

Sen. McNeill Smith wants to remain Sen. Smith—but change address

The town of Rowland in Robeson County is not unlike the hundreds of other small towns in North Carolina. Located in the south-central part of the state near the South Carolina border, the town's population is close-knit, God-fearing and largely conservative. One of the most respected natives is state Sen. McNeill Smith of Greensboro, Democratic candidate for the U.S. Senate. He was at UNC last week to speak before the UNC Young Democrats. After four terms in the state senate, Smith has joined a host of other Democrats in a battle for the right to face incumbent Republican U.S. Senator Jesse Helms next November.

Smith warmed up his audience with recollections of his childhood years in Rowland before concentrating on why he feels he should be in the Senate instead of Jesse Helms.

"IN QUOTES"

By MARK ANDREWS

"Every house had a legend and a story," Smith said of his home town. "I knew everybody in Rowland."

During his youth, Smith worked tobacco and cotton crops and used to be a salesman in a store in town. He recalls the time when a poor man came into the store to buy shoes for his children. The only way he had been able to tell what size to buy was to measure his kids' feet, and he brought twigs in to show Smith how long each of their feet were. He has never forgotten the poverty he saw when he was young.

Rowland used to boast that it was "the town of 1,000 friends," Smith recalls. But a closer look at the population figures revealed that at the time the town had only 915 people. Since the residents strongly adhered to the Christian principle of truthfulness, they decided that the sign would have to be changed. They added a line at the bottom of the sign.

"Some of them are dogs," the sign confessed. Like so many other towns and cities in the South during the 1960s, Rowland experienced some division and controversy over racial issues. A Baptist minister there, who had helped establish a Head Start program for pre-school children, was asked to leave the church by his congregation.

The congregation was upset because the church's program was integrated. A major controversy in the church ensued, and the church was split.

Someone was particularly disgusted with the turmoil over the integrated school and put a sign up on the church which caused such a disturbance when it was found that the authorities were brought in to find who the culprit was.

"Church for sale — congregation gone to hell," it said.

The incident drew national attention and was even reported by *Time* magazine.

Smith arrived in Chapel Hill at age 16 to attend UNC. He recalls that first day at UNC — he was away from home and like most freshmen, very homesick. He remembers having his first college meal at Swain Hall, and eating fried okra which he had always hated.

Despite the initial anxiety, however, the Robeson County collegian recovered nicely and became, in time, a *Daily Tar Heel* editor, a member of several campus organizations and a Phi Beta Kappa initiate.

Frank Porter Graham, a nationally-recognized educator in his day and perhaps the most famous and best-loved man in UNC's long history, was president of the University when Smith was in college. On Sunday evenings, Smith and many other students would walk over to Graham's lawn at the president's mansion to visit with him.

Even today Smith vividly remembers his contacts with Graham, which continued long after Smith left UNC. He held Graham in very high esteem and still retains a hint of bitterness for the way he says Graham was treated in his bid to retain his seat in the U.S. Senate (to which he had been appointed in 1949 when the incumbent died).

The campaign was a particularly heated one, and McNeill Smith and others have accused Graham's opponent, Willis Smith, of dirty campaign tactics. Smith says that he has never seen his wife cry except after that bitter Senate race which ended in Graham's defeat. He wants to "avenge and revenge" that defeat.

One of the managers of the Willis Smith campaign was a young man named Jesse Helms, and Smith wants to avenge Graham's defeat.

In an effort to control the growing amount of protest that was taking place at UNC and other campuses during the 1960s, the North Carolina General Assembly in 1963 passed the Speaker Ban Law which allowed the state to prevent certain speakers it considered dangerous from appearing on campus. A group of concerned students at UNC were

determined to get the law changed and sought a lawyer who would help them fight it in the courts.

They had trouble finding someone to help them in a battle which was bound to arouse the wrath of so many people in the state who felt angry and threatened by events taking place on some college campuses. McNeill Smith agreed to represent the group, and they filed suit against the speaker ban.

Some people complained that Smith and the students were trying to destroy the University by fighting the ban. "No we're not," Smith insisted, "we're going to rescue the University."

The students and Smith faced a panel of three federal court judges when they presented their case in 1968. All three had a reputation for being hardnosed judges. Frank Graham called Smith twice from New York to inquire about the suit's progress. Many people became discouraged and pessimistic when they found out who the judges were, but Smith and the students bringing suit continued to fight the court battle. They actually succeeded in winning the case, and finally the Speaker Ban Law was struck down.

"It was the students of North Carolina who brought this lawsuit," Smith told the UNC students and others last week. "I was very proud to represent these students because they believe in the Constitution."

