

Viewpoints

Budget vote correct

Members of the Hoke County Commission adopted a budget plan last week which could get this county heading in a direction towards solid controlled growth.

The commissioners should be commended for their action which showed fiscal constraint, but an eye for the future.

However, Hoke County leaders now need to begin working to come up with a plan which will bring this county up from our ranking of last in per capita income and last in per capita spending for education.

For many, Hoke County is a good place live and work. With a little hard work, it could become better for everyone.

Plight of farmers is beyond the farm

The sad plight of the farmer in North Carolina and almost every other state in the union could be described as one of those problems that is treated like the weather. Everyone is willing to talk about the dilemma, but no one has come up with a solution.

Third and fourth generation families, who have tilled the same soil for more than 100 years, are losing their property because of loan foreclosures. One cannot be critical of lenders for wanting their money, but both the state and federal governments should help the farmer find a solution. If there was no food to put on your table, Congress would take action immediately.

Indirectly, the uncertainty in the life of a farmer carries over into other areas. It has just been reported that four creditors of the Long Manufacturing Company of Tarboro have filed a petition in U.S. Bankruptcy Court asking that the company be placed in bankruptcy.

In the 1970s Long employed 1,100 workers in Tarboro and another 400 at a Davenport, Iowa plant. Although by 1980 the total work force had been reduced to 750, and now the plant employs only 400, Long has for many years provided Tarboro with millions of dollars in wages and other purchases. The firm makes agricultural equipment and markets tractors nationwide.

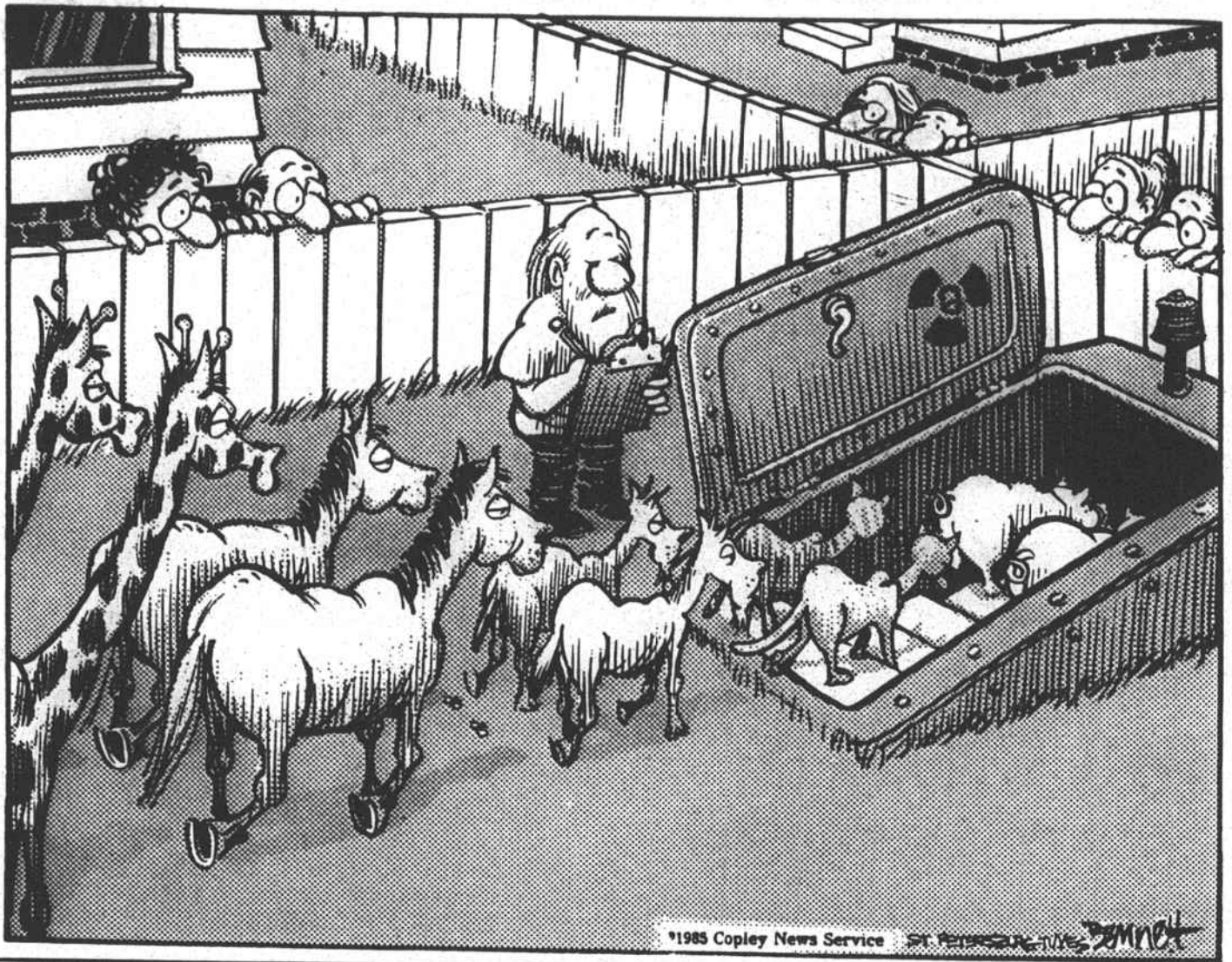
The company's annual revenue in 1975 was as high as \$75 million; today's sales are about \$30 million annually.

