

# The Franklin Times

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## LOCAL EDITORIAL COMMENT

### To Tell Us Something

Voters in neighboring Vance County defeated four bond issues this week. The margins of defeat—especially in the matter of a proposed \$2.8 million water system improvement—was decisive.

It is difficult to imagine that voters in Vance or anywhere else are against improved and ample supplies of water; new fire stations, new fire equipment and community recreation. However, Vance voters made their desires unequivocally clear on all these things.

Also this week, Governor Bob Scott made his budget presentation to the General Assembly. Without the benefit of advance knowledge on the Governor's message, one can easily assume that it will require additional taxes. Much talk has been heard recently on the possibility of a five-cent-per-pack tax on cigarettes and a minimum of three cents per gallon on gasoline. Some legislators are known to favor a one-cent increase on the current sales tax. Some others are advocating a substantial increase in the cost of automobile licenses and ad infinitum.

Up in Washington, things are little better. The Congress has given itself a forty percent salary hike and raised salaries for everyone else in sight of the shiny dome and many standing out in the shadows. Already operating billions in the red, the national law-

makers go merrily along their way devising more and more onerous taxes.

The poor do not need worry about this. Unfortunately, their income is too low to be taxed. The rich have long since contrived their ignoble loopholes. So it follows that those left to carry the intolerable burden are the average citizens—the middle-income group.

It is this segment of our society that must also maintain the economic health of the nation. Supporting families, raising children, donating to the many charities and maintaining a household are every-day problems to the middle income citizen.

The cost of food is way up. Medical expenses have jumped to unbelievable heights in recent years. Keeping a child in school gets more expensive each year. Salaries and profits for the little man have long ago lost the foot race with the spiraling cost of living.

Citizens can hardly be expected to look favorably on more taxation while pulling in their own belts with ever growing regularity.

For most people, keeping one's head above the financial waters is life's greatest urgency. It could be that Vance voters are trying to tell us something.

## Mourn Now

Two Pilot Mountain police officers were murdered earlier this month and four Negro youths have been charged with the slayings. The two policemen left grieving families and empty places which can never be filled. Compassionate people mourn their loss.

But, the warning must go out. Those who would mourn the senseless killing of these two public servants must do so now. It must be done in the bitter heat of remembrance. And it must be done before the do-gooders begin their predictable drive to excuse the killers.

Any day now, the ultra-liberal forgers will be crying against any punishment the courts might decree when and if conviction comes. They will point out that the youths — if they be the killers — are underprivileged; that they have been left out of the mainstream and that they didn't really mean to do bad. They will say — as one liberal editor recently did about another case — that "Both justice and society seem to be sick kittens in this land".

If anyone doubts that a drive will be launched to all but, if not entirely, set free the murderers of these policemen, it takes only a glance at the front pages of today's larger newspapers to get the message.

In Edgecombe County a short time ago, four Negroes entered the store of a 65-year-old white man, whose only sin was that he had worked all his life and still found it necessary to keep open his place of business.

When the foursome left the store, the owner was dead. All he had worked for in his life was of no further use to him. His life had been

snuffed out so that these people might steal a little money not belonging to them. His family, as all families do, mourned.

One of the four people accused in the murder of this storekeeper is a Negro girl, Marie Hill was tried and convicted by a jury of four Negroes and eight whites. The jury did not recommend mercy and she was sentenced to die in the state's gas chamber.

Without getting into the many pros and cons of capital punishment, one is now to assume that the life of this convicted murderer is worth more than the life of her victim, who, as far as is known, never harmed anyone in his life.

Nobody cries for the storekeeper, except maybe his family and a few friends. But over a hundred people are making a march on Raleigh in protest to the conviction of the murderer. Liberal groups are shouting everywhere that she should not be made to pay for this crime. It seems that some would advocate giving her some sort of medal.

Her case is on appeal and it is highly unlikely that she or anyone else will ever again be put to death by the state. But the fact remains that in today's society it is the criminal that gets the sympathy and the victim can remain dead—very dead.

So, if any are to mourn the two Pilot Mountain police officers, killed in line of duty, it should be done immediately. Soon it will be fashionable to forgive the killers and blame the victims. Such is the way of things in this country today.



G. H. G.  
THE MIDDLE EAST TENSION

"What in the world has gotten into him?"

## Legislative Report

By Rep. James D. Speed

Raleigh - On the whole, I believe the governor's new budget proposals for 1969-71 are very good and that his recommendations generally are realistic.

I especially agree with the governor's recommendations concerning salary increases for teachers and for state employees. However, I feel that his recommendations for salary increases in the field of higher education go too far.

Looking at the specific tax proposals, I am disappointed at the concentration of additional taxes upon tobacco instead of other possible sources of revenue.



JAMES SPEED

I believe this to be contrary to the thinking of many legislators and citizens throughout the state, especially those in tobacco-growing areas. The governor quite frankly admitted that he had stated during his campaign that he was opposed to such a tax. His words were:

"My only regret in recommending a cigarette tax to this distinguished body is that when I campaigned for this office, I said I was opposed to such a tax."

I feel this is an especially bad time to do anything which would further weaken our tobacco industry.

I also was disappointed that the governor did not recommend any further fi-

financial help for the local governments in North Carolina which are badly in need of help.

