

Monday, August 24, 1981

## Air controllers walkout raises questions about travel safety

By JOHN DRESCHER

With 80 percent of the nation's air traffic controllers deciding to walk away from their jobs earlier this month, the overriding question for most travelers has become one of safety. Put simply, is it safe to fly?

Hugh Sawyer and Randy Langston, two experts on air traffic control, have differing views.

Sawyer says yes. "Things have been very safe since the strike and will remain safe," he said. "I'd encourage anyone to fly. I'd put my own family on a plane to go anywhere. In fact, I wish I could go with them."

Langston says no. "I know in my heart that the skies in the United States are not safe," he said. "No, I wouldn't fly and I recommend that people don't fly."

The strikingly different opinions of two men who know the business of the nation's airways are not so surprising given their occupations and current situations. Sawyer is chief of the control tower at Raleigh-Durham Airport. Because he is in management, he is not permitted to join a union and is currently working. Langston, an air traffic controller at RDU, is vice president of the local Professional Air

John Drescher, a senior journalism and history major from Raleigh, is an editorial writer for The Daily Tar Heel.

Traffic Controllers Organization and participated in the illegal strike against the U.S. Government.

Their opinions mirror those of the Federal Aviation Administration, a division of the federal government, and PATCO, the union representing the striking air traffic controllers. Around the nation, the FAA maintains that the skies are as safe, if not safer, as ever.

### Like old times?

But logic seems to defy the FAA. The system lost 12,000 highly trained professionals who worked under perhaps the most stressful conditions of any job in the nation, replaced them with supervisors, non-strikers and military controllers who are forced to work six days a week, and claims safety has not been sacrificed.

North Carolina's two busiest airports, Charlotte and Raleigh-Durham, lost about 60 percent of their controllers, but both tower managers said with a reduced schedule they were handling the load with few problems.

"It's been an excellent operation," said Bernard Groseclose, tower chief at Charlotte's Douglas Municipal Airport, the state's busiest airport. "The pilots say it's like old times (before the strike)."

Sawyer said the same thing about operations at RDU. Yet, even two weeks after the strike, he refused to let a reporter, or even a photographer, into the tower for another week, until "things settle down." Before the strike, the media were welcomed to the tower.

"They don't want you to see the operations itself," Langston said. "I can't understand why he (Sawyer) says it's safe but he won't let you up there."

Pilots, a seemingly neutral and knowledgeable party, also have frequently refused comment. Pilots for both Piedmont and USAir stationed in Raleigh refused to comment on the situation.

### Overtime

Both Groseclose and Sawyer admitted that many of the controllers at Douglas and RDU were working six-day, 48-hour weeks. Most controllers around the nation are also working 48-hour weeks, said Rogers Myers, assistant public affairs director for the FAA in Atlanta. Shortly after the strike, many controllers were working as much as 58 hours a week, Myers said. The day after the strike, Sawyer said, "How long we can keep this up, I don't know." Since then some PATCO members returned to work, military controllers were added at some locations and the amount of working time decreased.

"We're not going to allow anyone to get fatigued and exhausted," Myers said. "We'll have people who are fresh."

But PATCO doesn't see how air traffic controllers can work six days a week, make eight hours more than usual of split-second, crash-averting decisions, and remain able to perform their jobs safely. Many of the PATCO members who struck and returned to work after President Ronald Reagan's threat of dismissal — including 11 at RDU — struck because they felt a 40-hour work week was already eight hours too long. Those people are now working 16 hours more than the 32-hour week that they felt strongly enough about to participate in an illegal strike.

"I know what the stress is like," Langston said. "Because of the fatigue factor, I think there's going to be a major air disaster. Believe me, it's showing up more and more everyday." He said he was given information from inside the tower reporting that in the two weeks after the strike there were three systems deviations — turning aircraft to avoid collisions — and one near miss. Given the amount of reduced traffic (RDU flights have been reduced by about 20 percent), Langston said that the traffic-irregularity rate was high. "If our guys were working, that wouldn't have happened."

When Canadian controllers threatened to boycott controlling all American flights, they cited 44 near-collisions — far more than usual — and other incidents as evidence that the U.S. system was not safe. William Robertson, head of the Canadian controllers, said nine of the near-misses were critical, requiring evasive action of one or both planes to avoid a collision. The FAA denied the statistics.

### Differing figures

Throughout the strike, the FAA and independent monitoring sources have produced differing figures of near-misses and systems deviations. For the public, it has become a question of each group's credibility. PATCO says the FAA changes its story to meet the needs of its audience.

