

PHOTO BY BILL FAVER

OUR SYMPATHIES for baby birds or baby turtles need to result in concern for habitat and protection of nesting sites.

Misplaced Sympathies

BY BILL FAVER

It would seem to be a very natural response to feel sympathetic toward young animals. Babies of almost any type grab our attention and we usually want the best for them. We translate our cares and concerns for humans to the babies of our pets, baby birds, and the babies of other animals. Sometimes these feelings can be misplaced sympathies.



FAVER

When we see a black snake break up a bluebird nest and eat the eggs or the young birds, we seldom understand the snake's needs for food. Our sympathies are with the baby birds. It is unlikely that we will understand the snake's appetite is one reason why the bluebirds will raise two or three broods a year. If all of the young birds were to live, we could be inundated with bluebirds, and some of them would die for lack of feeding space.

When we find a baby bird out of its nest, our first

response is to get it back in the nest or to try to raise it ourselves. We may not realize the bird may have been too weak to survive and may have been pushed from the nest by stronger siblings. Even if we get it back in the nest, it is unlikely to live.

When we learn most baby sea turtles hatching on our beaches will become food for gulls and ghost crabs on land and fish and crabs in the ocean, we feel for the babies and want to protect them. We don't realize this process of hatching and scrambling for safety and feeding has been going on for millions of years, and the turtles have survived as a species.

Perhaps many of our sympathies can be considered misplaced sympathies. Rather than worrying about a baby bird out of the nest, we should worry about the shrinking habitat available to the birds. Or perhaps our concern for the baby turtles should rest with the loss of nesting sites on our beaches and the killing of adult turtles by some humans who should know better.

The natural world needs our sympathies, but they need to cover the big picture. Those sympathies need to result in action as well as warm feelings.

GUEST COLUMN

Tax Would Devastate Southeast

BY GEORGE W. ABBOTT

Of all the regions of the country, the Southeast has consistently weathered recessions and quietly provided its people with jobs and steady growth. Now, all that could change.

Various proposals are now being considered in Washington to substantially increase the federal cigarette tax. But whether we end up with a doubling of the current 24-cents-a-pack federal excise tax, or a \$1 increase, or even the \$2 "monster" tax, as the Washington Post labeled one proposal, the economic impact on our region would be devastating.

Tobacco is to the Southeast as logging is to the Northwest...as petroleum is to the Gulf states and Alaska...as wheat is to the Midwest. Here in the Southeast, tobacco provides about 200,000 jobs just in farming and manufacturing. Hundreds of thousands of other jobs are supplies in retailing, warehousing and many other direct and non-direct ways.

Based on a Price Waterhouse study, a \$1-a-pack increase in the excise tax would remove from our region more than \$485 million in annual tobacco-farm leaf sales. More than 25,675 farming jobs would be lost; 8,007 tobacco manufacturing jobs would vanish; 6,878 retail jobs would be eliminated; and some 1,884 wholesale trade jobs would be gone.

Thousands of businesses—from paper companies to computer manufacturers to advertisers—supply the tobacco industry. With a \$1-a-pack excise tax increase, more than 14,500 jobs in the Southeast alone would evaporate from this tobacco-supplier sector of the U.S. economy. With this loss of workers and paychecks that buy food, clothing and everything else families require, a destructive ripple of tobacco unemployment would reach far and wide, adding another 89,250 Americans to unemployment in the Southeast.

The total economic damage in terms of unemployment with a \$1-a-pack increase: 144,247 jobs and \$3.4 billion in paychecks—gone.

At \$2 a pack in tax increases, the pain in our part of the country would be unthinkable: more than 287,000 workers currently participating in the American economic system—earning paychecks totaling more than \$6.8 billion and paying taxes—would be told to start collecting unemployment checks from the government while they look for work elsewhere. Taken from our Southeastern economy would be

\$972 million from tobacco leaf sales.

Even a "simple" doubling of the federal cigarette tax—to 48 cents a pack—would be a severe blow to our region. More than 42,000 workers would face unemployment and more than \$1 billion would be lost in paychecks.

But that's not all. Cigarette taxes traditionally have been a source for generating revenue at the state level. A large increase in the federal cigarette tax will reduce sales of tobacco products. That will reduce state cigarette-tax revenue. While tobacco excise taxes are low in the Southeast—reflecting tobacco's contribution to the region's economy in many other ways—a \$1-a-pack federal tax increase will cost Southeastern states \$155 million. Will other taxes be raised to make up the difference? What will be cut? Education? Support for the elderly?

A federal cigarette tax increase is a bad idea for other reasons as well:

■ **Cigarette taxes unfairly hit those least able to pay**—low- and middle-income taxpayers. No matter how high or low a person's income, he or she pays the same amount of cigarette taxes, and that's not fair economically.

