

COMMENTARY

THE TAR HEEL

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Free, white and 21

Perhaps no other political figure in the nation stirs the emotions as strongly as our own Sen. Jesse A. Helms. In the past week, North Carolina's senior senator was the subject of derogatory articles in *Playboy*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *New Yorker* magazine. The articles especially raised questions about Helms' stand on racial issues and brought to light an attitude on race that is difficult to believe still exists in the U.S. Senate in 1981.

While the country was making vast strides in the area of civil rights in the 1960s, Helms was defending segregated swimming pools and restaurants. When literacy tests were being used to deny blacks the right to vote, Helms called for tougher tests. He also said blacks needed to face up to what he called their own criminal behavior and irresponsibility.

Unfortunately, one has to wonder if Helms' positions have changed any. This week he reiterated that his belief that integration should have come about voluntarily, without government intervention, has not changed. Without government intervention, blacks probably still would be attending separate schools, sitting on the back of buses and drinking out of separate water fountains. The racial attitudes and policies of the 1950s presumably would be all right with Helms as long as there was no government intervention.

His record in the Senate has been consistent. During his eight years in the Senate, he has opposed every major civil rights initiative. He still remains the strongest supporter in the Senate of South Africa's apartheid regime.

He has never employed a black on either his Washington or North Carolina staffs. Even Southern conservatives like South Carolina's Strom Thurmond and Mississippi's Thad Cochran have black staffers. Yet Helms, in a state of more than 20 percent blacks, with a staff numbering more than 125, employs none. "We had interviewed one or two that were conservative and competent," Helms explained, but they were hired away by the executive branch.

Old ways die hard and Helms has yet to rid himself of his racist attitudes. At one point in a *New York Times* article, he used the phrase "Free, white and 21" to describe the good life. Helms said no racial implication was intended. Even so, comments like that have no place in the conversations of a U.S. Senator and Helms should be responsible enough to realize that. Helms' backward comments on race make one wonder if, indeed, after the civil rights gains of the past 20 years, there should be a place for the senator in U.S. government.

Canoeing adventure brings out hidden beauties of life

By LUCY HOOD

The scene reminded me of one that Thoreau might have encountered during his travels in *The Maine Woods*. The muddy water ran smoothly, then was interrupted suddenly by rapids scattered along the river. Trees, shrubs and grass shadowed the banks and the chatter of crickets dominated the conversation as my friend and I made our way down the Haw River in a canoe.

The peaceful, calm setting just outside Pittsboro brought back images of the pioneers making their way down the James River to settle Williamsburg. My comrade and I managed to get stuck on almost every little rock — one of which jumped up out of the water and dumped our meager provisions and the two of us out of the boat.

This was just one of the many happenings of the day that made me appreciate the talents with which our forefathers conquered much more difficult waters without losing their only possessions.

Because my protected upbringing in Richmond, Va., deprived me of the many beauties nature has to offer, the mosquitos will go unappreciated until the infected bites on my legs disappear. But, we did meet people who, whether brought up in a cosmopolitan, fast-paced environment or the country, greeted us with welcoming friendliness that is too

often lost in the shuffle of classes, tests and deadlines.

When the canoe became too much for us to carry any further, an older couple let us put the canoe in the river at their fishing hole. We scared away the fish, but so had two previous parties of canoers who had entered at that same spot. With a few kind words and a wish for a good trip, two obviously inexperienced canoers were off on their daring journey.

Three hours later we reached our destination — my car — which was needed to haul the canoe back to my friend's car a few miles up the river at the point where we started. But ... my keys were also six miles up the river in his car. Lewis and Clark — our role models for the day — would never have found themselves in this position. As night began to fall and everyone else canoeing the river had left for home, we faced a dilemma brought about by that nasty concept known as technology.

Fortunately, we were once again greeted with the aide of people willing to give up a large part of their Sunday evening to help us.

Alan caught a ride to make a phone call at the gas station a mile up the road while I stood guard by the canoe and locked car, paddles in hand. After waiting 45 minutes until dark without spotting relief from either direction, I decided to walk to the nearest house to call for help.

