.

While the State Utilities Commission had the power to reduce or even disallow increases for services under normal circumstances, their hands have been practically tied where fuel adjustments are concerned. Current law provides for fuel adjustment increases to the consumer up to three times a year.

Unlike other service increases which have been at least reduced by the Commission, the fuel adjustment increases have generally received full approval (there is, of late, a growing sentiment that the Commission has been much too kind in all of its allowances).

The latest fuel adjustment increase occurred only a little over a month ago.

So Hunt has taken the lead in suggesting a change. Citing the ineffectiveness of the state's several nuclear plants, Hunt hinted the problems might be

management related. The governor maintained that the law was never intended for such compensation. But the state courts in 1980 stripped the Utilities Commission of authority to consider management decisions in granting fuel adjustment increases.

It seems certain now that some changes will be made in the law, probably in the upcoming June "short" session. Both Lt. Gov. Jimmy Green, who presides over the Senate, and Speaker of the House Liston Ramsey seemed willing to let the issue come before the supposed budget review session. The adjournment resolution of last year prohibits consideration of anything other than budgetary matters, legislative study reports and local legislation. Bills that have already passed one House or the other can also be considered.

Consideration of the fuel adjustment clause will probably be - pass the adjournment resolution - a two-thirds majority vote can accomplish that. GREEN. . . Speculation that Jimmy Green had decided to pull out of the 1984 governor's race can now be put to rest. Green's salaried campaign organizer, Weldon Denny, last month mailed invitations to Green supporters for the "first annual Jimmy Green Spring Festival."

The event, scheduled for April 23 in the Raleigh Civic Center, will (according to the invitation) "mark the beginning of an annual affair the Lt. Gov. will host."

Tickets for the event are \$50 per. The "festive evening" will include "live music, plenty of refreshments and hors d'oeuvres." One can be sure that this "annual event," at \$50 per ticket, will take place only as long as the lieutenant governor is running for office or holding office.

The Washington Report

By Congressman Walter B. Jones

As you might know the Congress has yet to complete approval of all appropriation bills for fiscal year 1982. In fairness to the House of Representatives that body did pass all of the thirteen regular appropriation bills, but the Senate for whatever reason, at this date has failed to pass the Labor-Health and Human Services, Commerce-Justice-State-Judiciary and Treasury-Postal Service legislation.

Labor and Health and Human Services is the largest appropriation of them all, and one which affects many facets of our government. In the absence of final legislative approval of the appropriation bills, in order to keep the government operating, we consider from time to time what is known as a Continuing Resolution which means that all Departments are funded at last year's level until such time as final approval is given for their current appropriation request. In December prior to adjournment the Congress enacted a Continuing Resolution to expire March 31 of this year. It now appears that there is no way that the three pending appropriation bills can be approved by that date. So once again the House was forced to vote on a Continuing Resolution which will fund all Departments until September 30, 1982 at which time the 1983 appropriation bill becomes effective. I have been somewhat critical of this stop-gap method of voting. To me, there is no reason why the House or the Senate cannot consider and enact the necessary appropriation bills in an orderly fashion.

During the week the House again considered a series of suspension bills and perhaps one which portrays the philosophy of this present Congress was to require federal agencies to pay bills for purchases or rentals within thirty days after the acceptance of the

goods, unless a different time is specified in the contract. Anyone who has done business with the federal government realizes that if you are the one who owes the federal government, they demand prompt payment whether it be income tax or other indebtedness and inflicts in most cases, severe penalties for late payments. So many of us feel it was only fair to be sure that the American citizens doing business with the government are treated in the same manner.

As Chairman of the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, from time to time we have some very interesting witnesses. On Tuesday, March 23 we held public hearings on Ocean Dumping, that is, what restrictions if any should be put on the municipalities and others who dump sludge and sewage into our deep waters. Among the witnesses Tuesday was one of the most delightful and knowledgeable gentlemen that I have had the pleasure of meeting in many years and that was Captain Jacques Cousteau. Many of you will recall that he has been a pioneer in the oceanographic field and is internationally known, and has frequently been on national television. Also appearing at the same hearing was the very personable Ed Koch, Mayor of New York City, inasmuch as the City has a tremendous problem of waste disposal. It is Captain Cousteau's feeling that not all ocean dumping is harmful. His scientific organization has presently concluded that possibly 75 percent of all the sludge contains beneficial materials to the life of the sea, whereas approximately 25 percent would have to be considered harmful; and so the challenge is to the scientific world to find some way to separate the beneficial from the harmful. If that could be done, it would solve many problems for the large municipalities such as New York City.



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T C COFFEE	1.49
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1.00	.99
AJAX 118 DET	.55
QUAKER GRITS	1.05
AST REG BAG	.30
CUT GRN BEAN	1.37
1.00	.50
QUAKER OATS	.55
TW PINEAPPLE	.99
PRODUCE	.55
CORN FLAKES	.55
PRODUCE	.55
POT PIE MORT	1.37
1.00	1.35
ELB DINNER	.75
SAUSAGE PIZZ	1.15
PRODUCE	.75
PRODUCE	.55
CHARMIN TISS	.55
12OZ WU FRK	.55
WA SAUSAGE	.55
PRODUCE	.55
TAX	1.19
TOTAL	31.57

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- CELERY
- 8-OZ. MORTON CHICKEN POT PIE
- 32-OZ. MORTON GRAVY & SAUSAGE STEAK DINNER
- 10-OZ. MR. P'S SAUSAGE PIZZA
- 3-LB. YELLOW ONIONS
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FOOD TOWN LFPINC/SC/VA 02/10/82	
PEPET PROCT	1.45 L
BILL DEP	.80 H
GROCRY	1.19 L
NON-FOOD	.79 8
GROCRY	1.10 L
NON-FOOD	2.36 6
PERISHBL	.34 L
102/1.00	.59 L
GROCRY	4.75 L
NON-FOOD	1.49 0
HEAT	1.79 L
GROCRY	.34 L
NON-FOOD	1.35 6
GROCRY	.67 L
GROCRY	1.79 L
GROCRY	.73 L
GROCRY	.90 L
PRODUCE	.72 L
GROCRY	.99 L
PRODUCE	1.02 L
PERISHBL	.69 L
102/1.25	.42 L
PERISHBL	1.49 L
PERISHBL	.79 L
PRODUCE	.99 L
PRODUCE	.99 L
GROCRY	.99 L
HEAT	1.12 L
HEAT	1.09 L
PRODUCE	1.29 L
SURTOTAL	.59 L
4% TAX	34.04
TOTAL	35.37

FOOD TOWN
TOTAL
\$3537

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