"The FAA is just putting out figures that do not reflect the facts," said Steve Kaufman of PATCO in Charlotte. "They (the FAA) seem to be saying one thing on a legal front and something else to the press on the national level." Kaufman referred to a notice of an Unfair Labor Practice charge levied against each local PATCO chapter. One sentence of the notice read: "This illegal action is causing irreparable

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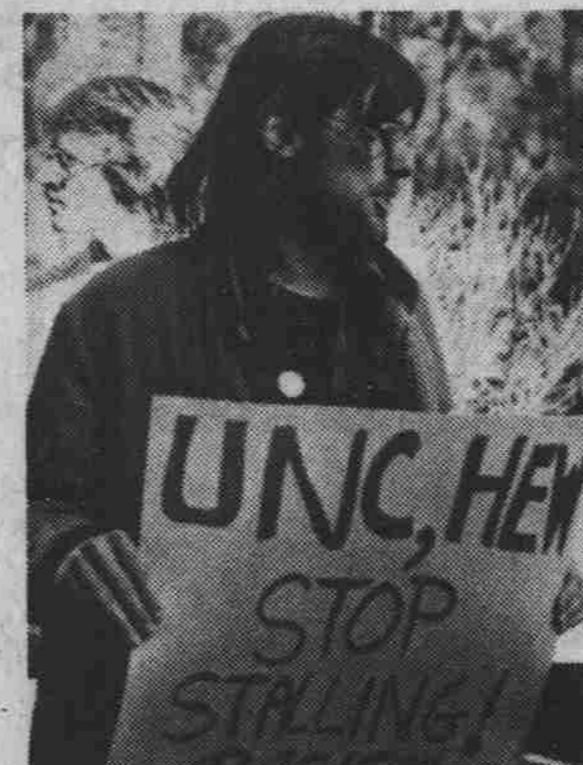
Members of BSM discuss desegregation dispute with Samuel Williamson ... 11-year dispute between UNC and the government was resolved last month

## Desegregation settlement draws response from blacks, University

By JIM HUMMEL

This Consent Decree is occasioned by the desire of all parties to resolve 11 years of disagreement regarding the compliance of the public senior higher education institutions of the State of North Carolina with the 14th Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and rules, regulations and criteria promulgated thereunder.

So began last month's 100-page consent decree signed by U.S. District Court Judge Franklin Dupree Jr. It is an agreement that UNC officials hope will put an end to the battle that started in 1969 when the NAACP filed suit seeking enforcement of desegregation guidelines for 10 states, including North Carolina.



DHEW protestor

It is a case that would make any lawyer's head spin. North Carolina's efforts to maintain control over its University system have spanned four presidential administrations, involved 15,000 pages of testimony, elicited 500 exhibits and cost Jim Hummel, a senior journalism and political science major from Grafton, Mass., is editor of The Daily Tar Heel.

untold millions of dollars in taxpayers' money — and it may not be over yet.

Reaction to last month's agreement by black leaders and NAACP officials was swift and strong, as opponents of the plan criticized the government for being too vague in its requirements for the University.

"Historically, whenever you have a situation as vague as this decree it doesn't help blacks," said Hayden B. Renwick, UNC associate dean for the college of Arts and Sciences. "They wind up getting the short end of the stick."

"Blacks are going to have to start deciding their own destinies. I don't know anything that's happened on this campus that blacks have not done voluntarily. Anything done by the administration is done only after they've been threatened, coerced or exposed," Renwick added.

Joseph Rauh, the outspoken lawyer for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, which originally filed suit 11 years ago, last week filed an appeal in the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, protesting Dupree's acceptance of the consent decree.

"My problem with (UNC President William) Friday's plan is that he doesn't want integration," Rauh said last week. "If Friday can get away with this, why can't some other jerk do it?"

Rauh's statement reflects an increasing attack on Friday over the past several months — an attack that Friday has taken in stride and tried to downplay.

In an interview last week Friday said it was time for the issue to drop out of the headlines and for the University to implement its plan. "My first reaction (after the decree was signed) was that this dispute could have and should have been avoided," Friday said.

"I have become (Rauh's) newest target and he has labelled me as the latest redneck of the South, but the issue has been resolved and it's time to give the agreement a chance to be carried out."

The consent decree, among other things, calls for increased black enrollment at the traditionally white schools, equal financial support per student for "colleges with similar missions," and 29 new bachelor's and master's programs at the predominantly black universities.

The 29 new programs will require millions of dollars and the construction of at least two new buildings. As part of the

agreement a new library will be built at Fayetteville State University and a new building would be constructed at N.C. A&T State University to house an engineering program.