Within a hundred yards a car pulled up and I shook through-out — fearing the worst. But, a kind man, his wife and their 10-year-old son stopped and offered to take me to a phone,

to take me to my friend's car, or to just wait with me. Nicer people couldn't have been found.

These people knew the area backward and forward. They knew every back road my friend could have taken to reach his car, if in fact that is what he had tried to do. He could have been carried off forever by whoever had picked him up an hour earlier, for all I knew.

Well, my one phone call home amounted to nothing. Alan had not called home and I didn't have any idea where he was. Back to my car and the canoe we drove — to wait while my new-found friends told fun-loving stories they had heard about canoe trips down the Haw River. Nothing could have been more comforting under those circumstances.

Another Pittsboro native was out taking fresh vegetables to a neighbor and had offered Alan a ride to his car. Within minutes, Alan drove up. Finally, no more keys were locked up in distant places and we made it home tired and hungry, but safe.

Now that deadlines are hanging over my head again and I have what seems like 1,000 pages of assigned reading to do, I must take time to thank these kind people who took their time to help us. I will never forget such unselfish and kind hospitality.

Lucy Hood, a junior Spanish and journalism major from Richmond, Va., is news editor for *The Tar Heel* and Alan Stanley denies the whole affair.

AT A GLANCE

More on Mideast

More than 400 deaths were reported by Lebanon as the result of Israeli air strikes and commando raids. The attacks, which began on July 10, have been aimed at Palestinian strongholds in the southern regions of the country.

Because many of the guerilla bases are situated in communities, 95 percent of the deaths from the raids have been civilian. Prime Minister Menachem Begin has justified the deaths as the risk that Palestinian forces take by placing the strongholds in the towns. Several deaths of Israeli citizens have resulted from Lebanese rockets fired in retaliation.

The United Nations Security Council has begun talks for a resolution urging a cease-fire. Begin has agreed to open contacts with Lebanon in an attempt to end the fighting. Palestinian Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat also is willing to impose a cease-fire if Israel halts the attacks and reconnaissance flights over Lebanon.

The raids have shaken the Reagan administration's policy toward the Middle East. One effect of the attacks has been the delay of the shipment of F-16 jet fighters to Israel. There is no word as yet on how long the shipment will be delayed.

Summit talks end

President Ronald Reagan attended a three-day summit of the major industrial democracies in secluded Chateau Montebello outside Ottawa, Canada, this week. The president was joined by the leaders of Japan, West Germany, Britain, Canada, France and Italy for discussion of economic policies.

The meetings produced a communique that stated the positions of these countries on several key issues. One result was the commitment to assist development of poorer nations around the world. The communique also gave support to Reaganomics, the high U.S. interest rates and spending cuts used by the administration to curb inflation and to stimulate the economy. Several foreign leaders had expressed concern that the high rates would have damaging effects on their own economies.

The President also received assurance that the European powers would avoid too much dependence on the Soviet Union, especially for energy resources such as natural gas.

Hotel tragedy

Walkways above the Kansas City Hyatt Regency Hotel's lobby collapsed Friday night, killing 113 people and injuring another 186. The victims were part of 1500 persons attending a dance at the hotel.

Scores of the injured victims are still hospitalized. And as funerals were held for other victims, investigations were already under way to determine the cause of the accident. Five separate investigations are being conducted, and theories about the incident range from faulty design to weakening of the walkways by patrons swaying to the music.

Owners of the hotel have said that the hotel could be reopened in a week and destroyed structures could be replaced, as long as investigations prove that the collapse was not the fault of the structure itself.

Fashionable trend?

The threatened postal strike was the latest of what has become a long series of walkouts and near walkouts across the nation recently.

Beginning with the on-going baseball strike, many highly visible unions that have direct influence on the public have voiced their unrest. Air traffic controllers still have not signed a contract after coming within hours of crippling the nation's airlines. Municipal workers in several states have left their jobs for varying reasons. Massachusetts state employees struck after state revenues became depleted and made payment of salaries impossible. And workers in San Jose, Calif., refused to report in protest for equal pay for women.

The latest threat, a postal strike that would have halted the nation's postal service, was finally averted after more than 30 hours of bargaining. That strike, like many others, would have been illegal.

— KEVIN KIRK