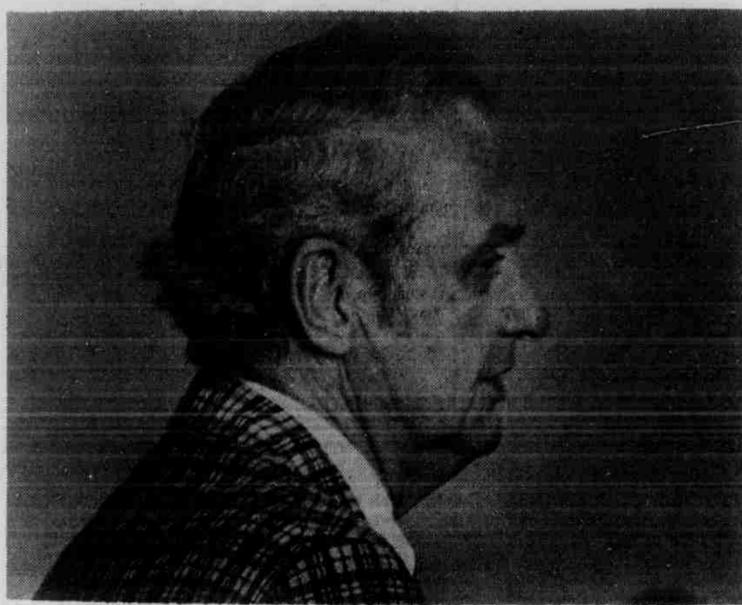
Jesse Helms had been a supporter of the speaker ban, Smith reminded the audience, and he continued to support it even after its repeal. Helms called the students "asinine and stupid," Smith maintained.

"He (Helms) was on the side of the censor," Smith insisted. "I was on the other side."

As far as North Carolina politics are concerned, McNeill Smith is somewhat of an unconventional politician. He is considered by watchers of the state legislature to be one of its most progressive and active members. He is also considered liberal in comparison to most of the state's other politicians, especially in contrast to the man he'd like to face in the Senate race next year, incumbent Republican Helms. Yet, Smith doesn't really like labels.

Smith's voting record in the state senate shows that while he has a record of supporting "progressive" legislation, he does not respond to legislation in unwavering knee-jerk fashion. He has gone against many other senators of the progressive bent and voted against almost all bills for liquor by the drink in the state — although he did support one which would have allowed local option.

"I had a feeling that this proposal (liquor by the



Sen. McNeill Smith

drink) would have increased consumption," he contended.

Smith is an avid bicycle-rider and likes to travel by bike instead of by car when possible. He says he feels he's traveled the equivalent of a couple of times around the world by bicycle during his life. He'd never had an accident until a week ago Sunday when a person in a person opened his door as Smith passed. Smith wasn't injured, though.

Smith wants to replace the negativism he feels Helms has exhibited in the U.S. Senate with an optimistic, forward-looking approach to the problems facing the country. He wants to take greater advantage of what he feels is the tremendous prospect of solar energy; he wants the federal government to provide jobs to the unemployed when the private sector can't hire them, and he favors ratification of the Panama Canal treaty as long as clarifications about our rights after we withdraw are outlined.

Smith enjoys discussing the issues and remained with a handful of students long after his speech to consider some of the issues coming up in the campaign.

Smith takes great pride in noting that when other people gave up fighting for their side in some controversial issue and said it couldn't be done, he kept at it and proved them wrong. He wants to face Jesse Helms in the general election next year, but he faces an uphill battle trying to get the Democratic nomination and is still considered an underdog in the primary race.

Sen. McNeill Smith wants to remain Sen. Smith for at least another half dozen years. Of course, he'd like to move his office from Raleigh to Washington.

Mark Andrews, a senior journalism major from Burlington, N.C., is a staff writer for the *Daily Tar Heel*.

Guns: government should learn more

By MARY ANNE RHYNE

Every 40 minutes someone in the United States is murdered with a gun. Someone else is robbed at gunpoint every two-and-a-half minutes.

Where do the guns to commit these crimes come from?

No one, not even the government, knows the answer to that question. The government doesn't know what kind of guns are made, how many are made, how many are stolen, how they are shipped or who makes the profit from their sale.

In the people's interest, the government should learn more.

Statistics now show that police pick up one handgun every two minutes while gun manufacturers put together four replacements in the same time. But these are just estimates. The gun makers have refused to tell the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the agency charged with monitoring firearms production, just what they are doing. The House Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Crime could only get 12 of 32 manufacturers even to answer a questionnaire. Such flagrant lack of cooperation with the government should disturb Americans.

