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**ERNEST H. PITT**  
 Publisher  
**NDUBISI EGEMONYE**  
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**ELAINE L. PITT**  
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**VIPAPORN P. RATANACHAROENSIRI**  
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# Reader calls for greater use of home monitoring

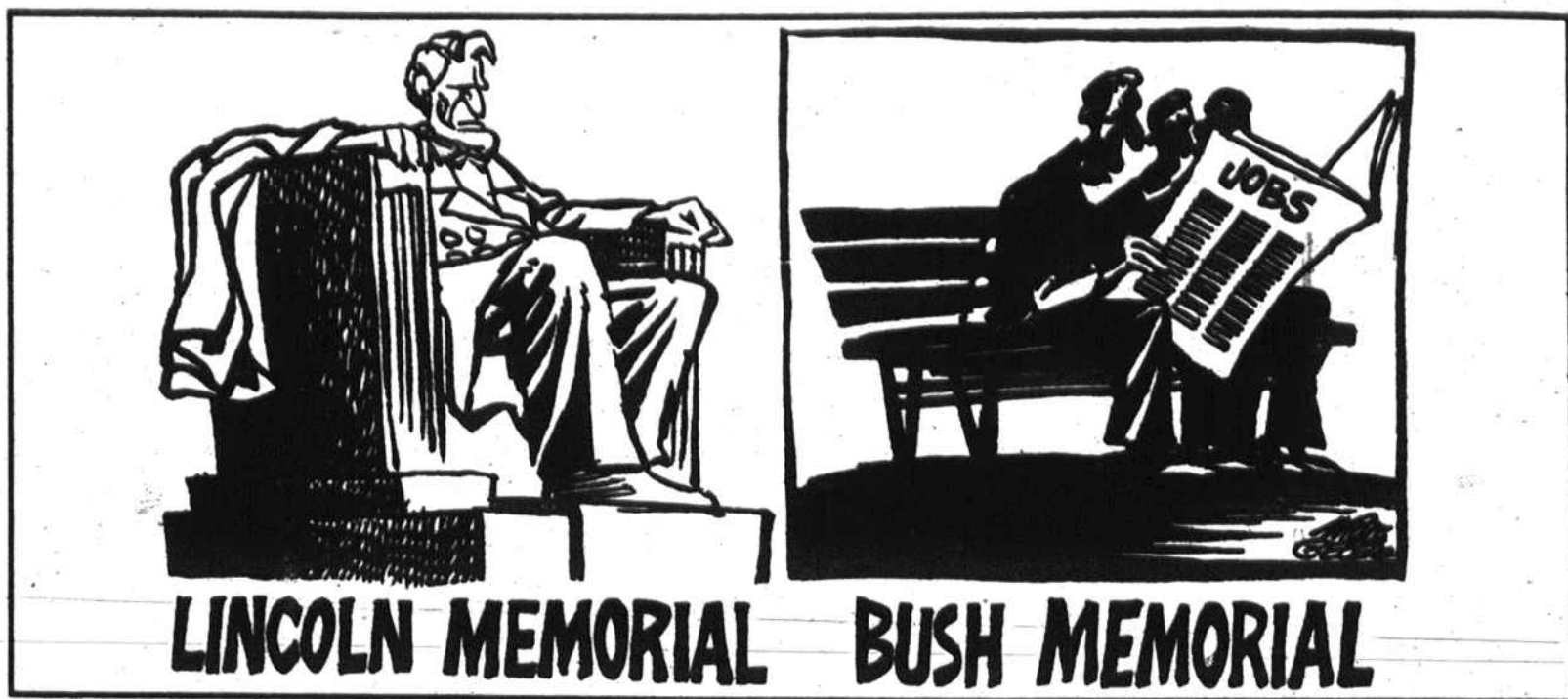
To the Editor:

Our prison system here in North Carolina is costing the taxpayer more than he or she can afford. The average inmate costs the state between \$30,000 to \$40,000 per year. I feel that the electronic monitoring system should be expanded, and more people should be placed on electronic home monitoring.

The group most likely to do the least harm to the public would be those who have been in for 10 years or more years, and all the first offenders with no substance abuse history.

I mean people who have never been to prison before, prior to the crime that they are currently incarcerated for. This group should be those who are already incarcerated, because now they can see that they don't want to be here, and have decided to change their life for the better.

I have run into many old timers (Guys who have been down a long time) who just want a break. But, so many young people are doing dumb things out there, and the system is not only making the young people pay, but, is keeping the old timers in longer. We want a chance to make something of our lives, and try to keep others from coming



## CHRONICLE MAILBAG Our Readers Speak Out

here. We want to do our share to try to turn young people from the drugs, and street life, but how can we, when we can't get a break? The biggest problem is not those who have been in here a long time, but the young people who keep coming back because no one who has been in for long, has had a long talk with them to explain many things, and about what they have been through.

