

Opinions

Abortion bill still looming



Watching
By Paul T. O'Connor

The morning that the Human Resources Budget subcommittee met to hammer out a special spending provision on abortion, the Legislative Building was full of rumors of an approaching compromise.

After the subcommittee's provision had been approved by the full committee, opponents of state-funded abortions were left asking, "Where did they compromise?"

North Carolina is one of only a handful of states that fund abortions for poor women. For years, a number of legislators led by Sen. Ollie Harris, D-Cleveland, have been trying to have this program removed from the budget. With the Republican delegation up to 50 members and a Republican governor committed to drastically scaling back the program, Harris may have the votes to win this year.

Supporters of state-funded abortions know that. A good head count of votes on this issue is hard to come by but everyone knows that a few votes will probably spell the difference. So, to get the program out of committee and to the floor, supporters had to make some kind of gesture.

The gesture was a four-page special budget provision. It outlines how state abortion funds can be spent. Asked to evaluate the provision, Harris said, "On a scale of one to ten, I'd give it a two."

Program opponents like two aspects of the provision. First, it

says the state does not support abortion on demand. Second, it limits a woman to one state-paid abortion unless she is the victim of a rape, incest or if she is a minor or mentally retarded. This restriction, however, does not apply to the two poorest categories of women who qualify for the state funds.

There's little else that opponents like about the abortion provision.

"What the committee did today was very little at all," said Phil Kirk, secretary of human resources. Rep. Trip Sizemore, R-Guilford, an abortion opponent, said, "Essentially, I don't see it as changing things from the way they have been."

Most notably, the committee did not reduce the level of funding — \$1.3 million annually — for the program. Although supporters of the program say that in itself is a compromise because there is no inflation growth in the program and the \$1.3 million always falls short of demand, anyway.

Under the provision, a woman could get a state paid abortion if she first meets any of three economic qualifications. Then, she

must also show that she is the victim of rape or incest, or that she is a minor or mentally retarded, or that a physician has determined that the fetus is deformed.

If the qualifications had stopped there, opponents say they might have felt they had a fair compromise. But, there is one other way a poor woman can qualify for an abortion. If "the woman's health would be impaired by the pregnancy, as determined in the sole discretion of a physician selected by the woman," the state will pay for her abortion.

"Anybody could be approved," says Kirk. "You could drive a truck through that language." Opponents say a woman can always find a doctor who'll attest that an unwanted pregnancy is bad for her health.

But Rep. Dan Blue, D-wake, a supporter of funding, scoffs at that. He says a woman wouldn't go through the "hassle" of doctor shopping, at her own expense, just for the \$150 state abortion payment. She'll pay for it herself if it isn't obvious that her health is endangered.

Harris was to get a chance to remove the abortion funding from the budget. Regardless of how that vote comes out, the abortion battle will continue with two options: The special provision and a Harris proposal to scale the program way back.

June brings longest days of year

The arrival of June, and the longest days are here. Here's a little poem:

*A ship at sea -- and a bride
in June
Ivy and bittersweet in fall
But the bride is the loveliest
of all!*

—Anne Mary Lawler

The arrival of June brings us almost to the half-way point of 1985. By the end of the month, half the year will be history. June brings with it summer,



Cliff Blue

People and Issues

commencements, weddings, school vacations and beautiful weather, and is thus, perhaps the most

welcome of all the months.

In this month the days are longer than in any other month of the year; there's more daylight and less darkness. And foliage is a bright, new green.

The Allies landed in France on June 6, 1944, in World War II, the beginning of the end of the war.

Father's Day falls in June (the 16th) as does the birthday of the first and only president of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis, on the 3rd.

1040 U.S. Individual Income Tax Return 1984

Do you want \$1 to go to this fund? (If first return, does your spouse want \$1 to go to this fund?)

WE'RE BUSTIN' OUT OF HERE - PASS IT ON!

...Letters continued

(Continued from page 2B)

The family always felt free to call them at any time.

They always came in with smiles of love and understanding.

Mrs. Helen Fields, Jackie Priemea and Susan Ellis were her friends also.

They worked hard to keep her comfortable and her spirits up.

We can never repay their kindness. They are wonderful ladies.

Thank you all and God Bless each one of you.

J.L. Hutter and family

Flu is problem solver

To the Editor:

If you'd like to lose all concern for the monstrous Federal deficit...

If you'd like to pay no attention

to the possibility of nuclear war...

If you'd like to not care whether the U.S. and Russia agree to reduce arms...

If you'd like to stop wondering how inflation can be down when the things you buy are up...

If you'd like to forget what the crime rate is...

If you'd like to wad up your newspaper and shut off the TV...

If you'd like to stop wondering why so many kids are going to college and so few coming out educated...