With such unguarded production of weapons, how can the consumer be sure of what he is buying? He can't be. A Police Foundation study shows that some makers import low-grade metal parts for the guns. A federal law in 1968 was supposed to prevent the sale of such cheap handguns.

The government should learn more.

If materials used in the guns are cheap, are Americans paying a fair price for handguns? Again the Police Foundation reports that if the list price of a gun is \$175, it probably cost its maker \$100 to produce. The profit is spread along to middlemen. With estimated profits of \$100 million, there is plenty of money for gun manufacturers to spread around.

The names of arms manufacturers read like a "most popular list" of conglomerates. The list includes DuPont (Remington Arms), Olin (Winchester) and Colt Industries (Colt Firearms). Many manufacturers are expanding arms production to include Mace, tear gas, holsters, ammunition and blood-alcohol analyzers. These are not signs of a floundering industry.

The government should learn more.

Another disturbing fact about the gun market is the success of the black market. Stolen guns account for 20 to 30 percent of the guns used in crime. How do these weapons get in the hands of criminals? RG Industries, the nation's leading maker of Saturday-night specials, says it ships arms by the United Parcel Service. The company simply used to mail guns. The theft problem is large but the profits are high. Smith and Wesson, another highly successful gun manufacturer, uses metal detectors to check employees, and fences and floodlights to spot thieves. Somewhere there are security leaks because thousands of guns are stolen.

The government should learn more.

If a gun is stolen, it can hardly be tracked down. The Police Foundation reports that many manufacturers have duplicate serial numbers on their products. None has a standard system of numbering.

The wide discrepancies and huge gaps in the provision of information to the public from gun manufacturers is inexcusable. As of now the question is not gun control. The demand is for information. Knowledge that could shed light on gun control issues. Knowledge that could lower the murder rate in the United States. Knowledge that the American people deserve to have.

Mary Anne Rhyne, a junior, is a French and journalism major from Hickory, N.C.

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Plaintiffs miss point

Carrboro apartment dwellers have been facing a parking crunch for several years, and they have been getting no relief from their managers. Limitations of space were increased in the fall of 1974 when the town board authorized the Carrboro fire chief to designate fire lanes in private parking lots. Towing was authorized as a means of punishing motorists who ignored the fire lane designations.

The constitutionality of the ordinance concerning the fire lane designations has been challenged in a class action suit. The plaintiffs, who include three UNC students, claim the town does not have the constitutional right to tow cars from private property. Orange District Court Judge Stanley Peele issued a temporary restraining order last week prohibiting the town from enforcing the questioned ordinance until the case is heard.

Mayor-elect Bob Drakeford agreed with the judge's action: "The people living there — the students — are the ones being penalized."

Drakeford and the plaintiffs seem to be missing the point. The restraining order prohibits the town from providing a fundamental town service to its citizenry — proper fire protection. The bickerings of a few students have out-shouted the masses who value their furniture, lives and clothing — all of which could go up in smoke.

Watching your roommate struggle to free himself of burning embers while firemen negotiate around a parked car would not be a pretty sight. Admittedly, this scenario is a bit extreme, but the death of one person under such circumstances is excessive.

The concern of students over the parking situation at the apartments is well-founded. But we should take our case to the apartment managers — not the courts. It is their responsibility to provide adequate parking, not the town's. The cost might be great but certainly not greater than the price of a human life.

Concerts won't get better

The Carolina Union Board of Directors' rejection of a proposal to establish a major attractions board is another sign that UNC's dismal record of attracting top-notch entertainment is in no danger of improving.

There's no doubt that the proposal to establish a board separate from the Activities Board solely to bring major concerts and the like to UNC was free of flaws. But questioning, as members of the board did, whether students would be willing to pay more money to see big-name entertainment is rather ludicrous. It's obvious from the throngs of UNC students who take in major attractions at places like Duke and Greensboro that concert-starved students here are willing to travel to see the entertainment this school will not bring them.

The last major rock-and-roll concerts here were two years ago when Fleetwood Mac and Stephen Stills played within a month of each other. Last year, Judy Collins and Jimmy Buffett were the biggest names to make it to Carmichael. In the last month alone, Crosby, Stills and Nash, Rod Stewart and Jethro Tull have appeared in Greensboro. Last year Duke students were treated to the Grateful Dead and George Benson, while two years ago Bruce Springsteen, Frank Zappa and Joni Mitchell played on the Duke campus. Duke has a major attractions committee under a separate budget from their activities board.

