

# COMMENTARY

## THE TAR HEEL

EDWINA RALSTON, *Editor*

JOHN DRESCHE, *Associate Editor*  
LUCY HOOD, *News Editor*  
KEITH KING, *Arts and Features Editor*

SCOTT SHARPE, *Photography Editor*

KIM ADAMS, *Sports Editor*  
RACHEL PERRY, *Copy Editor*  
KEVIN KIRK, *Wire Editor*

Staff: CLAY ANDREWS, TED AVERY, PHOEBE AZAR, CLIFTON BARNE, MARIA BAXTER, MATT COOPER, MARGARET DESABURE, JACKIE FIELDS, TERRI GARRARD, STEPHANIE GRAHAM, BOB HAAS, SPEED HALLMAN, JEFF HIDAY, JOHN HINTON, LOU ANN JONES, JEFF KNIGHT, KENNETH MINGE, SONJA PAYTON, ANN PETERS, CAROL SCALES, DAVID THOMPSON, LYNNE THOMSON, RANDY WALKER, SUSAN WALTERS, CLINTON WEAVER. Business Manager: RAJEANNE CARON. Advertising: NANCY MCKENZIE, *manager*, and PAULA BREWER, *coordinator*. Secretary/Receptionist: LINDA COOPER. Composition: UNC PRINTING DEPARTMENT, FPG COMPOSITION. Printing: THE HINTON PRESS, MERIDIAN.

## Good 'til the last drop

For years water has been taken for granted as one of our most abundant natural resources. But an in-depth series by the Raleigh *News and Observer* last week showed that the time has come when much of the state, including Chapel Hill, can no longer assume that the supply will never end.

Chapel Hill has been listed by the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development as one of three cities and four small towns that faces potential water supply problems within 20 years if it does not take action. That comes as no surprise to anyone who was in the Village in the mid-70s when severe water shortages forced residents to cut back on water and threatened to cancel classes.

The town relies on University Lake for most of its 5.5 million gallons of water each day. University Lake was down about 50 million gallons during the June drought but is back to normal level following recent rains.

The Orange Water and Sewer Authority also pumps in 1.5 million gallons a day from Hillsborough, but the town's basic problem lies in its reliance on University Lake and its subsequent reliance on adequate rainfall to keep the level of the lake normal. It doesn't take an expert to realize that relying solely on rainfall isn't the safest way to have a good water supply. Rainfall across the state has been 20 percent to 25 percent below normal in the last year, and last month was the driest June since the National Weather Service began keeping records in 1885.

The water authority is seeking approval to impound Cane Creek, 12 miles west of Carrboro, but it would take at least three years to tap its' water supply. In the meantime, Chapel Hill and surrounding areas continue to grow and the demand for water continues to increase.

While there is not much area citizens can do about increasing the water supply, they can conserve water. The water authority has begun selling water conservation devices and offering brochures that tell how to conserve. The Chapel Hill Town Council should do what their counterparts in Apex did: offer rebates to citizens who buy water-saving devices.

In the meantime, residents should do their bit to conserve and be conscious of the water they use. In Chapel Hill, as in any town, water is only good until the last drop.

## O'Connor nomination meets important qualifications

By EDWINA RALSTON

President Ronald Reagan has done just as he said he would do. With his recent court appointment of Judge Sandra Day O'Connor he has honored his campaign commitment to fill "one of the first Supreme Court vacancies" by "the most qualified woman I can possibly find."

O'Connor seems to be eminently well qualified, and her judicial records show a practical open-mindedness imperative to the position for which she has been nominated. She has been described as a "sometime conservative with a moderate, even progressive, streak." Most important, the Arizona judge has never allowed partisan political values to stand in the way of the implementation of justice. The indication is that O'Connor would provide a consistent voice toward the center, relying on dedication to jurisprudence rather than a passionate political ideology.

The O'Connor nomination seems to offer something for everyone. Most obvious, the choice satisfies the call for a woman on the Supreme Court. By naming a woman, Reagan has done something that our last four presidents — both Republican and Democratic — have declined the opportunity to do.

Liberals should be grateful for the nomination. Although O'Connor is conservative, she is sensibly conservative. Obviously, Reagan was not going to appoint a liberal Democrat. O'Connor has been flexible enough in the past to adopt an almost radically left attitude toward issues that warranted such a shift.

As a state Senator, she voted twice for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and in 1974 was co-sponsor of a bill to have the question of ratification put before a popular vote in Arizona. Her voting record concerning abortion has caused quite a stir among Right-to-Lifers. Newspaper accounts indicate that several times she has voted for bills that would make certain laws regarding abortion more lenient and in 1974 voted against a resolution asking the U.S. Congress to amend the Constitution to legally recognize the "right to life" of a fetus. The judge has also voted in favor of making birth control more widely available.

For those on the right, O'Connor is, after all, a conservative Republican. In the past she has approached law making and interpretation with prudence. On social and economic issues, she has remained conservative, voting as a legislator to restore the death penalty and to ban compulsory busing of school children to achieve racial balance.