Long is not the first agricultural implement manufacturer in North Carolina to run into financial problems. Harrington Manufacturing Co. Inc. of Lewiston was successful in the 1970s, only to have high interest rates and the plight of the farmer force the company to file for bankruptcy last year.

A spokesman for Long has said that the company will contest the involuntary bankruptcy in federal bankruptcy court in Wilson and will ask the court for protection from creditors while reorganizing.

Most manufacturers of farm machinery are in the same situation as the farmer. So are the small businesses that have served farm communities for many years. It started out like a slow cancer; it has now reached the stage where the farmer and his suppliers are living on a day-to-day basis. It is a problem that should be of grave concern to every American.

-The Chapel Hill Newspaper



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Letters To The Editor

Quewhiffle forgotten Hoke County township

To the Editor: Commissioner Balfour wanted to know where the people were that opposed the Hoke County tax hike. Maybe they were ignorant to the meeting, as I was. Before you judge my ignorance: see if you can understand my plight.

I am a resident of Hoke County, and I like where I stay. We are property and landowners. We have three children enrolled in the school system. My address is Rt. 1, Aberdeen (a Moore County address). This is three miles from Aberdeen and 16 from Raeford. My telephone is a 281 exchange (a Moore County number). I can only call Raeford in an emergency by using the Zenith number. All other calls would be long distance. I cannot go to Raeford every day and ask people there what's happening. You say why not read *The News-Journal*? Well I do, when I can find one in this area. Quewhiffle Store carries them sometimes.

Are the people on the edge of the county to be set apart from those that live close to the county seat? Are we to be denied the privileges

that others enjoy? Hoke County is a large County.

Our homes and ourselves cannot be protected as they should because of the lack of enough law enforcement officers. This area is not patrolled enough. How do I know this? I asked the Sheriff at a Community Watch meeting. Are the residents of Quewhiffle township only considered at tax time and at elections (maybe not even then for I haven't seen a candidate at our polls). Our children have to limit their extra school activities because it is so far to drive and with three you would be steady driving.

I agree with the editorial comparing Moore County's lower tax rate with our rate. I would suggest that a study be made to find out why a county this size cannot run on the rate as is or lower as others are doing. I'm sure that others feel this way but are just not concerned in speaking out. Maybe the commissioners should start mailing bulletins to the residents so they will know when and where these meetings are held. I'm sure more people would show up and speak up.

Thank you. Maxine B. Rogers

Law enforcement effort appreciated

To the Editor: I would like to thank the law enforcement of Hoke County and the City of Raeford for the outstanding work they did, in the recent dangerous situation. Along with the help of outside law enforcement agents, they were able to bring a peaceful solution to the incident at the Countryside Apartments, without loss of life. The

Rescue Squad, the Ambulance service were standing by, so they also deserve a big THANK YOU!

I don't believe many of us take the time to tell the officers that they are appreciated, and when they have done an exceptionally outstanding job I hope others besides me think to thank them. They were in a very dangerous situation, where anybody could have been hurt, but it was handled so very well, and no injuries occurred.