If you'd like to stop wondering why it takes Congress so long to do nothing...

If you'd like to pay no attention to what the weather forecast for tomorrow is, whether it's warm, cold, dry, rain, sleet or snow...

If you'd like to not care whether today is Monday or Friday or

Wednesday or all three...

Then I can tell you how to reach those goals: **come down with a hard case of the flu**, with temperature around 104°.

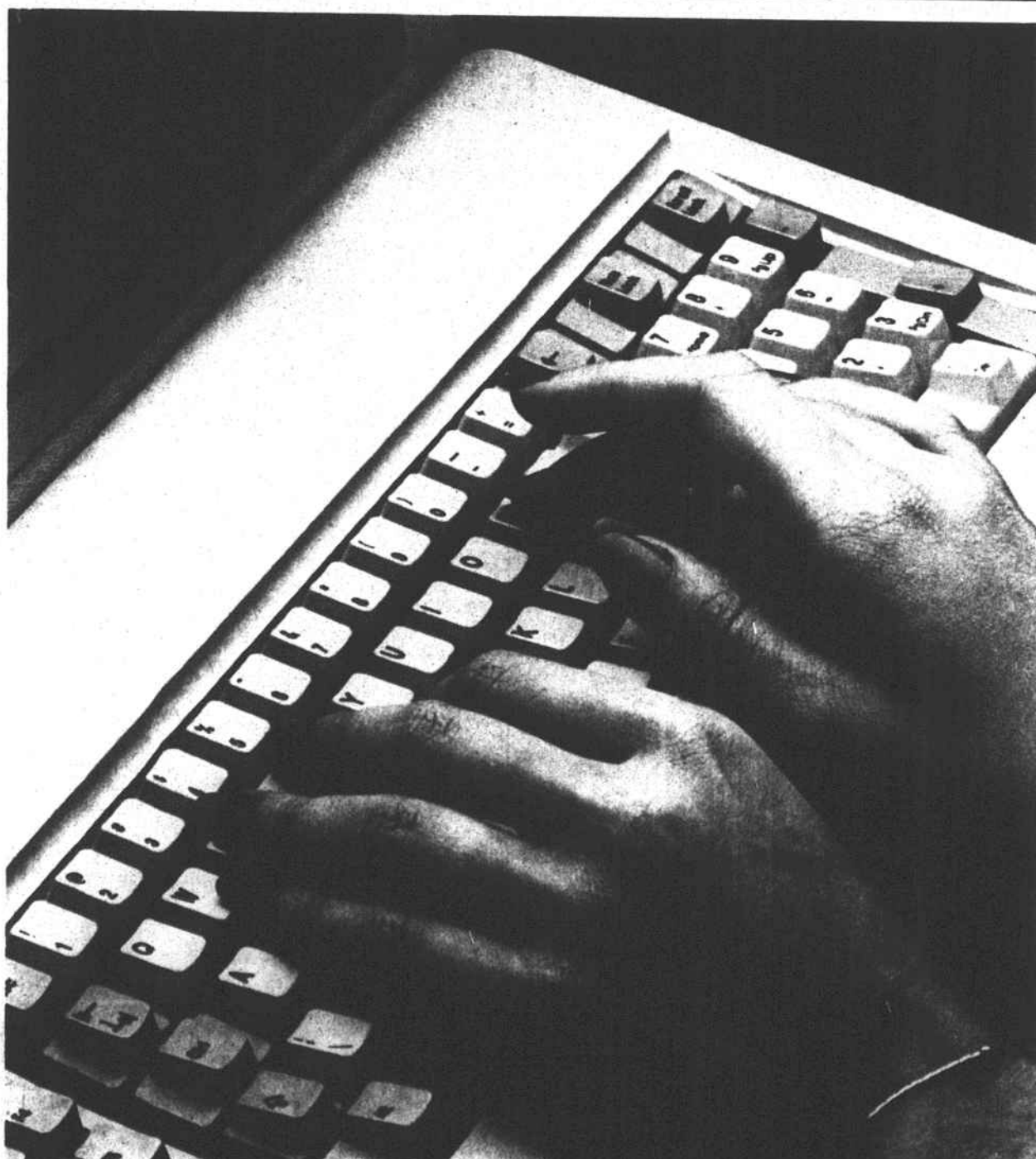
The first few days you'll feel like you're not worth shooting. The next few days you'll begin to wonder if you'll ever feel like you'll ever be worth shooting.

Yours faithfully
J.A.

Letters Policy

Letters to the editor are encouraged and welcomed. Writers should keep letters as short as possible. Names, addresses and telephone numbers should be included and all letters must be signed. Names will be printed, however, other information will be kept confidential. We reserve the right to edit letters for good taste and brevity. Letters should be received by *The News-Journal* by noon on the Monday of the publication week.

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