■ **The government will not bet the money it expects by raising taxes.** In 1990 and 1991, Canadian cigarette tax rates rose 45 percent. But revenue increased only 1.4 percent. Canadians are crossing the border to buy their brands in U.S. stores. Smuggling and black markets are thriving.

■ **Smokers already pay their fair share.** According to an article in The Journal of the American Medical Association (March 17, 1989), "...On balance, smokers probably pay their way with the current level of excise tax on cigarettes." And that statement was made before the last two federal ex-

cise tax increases and the scores of state tax increases enacted since 1989.

■ **If America's health-care system is broken, the government should fix it—not just throw more money at the problem.** At both the state and federal levels, cigarette taxes are being proposed to finance health-care reform. Americans spent \$838 billion on health care in 1992. But, according to Consumer Reports, at least \$200 billion was thrown away on "overpriced, useless...treatments, and on a bloated bureaucracy."

■ **A major tax increase will not deter youth from smoking.** Where this has been tried, the tax didn't do what its supporters said it was supposed to do. Last year, health authorities got together to review the results of a major tax increase enacted in California three years earlier. To the dismay of conference participants, a spokesman for the California program reported that the tax appeared "to have had little effect" on adolescents, and that their rate of smoking was virtually unchanged.

Given all the reasons why a major tobacco excise tax is a bad idea, a surprisingly large percentage of Americans seem to favor such a tax. Or is it so surprising? Three-fourths of American adults do not smoke—and proponents of the tax have been doing nothing to discourage the public from assuming that, if they don't smoke, there will be no economic price to pay for this tax.

Workers and employers all over the country will be paying the price, but it will hurt far more in the Southeast. Not since Reconstruction has the Southeast faced such a critical economic issue.

George W. Abbott is a tobacco warehouseman, farm supply dealer and farmer living in Darlington, S.C.

MORE LETTERS

Anti-Abortion Ad Insert Provokes Reader Response

To the editor:

Shame on you! You allowed yourself to be an organ for untrue propaganda. We pay our money to buy a paper which is supposed to have responsible journalism and integrity and, behold, we receive a paper containing deliberate lies.

I refer to the anti-"Freedom of Choice" literature in your July 8 edition. Despite your bias and/or political motivation, your researchers should have advised you of the blatant errors. Or did they?

There is no such thing as a D & X abortion procedure. Fetuses are not aborted as was stated. If a late-term termination of pregnancy is necessary (due to endangerment of the woman or death of the fetus in utero) a prostaglandin suppository is inserted in the cervix, labor is initiated and the products of conception are expelled.

The New York abortionist who tried to terminate a gestation beyond 24 weeks was convicted, sent to prison and had his license revoked.

Also, any laws regarding termination of pregnancy will have certain stipulations, as in New York state.

Why not do a research project on "Freedom of Choice," "Right to Life," and the implications of the medication RU 486 to both movements—or would you stir up a hornet's nest?

Mildred S. Capone
Shallotte

Pro-Lifers Do Pay

To the editor:

Pegge Jaynes deplores the "melodramatic flyer" produced by pro-lifers and then produces her own melodramatic slander:

"When the Right to Life radicals start taking care of the millions of already born tiny tots who lack food, medicine and two-parent homes, then I'll take their pleas for the un-

born more seriously," she fumes.

The term "radical" is less than flattering and usually untrue in fact. The truth is that we already take care of those millions!

Part of it is called "AFDC," which pays for many unwanted children's physical life, and then there are thousands of volunteers who assist young women in the adoption process.

Like Christians everywhere and always, we do care and we held re-arrange the consequences of sin.

And Ms Jaynes repeats the distortion of the times by writing, "Until we have a form of birth control that is medically and socially acceptable, the numbers of unwanted pregnancies will continue to escalate."

We used to have such a method and could readily reinstate it: it's called "responsibility"...the self-discipline of abstinence in the formative years.

The judgment that "young women should have the final say over their own bodies and their own destinies" and, by extension, the same for young men is a self-centered expression which flouts natural law and the will of God.

And while there are flaws in the effort to impose the will of God by government, the distortions and screams of the "pro-choice" propagandists deserve no consideration.

Karl E. Brandt
Shallotte

Fortunate Survivor

To the editor:

Thank you for including the Freedom of Choice Act insert in your paper. Ana Rosa Rodriguez is indeed one of the few fortunate ones that survived the murder attempt on her life through abortion. Complete shock and utter disbelief is the moral response to this carnage. But even more alarming are the attitudes of

those who would rather see people like Ana Rosa dead.

Randi Moon
Sunset Beach

'Smacks Of Feminism'

To the editor:

I hope that in the future before you accept paid ads, you will check with Neill Key (writer of a letter in last week's issue) to be sure that they meet his/her radical standards and, if they don't, you are not to accept them.