Very sincerely yours, Esther Teal



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Use July 4th to begin fight against racism

By Mab Segrest
North Carolinians celebrating the 209th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence this July can do more than organize picnics and set off fireworks to honor America's blueprint of freedom. They can speak out against the growing hate group activity and bigoted violence in North Carolina which threatens our fellow citizens' right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

After all, do not we as Americans view our diversity as a sign of strength? Should we not be teaching our children that their own freedom is only guaranteed by protecting the freedom of others who may be racially, ethnically and culturally different from ourselves?

History reveals that hate groups which are not taken seriously when they begin their activities can assume power where a society does not vigorously safeguard the rights of minorities.

Consider these statistics. From 1979 through 1984 nine persons (including five in Greensboro) have been killed in attacks by the Klan or other racist elements in

North Carolina. There were over 40 cross burnings in the state, 12 incidents in which shots were fired into homes, two cases of arson, and 41 other threatening incidents motivated by racial or religious bigotry. In addition, at least five men have been murdered in the past two years because their attackers perceived them to be gay.

While the attacks against homosexuals seem the work of youth gangs or individuals, many of the assaults against members of religious and racial groups can be tied to the rise of hate group activity in the state. Two nationally recognized Ku Klux Klan monitoring agencies, Klanwatch and the national Anti-Klan Network, consider North Carolina to have the most active and dangerous group of Klans in the U.S.

The arrest of neo-Nazi David Lane in Winston-Salem in March pointed up dangerous trends in Klan groups in the state and nation. Lane is a member of The Order, a violent group of racists and anti-Semites charged with a series of armored car robberies and the gangland style slaying of a Jewish radio personality in Denver. According to federal

authorities, The Order planned to use stolen and counterfeited money to finance a racist revolution. Law enforcement officials say Lane was in the vicinity of Winston-Salem for three months.

This summer the Klan is busy creating tensions in North Carolina. On June 1 KKK members gathered on property owned by a white citizen to "light up" a cross in a predominantly black neighborhood in Mooresville. Black youths reported being threatened by armed men as the blacks walked by homes inhabited by whites. The week before the White "Patriot" Party paraded through a black section in Whiteville, causing a riot, according to a local black minister. On June 15 Klan/White Patriots marched through Shelby, King's Mountain, and Gastonia. At least three people in that march were arrested for possessions of weapons.

What can be done about this alarming resurgence of violent, anti-democratic forces in our state? First and foremost, we must change the climate of tolerance and apathy which permits this activity to continue. It is time for

law-abiding, patriotic citizens in our state to demand that the law be enforced against groups and individuals who would deny any of our citizens their rights as Americans.

If democracy permits anti-democratic groups to spread their ideas, it also requires citizens who disagree to use their right of free speech to repudiate hate group ideologies. Groups like the Klan and the Nazis grow by playing on fears and stereotypes. These need to be aggressively challenged.

When organizations like the Klan appear in a town everyone should speak out - in schools, churches, synagogues, work places and town councils - against the bigotry and violence such groups represent.

Local officials should take Klan activity, including public demonstrations, seriously. Klan/White "Patriot" groups should not be treated like fraternal organizations, or the white equivalent of the NAACP, but the terrorist groups they are. Under the First Amendment, such groups have the right to demonstrate peacefully. But these marches should be regulated, with municipal officials setting the time

and place, and with police there to ensure that marchers are not armed.

At the state level, the Attorney General should: 1.) appoint a task force to assist towns with high levels of Klan/"Patriot" activity, offering advice to local officials on measured responses 2.) obtain for the State Bureau of Investigation original jurisdiction to investigate and make arrests in cases of bigoted violence and harassment (with or without the cooperation of local law enforcement officials, who have often been slow to respond to Klan threats) 3.) declare a private army created by an extremist organization which educates its members in paramilitary activity to be in violation of law and its members subject to arrest if such units are not disbanded and 4.) report to the citizens of the state on Klan/Nazi/guerilla activity.

Politicians must refrain from using racism or the fear and hatred of gay people to get votes and raise money. The legislature should repeal laws directed against homosexuals. These increase the climate of hostility in which anti-gay attacks occur and discourage gay men and lesbians from reporting violence and harassment to the police.

Few North Carolinians sanction acts of intimidation and physical attacks against members of racial and religious groups and homosexuals. Yet, if we remain silent in the presence of this un-American activity we are permitting it to continue.

Editor's note: Segrest is coordinator for North Carolinians Against Racist and Religious Violence. She lives in Durham. The North Carolina Forum is an educational organization which provides the views of the experts.

Warren Johnston
The Puppy Papers
are on vacation