

# The Carolina Review: NEA Still Losing Ground

**MARBLES**... As the chief lobbyist for North Carolina teachers, the N.C. Association of Educators has a lot of responsibility—and power. With a membership of 40,000 dues-paying members (\$115 per year average), another 8,000 retired members (\$5 per year), an in-place statewide organization structure, and a fulltime lobbying staff (housed in a new, futuristic building in downtown Raleigh), the group would seem to have enough marbles to play the game.

But the NCAE has been losing face of late, and over the past few years, friends inside and out.

Last week, the NCAE failed to get a "favorable report" from the Senate Education Committee on the committee substitute for SB 515. That bill would allow payroll deductions from teacher's paychecks for NCAE dues. Payroll deduction for association dues is something other state employee lobbying groups won for themselves in 1981.

Supporters of the bill say all the deductions would do is provide convenience for the members and organization.

Opponents say, and opposi-

tion is growing each day SB 515 is delayed, that payroll deduction is defacto acceptance of unionization of teachers. Or at least the first step. Collective bargaining (unionization) by state employees, if you didn't know it, is against the law in North Carolina, but not everywhere else.

"Yes," say opponents, "other state employees got deductions in 1981, although maybe they shouldn't have."

The teacher's group, though, is hooked up with the National Education Association in Washington.

"That bunch (NEA) is a militant, collective bargaining group," said one legislator opposed to SB 515.

The NEA does espouse collective bargaining and apparently some of its stands could be classified as militant. Of the average \$115.00 dues that North Carolina teachers pay each year to the NCAE, the NEA gets almost half.

So the lines were drawn in the committee meeting last week, when parliamentary maneuvers prevented maybe a favorable vote.

Assessments are mixed on whether the number of votes

even exist in the committee to send SB 515 to the Senate floor.

According to NCAE President Loretta Martin, the opponents are "not being very reasonable."

"We've already agreed to the committee substitute compromise," Martin says, "what else do they want us to do?"

The compromise was written by freshman Senator Bob Davis, D-Rowan, and reads simply that "if this organization engages in collective bargaining, this act is null and void."

"I felt like I could vote for it with that," Davis said.

Others couldn't. "They couldn't get it through the House, so they thought they could bulldoze it through the Senate," said one senator, irate at some of the lobbying tactics of the NCAE.

After conversations with the irate senator, the question was posed to Martin that maybe the problem wasn't SB 515, but rather a growing legislative dissatisfaction with the NCAE as a lobbying group.

Martin wasn't surprised by the question. "I'd say that might be a pretty good assessment that you've made. I won't agree or disagree, except to say you're right that there is another reason (for the problems other than SB 515)," she said.

Martin continued. "Why we're not a popular as in the past? We're more politically active... (we've been) taking positions, not in the line with current popular opinion. We have only in the past few years begun endorsing candidates that agree with us and sticking with them," she said.

"Right," says the irate senator, "they always pick the most liberal candidates and the ones that will promise the most. Things they (the candidates) can't possibly deliver."

Gov. Jim Hunt is one candidate the NCAE has put its money on in recent years.

"The governor strongly supports the bill because it's a matter of equity and fair play. Other state employees have it (payroll deduction)," says Brent Hackney, the spokesman for the governor.

Opponents say, and some neutral observers too, that the

governor wants NCAE and NEA money and strategic support in his upcoming race for Jesse Helms' Washington Senate seat. They say that the governor can use the national organization's help in his continuing rise in national prominence.

"Passage of the dues checkoff would be a plume in John Wilson's hat, and almost assure him a seat on the national board—where he could

best help Jim Hunt," said one opponent of SB 515, but a supporter of Hunt.

John Wilson is the past president of the NCAE and is running hard for a seat on the NEA board.

If the NCAE has an ace, and they may not, Gov. Hunt is it. "We're still expecting the Education Committee to give us a favorable report," Martin said.

## Letter To The Editor

Dear Sir:

I read with interest and gratification that the House Judicial 1 subcommittee approved a bill to outlaw involuntary servitude in North Carolina. This legislation is long overdue, as anyone informed about the migrant situation in this state is well aware. Let us hope that the full committee and the legislature recognize this and support the bill.

I am confused by the stand taken by Reps. Vernon James, D-Pasquotank, and Edith Lutz, D-Cleveland. According to the report, they attempted to get the bill amended to remove any penalties from the owners of the farms on which such practices were employed. The statement reported was, "If there is a problem, it is with the crew leaders." It seems a natural question to ask who employs the crew leaders. The answer, obviously, is that their employer is the farm owner. How can the employer of the crew leader justify his abdication of responsibility for the practices of his employee, and for the conditions on his property? I assume he does not concede his rights to whatever income is derived from his crops. If the crew leader abused the farm machinery I feel sure the farm owner would feel called upon to exercise his authority. This sounds as though the people are less important than machinery. Is this the message North Carolina farmers want to give?

Farm workers are not organized to have power to present a united front. Perhaps the representatives' constituents hope this won't happen. But, being unorganized, the workers are relatively powerless to claim their rights. For more powerful groups to exercise their favored positions by pro-

moting legislation which denies protection to these workers is unjustifiable.

Mr. James is quoted as saying that such a bill might "indict the farming community." The indictment comes in the opposition to such legislation. The implication is that farm owners have something to fear and that, where problems exist, they want to shirk their responsibility. I hope the constituents of Reps. James and Lutz, and of other legislators who will be voting, urge recognition that farmers have more to gain than lose by such legislation, and demand that their representatives support the bill.

Sincerely,  
Gerry Gourley

## Hwy. Improvements To Be Considered

RALEIGH — The North Carolina Board of Transportation will hold its next meeting on Friday.

The meeting, to be held in the board room of the Highway Building located in downtown Raleigh, will begin at 9 A.M., an hour earlier than the starting time for previous meetings. Interested individuals are invited to attend.

Among the items that the board members will consider are 70 contracts for highway improvements affecting 76 counties across the state. Fifty-four of the contracts in-

volve resurfacing work while six specify bridge replacements.

State Secretary of Transportation W. R. Roberson Jr. commented, "Our main emphasis continues to be on maintenance of existing highways. North Carolinians have over \$25 billion invested in the state's highway system and it is our responsibility to protect that investment."

"Our thanks go to members of the 1981 General Assembly who approved Gov. Jim Hunt's program generating necessary funding for highway maintenance. We

appreciate their support and assistance in recognizing that critical need," he said.

In all the 70 contracts total more than \$36-million.

## Honor Roll

The students listed below were named to the Honor Roll at Pitt Community College for the 1983 Spring Quarter: Gregory S. Barham of Edenton and Michael W. Jordan of Tyner.

The students listed below were named to the Dean's List: Marcus F. Bass, Jr. and Kimberly J. Swanner, both of Edenton.



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## Sermon Topic Is Chosen

"Giving away the advantage" will be the sermon title Sunday, June 12th at First Presbyterian Church at the 11 A.M. Worship. The Pastor, Rev. H.E. Mallinson will preach. A Litany by members of the congregation will be offered for the Reunion of the Presbyterian Church, U.S. and the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

This Sunday the Summer Sunday School of the First Presbyterian Church begins at 10 A.M. Members of the Church have prepared the 12 week study around the theme: "Who's in charge here?" The study includes events from Genesis to Revelation. Members of the congregation will lead the study which will take place sometimes at the church building, sometimes outdoors, sometimes in homes. The Worship sermon will follow the Sunday School theme for that day. A play involving everyone present will lead off the study this Sunday. The story of Abraham and Lot and their families - from Genesis 13, 18 and 19 will be directed by the Pastor.



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