That letter smacked of radical feminism at its worst. They think that their views only are to be heard, and all others are to be suppressed.

Bill Stanley
Calabash

About Sewer Plans...

To the editor:

I would like to ask the engineers of the proposed Sunset Beach sewer system why, after the biggest tourist week in the history of Sunset Beach, shellfishing was opened up on Saturday, July 10, in front of my house on the Sunset Beach mainland for the first time since 1968.

For those that have eyes, let them see.

Frank Nesmith
Sunset Beach

Write Us

The Beacon welcomes letters to the editor. Letters must be signed and include the writer's address. Unsigned letters will not be printed. Letters must be legible. The Beacon reserves the right to edit libelous comments. Address letters to The Brunswick Beacon, P. O. Box 2558, Shallotte, N. C. 28459.

Calling Uncle Sam To Pay The Tab

If you're like me, all it takes to help put our local drought in perspective is a few feet of video on the disastrous flooding along the Mississippi and Missouri rivers.

It's a daily reminder that we're not really the guys in charge. For me, however, it's also another reminder that we've become too reliant on the federal government for my own comfort.

While not against the programs, I'm deeply disturbed when we don't seem able or willing to take care of ourselves or others in our own communities. When our first, not last, instinct is "Call Washington," it also bothers me that more and more we deliberately put ourselves at greater risk.

It doesn't help that it is hurricane season, and my mind is on such things as flood insurance, Hazel and Hugo, and building houses on rock instead of sand. It doesn't help that we're no longer just building po-dunk fishing shacks on the shore or in the floodplain.

The world over, people have always chosen to live and work near the water, despite the hazards of hurricanes or typhoons on the coast and flooding along coast and river. When the water came—and it always did, people either built back and took their chances, or moved out of flood's way, never to return.

These days we expect government engineers to tinker with Mother Nature, to build berms and seawalls, even redirect rivers, so that

Susan Usher



we can build where we like. And build, we do.


When the water comes—and sooner or later, it always does—we not only want help building back, we expect to recover all or a portion of our gambling losses. In fact, we expect fellow taxpayers to share the risk and the pay-off. Doesn't matter if it's an individual home or business, government property or even a sand dune.

Every day I see new examples of

what government is expected to do what people and communities used to do. But that's only the beginning. It seems to me we're expecting government to do it all on a grander scale than we would have if left to our own devices.

Where does it stop? Certainly the flood victims in the Midwest need help, but how much and who should provide it? How would I feel if the shoes were switched and my community was facing economic disaster or my beach cottage destroyed?

Maybe I'm just another naive Don Quixote, fighting battles with windmills. Most people seem to accept this routine as just the way it is, maybe even as the way it ought to be. Then again, maybe, just maybe, some other people haven't figured out who government really is and the price we're all paying for our collective extravagance, even folly.



Richard C. Glenn
PO Box 2865
Shallotte, NC 28459
(919)754-6771

SECURITIES AMERICA, INC.
18 Resort Plaza
Shallotte
Member NASD/SIPC

Dissatisfied with CD or IRA rates? call me today!

ONE HOUR EYE GLASSES ...LOWEST PRICES IN TOWN!

We can make arrangements to have your eyes examined today!

CLEAR-VUE
Single Vision* Plastic
\$12.95
Some Prescription Limitations Apply. Plus or Minus 3.00 diopters up to a 2.00 cylinder. Limit One Coupon Per Customer. No Other Advertised Specials Apply. Expires 7-31-93.

CLEAR-VUE
Bifocal
\$29.95
Round Seg. Flat Top 28's.
Any power spheres plus or minus.
\$39.95
Any power for Astigmatism. Limit One Coupon Per Customer. No Other Advertised Specials Apply. Expires 7-31-93.

CLEAR-VUE
Progressive No Line
\$59.95
Any power spheres plus or minus.
\$79.95
Any power for Astigmatism. Limit One Coupon Per Customer. No Other Advertised Specials Apply. Expires 7-31-93.

CLEAR-VUE OPTICIANS

3901-A Oleander Dr., Wilmington

(919)395-6563
1-800-634-1085

*54 eye and above oversize. Tints and ultra violet filter extra. Hours: Mon.-Fri. 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Other locations—Kinston, Greenville, Jackson, Wilson, Wilmington and Raleigh.

1207 Hwy. 17 S.
North Myrtle Bch.
"The Purple Building"
Just South of Cowboys

U-BREW

HOURS:
Mon.-Fri. 10-6
Thur. 10-7
Sat. 10-5
361-0092

Check Out Our New Everyday Low Prices

BEER & WINE SUPPLIES

YOUR COMPLETE HOME-BREW STORE

A Great Gift & A Great Hobby For Those With "Import Taste" On A "Domestic Budget" Mail Order/UPS