Just think back, how many long timers have been let out, and came

back because they weren't in but five to 10 months? (About 8 out of every 10 to 15). This is why the state should look at the long timers more. Help them to get out, so they can help the younger people stay out.

It's a simple matter of economics. There are 97 to 102 prisons in North Carolina. If just 50 people in each prison were placed on electronic monitors, there would be 4,850 people released (using 97). That would get rid of the over-

crowding, save taxpayers' money and the state.

The savings per year would be so great, because the state now is claiming broke. I don't know about you, but I think our taxpayers money could be better spent on education or conservation, better than on the continuing incarceration of inmates. Think about it.

Sincerely yours,  
**Mr. James L. Galloway**  
 Rt. 8, Box 89  
 Reidsville, N.C. 27320

## Branch's tough call

Recently the Forsyth County District Attorney's office has been criticized for its handling of a child sex-abuse case in which a plea bargain was used. That plea bargain allowed the second-degree rape charge involving a 13-year-old girl to be dismissed, and the man accused of the crime to plead guilty to a lesser charge of taking indecent liberties with a minor.

The relatives of the children involved are convinced that the way in which the case was handled by assistant D.A. Janet Branch smacked of insensitivity to the feelings of the children involved in this case, and of racism.

In looking at various aspects of the case, one cannot help but wonder if their suspicions have merit.

Branch had the criminal history of the man accused in this case at her disposal. She had people who were willing to come forward with the information about the alleged rape and his other activities. But Branch chose to plea bargain in order to devote more her energy and attention to the "other very difficult" sexual-abuse case she would be handling that day.

Her intention to dispose of a jail case, as she put it, may have been in line with what she felt she was under a mandate to do, but it did little to bolster the African-American public's confidence that the district attorney's office takes what happens to it as seriously as they do other similar cases in the majority community.

We urge that the district attorney examine how assistant D.A.s are meeting the mandates that have been handed down to determine if "justice" is actually being served.

It is understandable that tough decisions have to be made sometimes about the disposition of cases through the court system. And there are a number of variables that go into the making of those decisions. But no one should have to wonder if the manner in which a case is handled will be determined by the caseload or the severity of the crime, especially when it comes to a child, any child.

## The budget crunch

Both city and county officials are waiting on word from our legislators about what local cofers can expect from the General Assembly. Until they do hear what the final word is, local municipalities will be operating on interim budgets and will sooner or later begin dipping into reserve funds to cover expenses.

The legislature needs to make some decisions and soon or face the prospect of a wholesale revolt from taxpayers, already angered by local leaders for proposing tax increases and cuts in services.

The leadership in both houses of the legislature need to exercise some leadership and hammer out a budget and not keep the state's local governing bodies in limbo about what funds they actually have to work with.

If the legislature is going to use state reimbursements to balance the budget, then it needs to say so now, live with the consequences, and let the rest of the state make the adjustments necessary to help people move on with their lives.

## That's your fault

The other day, a young man was overheard, complaining that he couldn't find the job he wanted because all the "good" jobs had been taken. He went on to explain that the "good" jobs were those where you got to wear nice clothes, worked in an air conditioned building and could take breaks as often as you needed to.

So instead of going after "a job", the young man said he would just wait until something comes along that suited him.

Well, he is likely to be in for a long wait. The young people who don't mind a getting a little dirty, or working outdoors, and don't need so many breaks will probably have a lot more productive summer work experience.

Yes, the job market may not be as plentiful as it once was for area youth, but there are still plenty of jobs available if a person is willing not to be as concerned with the type of job as much as they are concerned with having a job period.

This young man's inability to find a job is his own fault. His options are clear. He can either sit around the rest of the summer and bellyache about it with no money in his pockets, or he can go out and find a job.

They are out there. And if you don't have one, that's your fault.

## Look at life as a chance . . . not as a chore!

What is it that makes us think that we are so important that eventually many of us wind up living our lives as if we've totally forgotten all about the fundamental questions as to why we are here in the first place?

What happens to us that makes so many of us forget who we really are and what this life experience is all about? What happens to us?

I dare you to ask yourself: why are we here in the first place? Why did God make us--you and me?

A woman said to me the other day "what is man that thou are fearful of him?" She said it with such conviction and such awareness, such understanding that I almost shook. She was trying to tell each of us something about the ultimate reality.

Oh yes we live in the "real" world and each of us are confronted with "real" problems--problems that threaten to destroy all that we know and love. But what are "real" prob-

lems when we are all confronted with the ultimate reality - -albeit certain/uncertainty of life and death? Each of us knows that death is just around the corner BUT even knowing that, why do so many of us live our lives as if living life doesn't really matter? Why?

once felt safe and secure--to the church where we first saw the light?