Many of us had hoped that a part of any proposed additional revenue or tax increase would earmarked to assist our counties, cities and towns. It is my feeling that the separate counties are in more need of financial assistance than other local governments such as the municipalities. The cities and towns presently receive aid in a number of ways which are not available to the county governments. For example, municipalities receive Powell Bill funds for improvements and maintenance of streets and, under legislation enacted in 1967, will become recipients of a larger share of the state-collected utilities franchise tax money both on next July 1, and even a bigger share on July 1, 1970.

I feel that the counties are in special need of some type of returned revenue from the state's tax collections. While the towns and cities could also use additional revenue, I believe they are generally in a more favorable position than the counties at the present time.

The governor's proposal for 10 per cent salary increases for teachers in each year of the biennium is, in my opinion, as much as the state can afford at this time. We must consider the many other demands for funds for necessary expansions of state services and programs.

I am in full agreement with the proposal to put state employe salary increases on a graduated scale with more emphasis placed on the lower income groups.

The straight percentage formula which has been used in the past in granting salary increases has had a tendency to create a greater spread of differential between the lower and top income groups, without regard to performance of duties. I feel that consideration must be given to the amount and quality of work done. The Governor is recommending this as a broad policy. I feel that it should be adopted.

I approve of the governor's requests for more appropriations for mental health centers and other institutions and of granting the request of East Carolina University for \$1.6 million to begin development of a regional medical center, called the Allied Health Center. This, I think, is justified in light of the denial of many other capital improvements requests for East Carolina University.

I also feel that additional funds for a poultry and livestock diagnostic laboratory, deleted from the earlier budget, are very important for the growth of a sound agricultural program. I am glad that the governor has recommended restoring these funds.



I got me a curious bill the other day. 'Course, I'm always getting some of the unfriendliest mail you ever saw. Most of it demands that I either buy something and charge it or that I pay for something I already bought. And as any red-blooded middle class (I hate that word) American male-married especially—already knows it ain't easy to pay for all you bought and charged. Sometimes its downright hard to do.

I didn't open it at first. I seldom open the mail at first. I wait a few days and let the suspense build. You ought to try it sometimes. There are days when I can hardly wait to open last week's mail. You'd be surprised how many useless meetings you miss this way.



When it come time to open this particular piece of what I call junk mail—all bills are junk to me—I started out slowly. I knowed full well I won't going to like what I was likely to find inside. This helps the suspense and makes you even gladder that you didn't open your mail at first.

I pulled the little don't tear, don't splinter, don't get dirty piece of cardboard. Started to throw it away right off. It was full of holes. But I decided to try to read all that light blue printing. Shore enough it said I owed 'em and I ought to have already paid 'em. I countered that they wuz probably right.

It wuz when I looked at the amount that I lost my cigar. I swallowed it. Burning end first. Now if you ain't never had this experience ... you ain't missed nothing.

There big as life and weighing as much as the little woman wuz the figures: \$00.00. That's right, \$00.00. They said pay it. They said it wuz past due and to pay it right now. Immediately.

I figured that crazy computer had been off on a blind date and hadn't been paying attention to the right things. So's I ignored it.

A few days later, I got another, one. In due course, I opened it. It wuz a second notice. It said I owed \$00.00 and I'd better pay it or else some terrible things wuz going to happen to me, my wife and youngins. Studied on this for awhile. Didn't want anything to happen to the kids, but that remark about the little woman wuz interesting. So, I ignored it agai'n.

Then come the final notice. The mailman knocked on the door and hand delivered it. Fact is, he slapped me in the face with it. Said it wuz a new service of the post office. The company had paid extra for it. Don't know if the company paid extra for sweeping him up out my yard or not.

But that final notice said they'd burn the house; poison the dog and whip the neighbors if I didn't remit at once \$00.00. Now I ain't one to cause my neighbors any undue trouble. And even though they been whipping each other for years, I decided if I wuz going to live in the neighborhood, I'd best pay. So I wrote them a check for \$00.00, signed it and mailed it. I hope that's the last I hear of it, too.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Times welcomes letters from readers, especially on problems and opinions concerning Franklin County. We do not undertake to edit letters without the consent of the writer, but reasonable length is advised to assure publication. All letters must be signed and must include the name and address of the writer. The Times will not publish unsigned letters, or withhold names of writers for any reason.

To The Editor:

Thanks for another fine editorial contained in your Feb. 11th issue. I agree with your statement "it is now time to stand up and be counted in support of our schools".

I wish to express my gratitude to all the officials, the local members of the faculty (both races) and those parents of both races that have contributed of their best efforts toward providing good public schools for all of our children.

I want to stand beside Mrs. Romero, and Mrs. Lucy T.

Allen (who wrote earlier letters in support of our schools), Mr. Chadwick, the committee formed this week and all those loyal people who are determined to "carry on" in support of Franklin County schools.

Life itself is filled with problems. My first school problem started when I was only 6 years old. I would dread the close of each school day because I knew I would be in for a licking on the mile walk from the school home. That problem which was momentous to me was solved by years of growth in which I was able to "turn the tide". Let it be our hope and prayer that our schools will continue to grow.

George D. Fuller

## Possible Space Power

Montreal - Two Canadian scientists reported recently that Canada could have its own satellite launching pad and rise to the ranks of a spacepower for about \$1-million. An aerospace expert said he believed that the Churchill range could be covered and put Canada among the modern satellite powers.

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