

Group plays dead to underscore need for 'Star Wars' plan

By DONNA LEINWAND
Assistant State & National Editor

About 12 members of UNC Students for America "died" in a mock nuclear explosion Friday afternoon in the Pit in front of an audience of about 40 students.

SFA staged the explosion to demonstrate the need for the Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative plan, according to Keith Poston, group chairman.

The group had asked 4th District Rep. Bill Cobey to attend the demonstration, but he was campaigning in Wake County to keep his congressional seat, Poston said.

Cobey said in a prepared statement that he supported Reagan and his position on SDI.

"SDI is too valuable to bargain away to the Soviets," he said. "I disagree with my opponent David Price's criticism of our great president. I strongly support development and deployment of the strategic defense initiative because it is vital to our nation's future security."

Poston said students should be proud of President Reagan, who "had the courage to walk away (from negotiations in Iceland with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev) with no deal instead of giving in to a bad deal."

Poston detonated a theatrical flash pot stationed behind a skeleton. The skeleton represented the "horrible danger of nuclear war," Poston said. The flash pot sent a cloud of black smoke into the sky and demonstrators fell to the ground. The demonstrators wore costumes and bandages covered with fake blood.

After the students "died" another participant gave out signs that called SDI the "Peace Shield." Another said, "You could die without SDI." Participants also received umbrellas and shields labeled with SDI stickers.

Group members gave out SDI stickers and literature to people in the audience.

Several members of the crowd began arguing with Poston about the



DTH/Tony DeFell

SFA members play dead after a mock nuclear explosion in the Pit

viability of SDI. One girl said she would tear up the literature.

"It's basically unfeasible," said Dale McKinley, a graduate student from Gweru, Zimbabwe, who watched the demonstration. "The cost of SDI is so astronomical. It will take away from other programs and escalate the nuclear arms race. No one ever said it would be totally effective, either. It's a destabilizing factor."

McKinley said he had continually opposed Keith Poston and SFA. He said SDI and the positions espoused by the group had little support on

campus, but commended them for taking the initiative on an issue.

"Most people don't believe in SDI," he said. "It's pork barrel politics."

John Davison, former SFA national field program coordinator, said that he was pleased with the turn-out and that he felt most UNC students supported "Star Wars," calling it a great deterrent.

Poston said he was disappointed at the amount of attention given to the hecklers. He said he was also disappointed that people would rip up the literature.

Winston-Salem paper gives endorsement to Broyhill

From Associated Press reports

Sen. Jim Broyhill, R-N.C., received the editorial endorsement of the Winston-Salem Journal, which reported in its Sunday editions that Democratic challenger Terry Sanford had edged ahead of Broyhill in its latest poll.

The newspaper said both Broyhill and Sanford are "men of personal integrity, political acumen and proven leadership. The caliber of candidates is an indication of vitality in the political process."

The Journal said Broyhill was the man for the job, "because of his long experience in Congress, his close acquaintance with economic issues of concern to the state and his affinity with conservative views and values shared by most North Carolinians regardless of party."

Baptists call for fairness

RALEIGH — Moderates in the Southern Baptist Convention have called on conservatives to adopt a set of proposals the moderates say would diminish political activity in the denomination.

News in Brief

At the heart of the seven-point statement is a request for fairness in appointing trustees to denominational boards and agencies. The proposal asks that the committee that determines trustee selection be made up of the presidents of state conventions and the presidents of state Women's Missionary Unions instead of a slate nominated by the convention's conservative president, the Rev. Adrian P. Rogers.

Missile cuts favor Soviets

WASHINGTON — Eliminating all nuclear weapons without building up NATO forces would give the Soviet Union an overwhelming edge in Europe and the ability to conquer that continent quickly, say congressional, Pentagon and West European experts.

"We will need a massive build-up in conventional weapons, if we have no nuclear deterrent," said the author of a congressional study on the impact of arms control proposals.

Candidates for chief justice seat try to keep a lid on controversy

By NICKI WEISENSEE
Staff Writer

The race between Republican Rhoda Billings and Democrat James Exum for the N.C. Supreme Court chief justice seat has been quieter than the state's other political races, thanks to the N.C. Judicial Code of Conduct.

The code prevents the candidates from attacking each other and the issues. The judicial code also states that a candidate "should not allow any other person to do for him what he is prohibited from doing under his canon."

Gov. Jim Martin appointed Billings chief justice in September when Joseph Branch retired. Exum, a former senior associate justice, resigned his post to run for the chief justice seat after Martin appointed Billings.

Traditionally, the governor appoints the senior associate justice to fill in for a retiring chief justice. But Martin — to the surprise of political observers — appointed the associate justice who had spent the least amount of time on the Court.

Tim Pittman, Martin's press secretary, said Martin appointed Billings for her

experience in the field of law and her refusal to talk about the issues. The governor also felt Exum had "painted him into a corner" by constantly pressuring him to appoint him as chief justice while he was trying to make his decision, Pittman said.

"Governor Martin believes that the job should seek the person, not the other way around," Pittman said.