When we as mere babes begin this life's journey, we are all so very innocent. We are fresh with God's great wisdom, love, peace and understanding. We love one another. We instinctively follow his

highway, some of us forget; some of us forget that we are actually living life! That we are actually living an experience that can only be described as being the most incredible experience a human being can have! Life.

I wonder sometimes how much easier this life would be if instead of us looking at life as a chore that we would look at life as a chance! Life is an opportunity to make a difference for good in somebody else's life.

My father told me about two old men lying in a hospital bed. Both of their bodies racked with pain. Death was inevitable. My father remembers the great difference between the two as being one of simple peace.

One man had lived his life riotously. The other, a retired Methodist minister, had lived his life trying to make a difference in the lives of people. One had forgotten. The other had not.

## ON THE AVANT-GARDE

By TANG NIVRI

Why is it that we so often find ourselves blown way, way off life's true course in such a way that we eventually wind up so lost, so confused, so full of ourselves that we wind up having to fight with life's bitter circumstances--including our own egos--that for some, it almost becomes impossible to actually make it back to the road where we

commandments. We seek his approval. And most of all, we intuitively want to report back to him (the Creator) who made us. We want to stay in touch with him. We talk to him. We listen with all of our curiosity. We listen as if we know that he is talking and that he wants to guide us.

Then somewhere along life's

## Show love by saying 'no' to gambling

If gambling becomes legal in North Carolina, the term "first in flight" could take on another mean-

ing. The question of legalized gambling (or gaming) is a horse of

from good examples for children. It would represent a flight away from acceptable Christian ethics. It would represent a flight away from the work ethic. It would represent a flight away from the belief that the end does not justify the means. It would represent a flight away from our state's motto, *esse quam videri* (to be, rather than to seem).

Legalized gambling would represent an embracing of that which is wrong (not right) with America.

To legalize gambling is to step out of the carefully laid path of responsible government and step into the mud, slime, and quagmire of crisis-management expediency.

History clearly shows that gambling is neither an expedient nor proper tool to use in management of the fiscal affairs of governing bod-

ies. Many wise statesmen have avoided its deceitful allure. According to Lewis C. Henry, George Washington said, "It (gaming) is the child of avarice, the brother of iniquity and the father of mischief."

Personally I believe legalized gambling is a form of citizen abuse. Here is the scenario: The government levies all the taxes it dares levy, then, knowing the citizens are taxed to the hilt, it finds another "painless" way to get more money from them. This is abuse, plain and simple, referendum notwithstanding.

Citizens should know that playing the lottery is gambling. The World Book Encyclopedia defines "lottery" as follows: "Lottery is per-

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## GUEST COLUMN

By C. WILLIAM PAGE

North Carolina can be proud of its "firsts." It was the first colony to instruct its delegates to the Continental Congress to vote for independence.

"First in Flight" refers to the Kitty Hawk 1903 powered flight of the Wright brothers. That "first" is considered a milestone in aviation

another breed. Rather than being a positive and encouraging "first," it would become a shameful and destructive "last." It would signal a deviation in North Carolina's values, ethics, and morality flight plan. It would actually represent a flight away from decent morals and values.

It would represent a flight away

## The politics of race is threatening black progress

George Bush and the Republican Party are at it again. In 1988 the Republican Party used Willie Horton as an image to exploit the fears, anxieties, and prejudices of white voters. With an eye on the 1992 election, a "kinder, gentler" George Bush is searching for another image or sym-

bol which can produce the Willie Horton effect. The new code word is racial quotas. Bush is vehemently denouncing the revised and watered down Civil Rights Act of 1991 as a "Quota Bill." Bush vetoed the Civil Rights Act of 1990 and the 1991 bill now faces a similar fate. Attacking civil rights and affirmative action has become good politics.

This latest episode of political opportunism by President Bush is reflective of a growing erosion of national will as it relates to civil rights of African-Americans and other minorities. The recent campaigns of David Duke and Jesse Helms showed significant evidence of this trend. Political analysts closely monitored those campaigns for clues as to what themes, tactics, and strategies might play well in the 1992 presidential election. What they found is that a sizable segment of white America has apparently grown weary of civil rights and affirmative

action. Many whites now feel that black progress is being made through policies and programs which unfairly give blacks an advantage of whites.

in terms of blacks achieving equity and parity within the U.S. system. With the most visible indignities of segregation having been wiped out

## VANTAGE POINT

By RON DANIELS

Hence the perception is that black progress is being made at the expense of whites.

The massive problems still plaguing and retarding the progress of large numbers of African-Americans is no longer seen as a circumstance that requires legislative remedies. It is increasingly clear that a majority within white America does not view the resolution of America's longstanding crisis in race relations

and with the impression that blacks have made substantial progress in terms of education, jobs, and political power, much of white America believes that any problems which blacks now suffer are not the result of racism or structural inequalities, but are due to defects in the culture and character of black people.

Unfortunately, the U.S. educa-

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