But Friday emphasized that the 29 new programs were merely given authorization and that funding would have to be secured for each individual project. As a result,



William Friday

the UNC General Administration has established priority requests for various programs, depending on what officials feel are the most pressing needs.

The priority list came under attack recently when the University went before the General Assembly seeking nearly \$150 million for capital improvements. The legislators only granted \$39.2 million, which forced Friday's staff to delay certain projects.

As a result, the Fayetteville State and A&T projects will be delayed until further funding can be secured. Black leaders criticized the General Assembly for allocating the reduced appropriation to only four schools: Western Carolina University, UNC-Chapel Hill, East Carolina University and N.C. Central University, only the last of which is predominantly black.

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Raleigh air controllers picketing outside airport ... union members walked off job Aug. 3

## Proposed Nixon library stirs faculty controversy

By JIM HUMMEL

When Richard Nixon published his memoirs in 1978, the former president did not have much to say about his three years at Duke University Law School, Nixon's recollection of his tenure at Duke accounted for a grand total of two pages in the 1,100-page autobiography.

After leaving Durham in 1937, the Californian returned to his home state, where he launched the beginning of a long and stormy political career, and in the following years there was little mention of Duke or the legal training he received there.

But last week the relationship between Nixon and his alma mater was rekindled as Duke President Terry Sanford announced that he was discussing with Nixon the possibility of housing the former president's library in Durham on land to be provided by the university.

The reaction, as expected, has been strong and mixed, with faculty and staff members beginning to draw battle lines on an issue that is certain to stir a great deal of controversy in the months ahead. For not only does the proposal pose logistical questions, it also touches on ethical and political considerations that will have to be resolved before a final decision is made.

Presidential libraries have always been a source of interest and controversy for the general public, as well as scholars, who recognize the historical sig-

nificance the material can have for research purposes.

At issue is not whether Nixon's papers will be valuable — many people predict they will be the most studied documents over the next 100 years once they are released — rather it is the question of whether a library will serve as a monument to the former president and the political implications that locating it in Durham could have for the State of North Carolina.

"It's going to be built anyway. The question is whether we want it here," one Duke professor said. "I'll tell you one thing, though, this is going to be an awfully hot issue around here this fall."

Under Sanford's proposal, Duke would provide land for a building that would strictly house Nixon's archives and not be a museum, which would make it different from most presidential collections. With the exception of the building that holds Gerald Ford's archives, which has been separated from the museum (the former being in Ann Arbor and the latter in Grand Rapids) all the presidential libraries have featured memorabilia as well as archives at one location, which tends to draw a number of tourists. Although this would not be the case in Durham, some professors have already voiced their loud disapproval of any Nixon material being housed at Duke.

"I am ardently opposed to the idea," said Richard Watson, acting chairman of the history department at Duke. "I am concerned because it is impossible to separate the presidential library from a monument to the man."

"I don't see how we can keep our high level of academic standards here if we were to accept the collection, in light of a president like (Nixon) and how he left office in disgrace," he added.

As a result of the strong reaction from certain faculty members, Sanford said last week he would delay a decision on the project until the Duke academic council could discuss the matter next month. The 80-member council is an advisory board that makes recommendations to the board of trustees, which will have final say on the matter.

Watson said a majority of faculty members in the history department was opposed to locating the library at Duke, but he emphasized that the opposition did not arise from political ideology.

"It's important to nip that misconception at the bud," Watson said. "Many people say those who

oppose the project are politically inspired. But that's just not the case — there are some people in my department that voted for Nixon twice," he said.

Watson is adamant in his opposition, but for some historians the decision may not be so easy. "The papers themselves will be exceptionally valuable, regardless of where the library is built," said William Leuchtenburg, a DeWitt Clinton professor of American history at Columbia University.

"It would be an important resource for the Triangle," said Leuchtenburg, who has done extensive research on presidential libraries. "It is especially important because between UNC and Duke we have one of the richest collections of 20th-century American history, with or without the Nixon collections."

But just as the papers would serve as an excellent resource, they might also bring unwanted political implications to a state that would like to consider itself progressive.

"Some people say that at this time this would not be the right image for North Carolina," one Duke professor said. "Some people might identify Duke with Nixon, and right now we have people like Jesse Helms and John East in office."

The construction and maintenance of any presidential library is a two-stage process. The usual procedure is for the actual construction costs to be borne by private individuals or groups, with the General Services Administration providing funding for maintenance and operation once the facility is opened.

But even this has caused some concern among

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