Exum said, "I find it difficult to understand that feeling on the part of the governor. All I did was seek my party's nomination, which I had to do. Other than that, I just advised him as to my position on the court as the most senior associate justice and of the century-old tradition (of appointing the most senior associate justice)."

A group formed in September called Citizens for a Conservative Court provided the only controversy in the race. In apparent violation of the judicial code, it consistently attacked Exum, accusing him in a statement of having "injected a sense of personal greed for power and partisanship into the campaign."

Billings has fervently denied any asso-

ciation with the group and said in a telephone interview Friday morning that she has tried to shut it down. "The assumption that I've done nothing (to stop them) is inexcusable," she said. "I've written to (former Gov.) Jim Holshouser and asked them to stop and asked Governor Martin to stop them, but they won't."

CCC spokesman Keith Clark said the group was "absolutely independent" of the candidate. "Justice Billings has said we're independent and has spoken out when she's disagreed with us," he said. "Our position is that we have the right to organize and present our views."

Exum, in a telephone interview Friday, said the CCC was "a very unfortunate aspect of this campaign. They have even embarrassed the candidate for whom they say they speak. This type of campaign is inappropriate for a judicial race."

He said an unfortunate long-term effect of the CCC's tactics is that judges may start deciding cases to satisfy public opinion, rather than according to the law.

He also feels that the CCC's goal to make the court conservative is wrong. "Judges

shouldn't take office to say they'll be of one mind or another . . . they need to be impartial. They shouldn't have predisposed notions about how a case should come out," he said.

Members of the press and political observers have brought up the issue of how each of the candidates has voted in death penalty cases, but neither candidate feels that it is pertinent when considering who would make a better chief justice.

Exum said, "I don't think the death penalty should be an issue at all . . . I have voted to sustain more death sentences than any other current member of the court. I have voted to carry out my duty as a justice, notwithstanding my personal views."

Billings agreed and said the media and the public have missed the point when they look only at the number of times an associate justice has voted to uphold or overturn a case ruling.

Both candidates have years of experience in the field of law.

Billings graduated from the Wake Forest University School of Law in 1966, and then

practiced law with her husband, Donald Billings, for two years. In 1968, she became a district court judge in the 21st judicial district and served until 1972.

From 1973 to 1984, she taught at Wake Forest in the School of Law. She practiced law at the firm of Billings and Burns until Sept. 4, 1985, when Gov. Martin appointed her to the court as an associate justice.

Exum was a Morehead Scholar at UNC. He graduated in 1951, then attended law school at New York University.

After graduation, he served as a law clerk to the late N.C. Chief Justice Emery B. Denny, then practiced law in Greensboro for six years. The late Dan K. Moore, former Democratic governor, appointed Exum to the Guilford County Superior Court bench in 1967, and Exum was elected to an eight-year term in 1968.

From 1975 until September, Exum served as an associate justice on the court. He is the senior associate justice; most of the other associate justices were elected in 1982. Exum has also been a visiting professor in the UNC School of Law.

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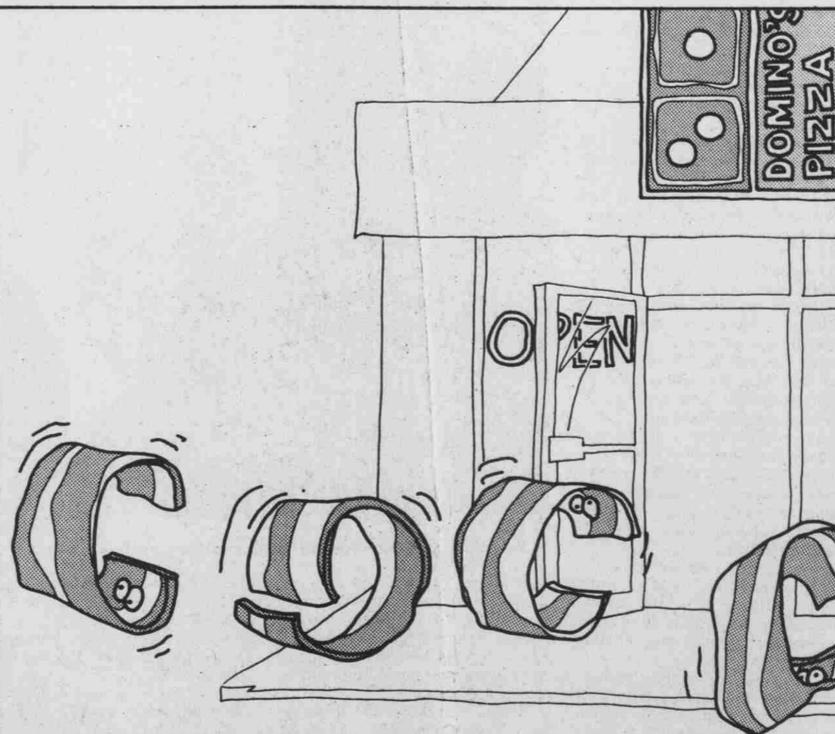
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