

Opinions

Tax proposed to aid acid rain prevention

A tax before the U.S. House and Senate would make utilities pay for more power plant emissions in the Mid-West and East in order to try to solve acid rain problems in the Northeast.

The experts at West Associates, a group of 21 Western utilities, say the government should form any acid rain programs with regional differences in mind.

This is not a hot item for North Carolina today, but in time it might be but concerned people should be aware of the situation. Ask your congressman to explain the proposal to you and how it might come to affect North Carolina.

ENERGY COSTS . . . Ten years ago, the Arab oil embargo sent petroleum fuel prices through the roof. According to Data Resources, the same gallon of heating oil that cost 23 cents in 1973, is now at \$1.08. Natural gas, is now nearly as costly as oil: deregulation and tightened supplies have sent natural gas prices from \$1.25 per thousand cubic feet years ago to over \$5.00 per cubic feet today. The price of electricity is no exception; rates have almost tripled in the last 10 years.

PIN MAKING . . . We read that



Cliff Blue
People and Issues

long ago, English husbands used to give their wives money on New Year's Day to buy enough pins for the whole year. The custom disappeared after the invention of pin-making machines. In 1908, there were about 8,000 movie houses called nickelodens throughout the U.S. They showed continuous movies with piano accompaniment and cost five cents.

POINSETTIA . . . We read that the most popular plant for Christmas is the poinsettia, brought to the U.S. more than 124 years ago from Mexico.

HOOVER ADAMS . . . Hoover Adams owns the *Dunn Daily Record* and another paper in Harnett in Lillington. He writes an interesting column on the front page of his paper.

Recently, he wrote a column about prominent people who

would be against the issue but would be friends when the debate was over.

"We quote: Senator Helms told me of his friendship with Senator McGovern a year or two ago during a visit in Washington.

"Actually, Helms and McGovern were neighbors in Arlington, Virginia, and frequently rode back and forth to Capitol Hill together. It saved them gas.

"We almost had a wreck one day," recalled Senator Helms with a laugh. "Now wouldn't *The News and Observer* have had a field day if they'd known Senator McGovern and I were riding around together.

While Sen. Helms disagrees with Sen. McGovern, he says he is a great "fellow," personally. And we're sure Sen. McGovern holds the same of Senator Helms.

"That's the way it is with really great men -- there is no bitterness of the type you sometimes see on the county and local level."

Adams concluded: "Like the hot Senate race now going on in North Carolina. The world isn't going to come to an end regardless of who's elected and things go on as usual the next day."

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Practical products outlast 'gone tomorrow' fad items

It occurred to me the other day that I hadn't seen any pint-sized Darth Vaders running around recently. "Could it be," I asked myself, "that Star Wars has peaked out?"

It wouldn't be the first time a national fad has fizzled. Take Davy Crockett, for instance. If you're over forty, you'll remember the Crockett craze launched in 1954 by Fess Parker, the buckskin-clad frontier hero on Disneyland television. Every kid in the country suddenly thought he was going to die if he didn't get a coonskin cap.

Then, along about Christmas, 1955, the Crockett bubble burst.



Lucien Coleman
Things That Matter

The kids lost interest almost overnight. Even with prices slashed to the bone, merchandisers got stuck with an awful lot of Davy Crockett paraphenalia. The multi-million dollar boom had turned into a colossal bust.

Most fads end up that way. Remember the "Pet Rocks" of a

few years ago? Where would you buy one today? Remember those funny little "Deelie-Bobbers" kids were wearing on their heads two years ago?

The Hula-Hoop is another good case in point. In 1958, the Wham-O corporation in Pasadena began making simple plastic hoops at a cost of 50 cents each, and sold them for \$1.98.

You can make some fast money on fads, if your timing is right. But, if you're looking for a long-term investment, better stick to something like plastic garbage bags.

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If You Plan On Entering The Military, These Are The Classes You Need

Agriculture research benefiting

By John Sledge
N.C. Farm Bureau Federation

The fact that the world's largest agricultural research organization is located in the U.S. Department of Agriculture is a little misleading. Just a glance at some of the research results of 1983 shows clearly that it's the consumer who's the ultimate beneficiary of agricultural research.

For example, a new technique was developed for measuring vitamin D imbalances which can lead to understanding the role of

vitamin D in metabolic diseases in animals and humans.

An infant feeding study shows infants digest starches . . . suggesting possible revision of infant feeding recommendations in the future.

Research showed that a new USDA rice variety survived the 115 mile per hour winds of hurricane Alicia. Only five percent of its kernels were lost in the storm while other rice varieties were flattened and stripped of 50% of their kernels.

There's also more research going

on to help increase our crop yields. Even today the yield that farmers get from their fields is only one-third of maximum experimental crop yields. As we narrow this gap we can see that continued research will shoot holes into the projections of gloom and doomers who say we're going to run out of food.

It's plain to see that the benefits of agricultural research are so extensive that the people in the administration who make budget cutting decisions should do their homework before they cut funds for agricultural research.

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