But, as could be expected, our own Sen. John East, Jerry Falwell and the rest of the Moral Majority crew have found in the nomination only something else to rant about. The radical right has reacted with considerable vengeance against the nomination, harping on O'Connor's record on abortion and the proposed ERA. It is ironic that Reagan's most zealous supporters have been the first to become alienated by a major Reagan nomination — and a campaign commitment at that. This reminds one of just how tentative the radical extremists' support is when it comes to realistic politics. The issue-oriented tunnelvision with which politicians such as East approach governing completely undermines any ration-

## —AT A GLANCE—

### More political battles

Now that the issue of next year's budget cuts is almost settled, the battle over President Reagan's proposals for reducing taxes is beginning to heat up. The argument centers around the choice between the President's plan or an alternate plan submitted by House Democrats.

President Reagan's bill, approved by the Senate Finance Committee, would cut all personal tax rates by 25 percent over the next 33 months starting in October. The House Ways and Means Committee, however, proposes a package that would place greater emphasis on cuts to taxpayers whose incomes are below \$50,000. Proponents of the President's plan argue that added importance must be given to those with higher incomes who would be more likely to use the relief as investments that would stimulate the economy.

Congress has about five weeks to deliberate on the issue before recessing in August. President Reagan has urged Congress to act quickly. He says that a plan must be agreed upon and on his desk for signing before the recess if the cuts are to go into effect in October.

### Buggy problem

As the Mediterranean fruit fly continues to infest the crops of several California counties, the question of whether or not to eliminate the insect with aerial chemical spraying has produced quite a controversy.

Many residents in the 177 square mile area designated for spraying are vigorously against the action. Some have said they would leave the area until the spraying was completed. They are afraid spraying of residential areas could produce serious health hazards. Their protests have gone all the way to the California Supreme Court, where they hope to get an injunction on the spraying until the effects can be studied.

Meanwhile, the presence of the Medfly has set back the California fruit industry. Produce from several counties has been quarantined by the state. And some Southern states have begun using barricades to stop trucks carrying California crops to prevent contamination of their own industries.

### Problems abroad

Violence and threats of violence plagued many areas of the world during the past week.

Riots continued in many English cities throughout the week. The violence spread to towns not previously involved and seemed to follow the general pattern of youths against the authorities. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher visited Liverpool to assess the situation. The British government is considering instituting legal measures, such as authorizing the use of tear gas, water cannons, and rubber bullets, to aid the police in controlling rioters.

Violence also erupted in Belfast, Ireland, as Joe McDonnell and Martin Hurson became the fifth and sixth hunger strikers to die. Fires were set and security forces were the targets of attacks in the aggressive reactions to the deaths of the prisoners. Other strikers weaken, while British officials refuse to grant the demands of the captured IRA guerrillas.

In the Middle East, Israeli jets made several raids into Lebanon, bombing several Palestinian guerrilla strongholds south of Beirut. The air strikes were the first to occur while U.S. envoy Phillip Habib has been in the area. The attacks were taken as a sign that Israel is becoming impatient with the pace of Habib's progress toward resolving the crisis surrounding the placement of Soviet-supplied anti-aircraft missiles in Lebanon.

And in Poland, the first Polish Communist Party Congress gathered after a week of tension between workers and the government. The Soviet Union will be monitoring the actions of the congress very closely. Leaders of the congress, in an attempt to please other communist-bloc countries, have warned workers not to expect any radical decisions from the meetings.

### Sound advice

"Make love often," is part of the advice in two pages of Dos and Don'ts prepared for the upcoming marriage of Lady Diana Spencer to Prince Charles. The article was written to prepare the couple for the hassles of married life. And with suggestions like the above, there is little doubt that they will have no problem following the rules.

—Kevin Kirk

ability of political ideology. East and his cohorts have considered O'Connor's nomination solely on what is an exaggerated idea of the judge as pro-abortion, anti-family.

Throughout her six years on the bench, there has been no record of O'Connor ever ruling on abortion. Further, even if she were pro-choice, there is no reason to think that she would diverge from her record of interpretation of the law without regard for personal politics.

Blinded by their obsessive anti-abortion stand, the radical right seems to have forgotten the most fundamental demand that a Supreme Court justice must, above all, be dedicated to strict interpretation and application of the law. Apparently, many of the O'Connor opponents either do not understand or do not believe in the distinction between interpretation and application of the law and the lawmaking process.

All predictions are that the nomination will be confirmed and the Supreme Court will gain a slightly right-of-center justice who understands the constitutional job of the Court. Reagan is to be commended for his ability to steer away from the demands of his fanatical supporters while at the same time upholding an important campaign pledge. East and Falwell will eventually return to full support of Reagan because they have nowhere else to turn, but perhaps in the meantime, they will take a closer look at the principals on which our government was founded.

Edwina Ralston, a senior journalism and political science major from Bainbridge, Ga., is editor of *The Tar Heel*.