

# Problems ahead with new financial act

By the very nature of our political system and the pluralistic society in which we live, any piece of legislation must contain many compromises and imperfections. Very often this process leads to the creation of legislation which is basically sound in nature, but which contains provisions that tend to be counterproductive to the sound intent of the legislation. The Financial Procedures Act presently before the Student Legislature for consideration contains many badly needed provisions for assuring our student funds are allocated and used in a proper manner. At the same time, it contains several provisions which do not serve the interests of the students in the manner set forth in the rest of the act.

Specifically, Article IV, Section 2 requires "each club and/or organization shall be required to keep a set of books listing receipts, disbursements and a current balance of all monies allocated to them by Student

Legislature." Also, line itemizations on these books will have to conform to the line itemizations as contained within their budgets as approved by the Student Legislature.

The provision which permits the treasurer to audit the books of any club or organization receiving funds from the Student Legislature at anytime, without notice, shall hopefully make these organizations more responsible in requesting and handling their funds.

Another good provision of this act (Article IV, Section 8) requires clubs and organizations to submit budgetary requests for the next fiscal year which runs from July 1 to June 30 by Feb. 1. This request must then receive action by the Student Legislature by April 1 of the same year. This would give clubs and organizations the time to adjust their expenditure plans accordingly. There are many other good provisions

which cannot be enumerated in this short space.

On the other hand, there are several key provisions which tend to dilute the good intent of the act as a whole. First, the question arises after reading the section dealing with recipients of funds (Article II, Section 4b), as to the meaning of the phrase "no type of eliminating process may be used in the selection of members of clubs and organizations."

What constitutes an "eliminating process"? Does it require members to attend a certain number of club functions or requiring them to possess a certain type of skill inherent to the nature of the club, such as being able to carry a tune to join a campus chorus, constitute an eliminating process? We hope this was not the intent of this section, but, in any case, this is much too vague to be adopted in its present form.

The worst provision of the Financial Procedures Act is contained in the section dealing with the "procedure for receiving funds from Student Legislature" (Article IV, Section 1h) which reads as follows: "Any member of the Finance Committee who belongs to a club or organization whose budget is being considered by the committee must abstain from voting on any matters dealing with that specific budget at the time of the budget hearing."

On face value, this provision raises some serious questions as to the right of any legislature, by legislative fiat, to deprive any elected representative of their vote on any matter before the legislature. Concurrently, this provision deprives many groups on this campus of a voice in matters before the Finance Committee. As an example, if a commuter representative is a member of the Black Student Union and is not able to vote on the BSU budget request, the commuter students would be deprived of a voice on that matter. Representatives are elected to represent their constituents and should not be prohibited from representing them because they happen to be a member of a certain club or organization. At the same time, this provision seems to be demeaning to the integrity of the members of the legislature.

In conclusion, we can appreciate the time and effort that went into the drafting of this act, but because of the aforementioned problems, we respectfully urge the members of the Student Legislature to consider the difficulties with this piece of legislation in its present form before acting on it.

John Deal & Dave Webb



## Liquor-by-the-drink

By Michael D. Evans

Passage of the Mecklenburg County liquor-by-the-drink referendum is a necessary step in the progressive movement of Metrolina society. The heated arguments publicized by both sides are readily available to the public, and because of their aggressive nature, provide little intrinsic value to the voter in formulating their decision.

The liquor-by-the-drink referendum does not provide a clearcut ideological boundary. Those conservatives who are not strictly religious or who favor the revenues of big business more than religious affiliation tend to favor the referendum.

On the other hand, there are a number of the liberal sector who oppose the bill because of the damage to the body caused by alcohol. All in all, strange bedfellows have been created through this controversial issue.

Why is liquor-by-the-drink such a necessity? To appease our conservative friends, one could go on about the benefits for big business in Charlotte — more conventions coming to the city, increased restaurant revenue, etc. However, there are much better reasons. Basically, every citizen of the Charlotte community should be given the opportunity to purchase the type of drink they desire with no interference from the government or any other agency. The moral issues, the financial issues, all become moot points when looking at the basic liberty being denied under the present system.

The broad issue of health is consistently brought into the referendum discussion by opponents. Health, one must assume, includes the occurrence of alcoholics, the possibility of permanent damage caused by alcohol and the number of traffic fatalities due to a supposedly higher incidence of drunken driving. The amount of actual alcohol consumed, though, is likely to be much less than is presently the case, as the cost of drinking will be much higher, and the restaurant/lounge owners are not going to be using as much alcohol in drinks as one would use when brownbaggging.

The fact is the decade of the seventies is almost over, and the state of North Carolina is one of the few backward states left which has not approved liquor-by-the-drink. This is only one of the many areas in which we lag behind, contrary to the statements made recently by Jim Hunt expressing an opposite view, and it is time for the state of North Carolina, led by Metrolina, considered by most the progressive center of the state, to begin catching up with the rest of American society. Support of the liquor-by-the-drink referendum is only one miniscule step in the direction out state should head, but it is very definitely a positive step.

By Sammy Hamrick

Mecklenburg County voters should reject the mixed drink referendum on Friday. This is not an exclusively wet/dry issue. The bottom line on this question is simply; do they citizens of this county favor the present system of controlled sale of alcoholic beverages or will they back what I regard as a fly by night system of de-control?

Alcohol is the most abused drug in our society today. There are 18 ABC stores in Mecklenburg County which sell liquor. If the Friday referendum passes, this number will increase to over 300 alcoholic outlets including restaurants, clubs and lounges. Studies show alcoholic consumption increases with the availability of alcohol. Obviously, liquor-by-the-drink will increase the availability of America's most abused drug in Mecklenburg.

And what will these 300 liquor-by-the-drink establishments be like? The main point here is businesslike. These establishments will be out to make a fast buck by making over 500 percent profit on a bottle of liquor sold by the drink. Drinks will range from \$1.50 to over 2.50. In addition to these high prices, you can expect a cover charge at places featuring any kind of entertainment.

Bars will cause de-control of alcohol. Today, employees of ABC stores are paid set wages whether they sell a fifth or 10,000 gallons. With liquor-by-the-drink, dispersing alcohol will be the job of bartenders, waiters and waitresses. These persons are in business to sell liquor, not control it. Making a profit does not come by control.

The ultimate absurdity from liquor-by-the-drink proponents is liquor-by-the-drink will entice more out of state tourists to North Carolina. The fact is North Carolina already has one of the largest tourist trades in America. People come to North Carolina to enjoy what the state has to offer, not to drink liquor.

Also, Mecklenburg County voters cannot really be sure of what they are voting for. ABC officials have not finalized the guidelines for enforcement of the provisions of the referendum. Voters should know these guidelines before they vote.

Finally, local option is a poor method to control alcohol. Various systems of control will be much more confusing in the 100 counties with the added factor of liquor-by-the-drink. In any event, North Carolina should decide as a whole when to begin the sale of mixed drinks. Mecklenburg County should wait for that day.

Readers are invited and encouraged to respond to comments made in the "Left/Right" column.

## Carolina Journal

"I must Create a System or be enslav'd by another man's."

—William Blake

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