If the Board of Directors doesn't feel a major attractions committee is possible, it should come up with a better idea. Perhaps the proposal was not the best solution, but something must be done to boost the sparse concert bookings here.

The ill-fated proposal for a major attractions board served a vital purpose if it simply reminded the Union Board of Directors that, when it comes to concerts, UNC students would rather *not* be in Chapel Hill.



"GET DOWN HERE! YOU WANT TO LOOK LIKE THAT WHEN THE GUESTS ARRIVE?"

letters to the editor

Nuclear energy questioned

To the editor:

In regard to Julian Grajewski's contribution concerning nuclear technology ("Nuclear technology the 'leading edge' for social and economic progress," Nov. 28), I'd like to ask him where he got his information concerning fission, breeder and fusion research. It is not true that fusion power will be ready by the 1990s. The Russian "Tokamak" reactor has been able to achieve a sustained fusion reaction for only a fraction of a second. The fusion program will not be able to put a fusion reactor on the line by the year 2000. The first generator of laboratory experimentation has not given way to any government projects for integration into America's power grid.

Breeder technology does not totally prevent radioactive waste. There are some radioactive wastes produced from the breeder process that must be stored.

The Brown's Ferry incident proved conclusively that, with any luck at all (bad), 10,000 people could have died. In France, a terrorist was able to get through the security to the control room of a fission reactor before he was stopped. A terrorist trained in nuclear physics could very easily construct a bomb from plutonium waste materials or from the fuel that has supposedly been lost by the United States government.

As for recycling fuel, President Carter vetoed a recycling plant in South Carolina as too costly.

The nuclear research program at the present only offers a short-run solution to the world's energy needs. It is not clear, and the factor of human error makes the risks high. Mr. Grajewski offers an idealistic look at nuclear energy. Maybe some of these "bandied" phrases concerning American lifestyles are correct.

Bill Ridd
1310 Granville West

To the editor:

In response to Julian Grajewski's irresponsible piece of journalism on the threat of solar energy to economic and social progress:

- 1) His alleged facts of the matter were, at best, out in left field. His estimate for energy generated per unit area of a nuclear generator was off by a factor of a million.
- 2) He failed to explain the relationships between energy generated per unit area and safety, economics and morality.
- 3) His total reliance on governmental and (nuclear) industry "factoids" is absurd.

Your government wants you to be aware of the dangers of smoking. So it requires that a warning come with the product. Your government does not want you to be aware of the dangers of nuclear energy. It's the government's product.

Patrick J. Rafferty
School of Public Health

Free play isn't free

To the editor:

Every occasion I have had to be first on a court in Woollen, be it a Sunday afternoon or weekday after classes, I have had to deal with groups of men beginning basketball games or shooting baskets as if no one else was on the court. Being there for volleyball scrimmages, I will admit that, yes, if a net was up, I and my teammates would be using both sides of the court. It is impossible to play handball volleyball. I have met with varying degrees of success (even on courts reserved for women) in asking the men to leave.

Yesterday, as I and my teammates were on a court warming up for an intramural game, we were again interrupted by a basketball group whose spokesman smirkingly volunteered that "this is a free-play court and we have it until 4:45." After getting the security guard to investigate, we indeed found out that we could be bumped from the court. For free play does not mean free play; it means pick-up basketball. And since we were playing volleyball on a court with a net up (and, I infer, since we were women) we had to give up the space.

I have had the "free play" policy explained to me and I find it discriminatory in many ways: First and foremost, as mentioned above, free play does not mean what it says — it means pick-up basketball. Why is it that almost all the courts in Woollen are given over to that one sport? The women's volleyball team is going to the nationals too!

Secondly, it is pure and simple rudeness to move in on a court already occupied. It is inconceivable to me that anyone other than a University or intramural team can bump anyone from a court who was there first. When there is a net up and volleyball is going on, then it is absurd to have to relinquish the court with the net to basketballers.

And last, I have never been bumped from a court by a group of women — only men who refused to move no matter what. At that point, it always becomes a game of who can endure the longest playing v-ball and b-ball under less than normal conditions on one court.

I suppose it is because whoever is in charge of the gym space assumes that everyone plays basketball that the "free play" rule is like it is. Needless to say, v-ball is building a substantial following, and it would seem only fair that at least one court in the gym could be reserved for volleyball. But even more basically, it would seem that some people, by this time, would have learned a little courtesy and would remain off the courts that are already taken.

Dee Dee Small
Durham, N.C.

The *Daily Tar Heel* welcomes contributions and letters to the editor. Letters must be signed, typed on a 60-space line, double-spaced and must be accompanied by a return address. Letters chosen for publication are subject to editing.