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# The Daily Tar Heel

86th year of editorial freedom

## Labor goes AWOL

Big Labor, that recalcitrant foot soldier in the Carter anti-inflation army, is bucking orders from headquarters once again.

AFL-CIO President George Meany, after meeting Tuesday with his federation's executive council, blasted the second phase of the president's anti-inflation plan as unfair and unequitable to the nation's workers, and charged that the voluntary program, in reality, calls for a holding down of wages but not prices, interest rates, dividends and profit margins — inflation spurs on the boots of business.

The only way to ensure that everyone marches in the war against inflation, the AFL-CIO argues, is to institute mandatory controls on all factors that contribute to inflation — an idea loathsome to Jimmy Carter, who campaigned on a plank emphasizing his aversion to ceilings like those used during the Nixon administration.

The opposition from Meany and the AFL-CIO, which represents 106 unions and some 14 million workers, was, of course, politically predictable; Washington's consistent pressuring of unions to cut payroll requests, coupled with its sore lack of influence on the ranks of management, has been wearing on labor leaders for some time. And Meany, cornered by angry membership on the one side and 10 percent inflation on the other, could certainly benefit from a mandatory anti-inflation program that takes him out of the hot seat at the negotiating tables.

Still, the federation's attack on the program is worth consideration, for if phase two even remotely resembles the tragically haphazard phase one (as it appears it may), then labor will indeed be called upon to lead the fight — and suffer the greatest number of casualties. The unions don't even need to add that the workingman is least able to sacrifice. A successful battle against inflation, as Meany suggests, must be one waged on all fronts. Mandatory controls certainly provide that coverage and are preferable to Meany; they also impose, however, certain unsavory and drastic costs on an open economy. But a voluntary program that exacts equal sacrifice can also be successful in all the theaters of war without those costs.

Carter and his Council on Wage and Price Stability have received their warning. They need not jump for mandatory controls, but must strive to build an effective army of business and labor that treats its soldiers sternly but equally.

## Model students

Some kids took it on Tuesday. Some will take it today. A few won't take it at all, as their parents are keeping them home in protest.

After months of spirited debate, North Carolina is finally administering its first competency test. Across the state, public high school juniors are sharpening their pencils and prepping their psyches for a standardized exam in basic verbal and mathematical skills. It's been a long time coming, but it's been well worth the wait.

In an effort to make the State's public schools accountable to the education they are supposed to provide, and to ensure that each North Carolina child is given a sound education at all costs, Gov. Jim Hunt proposed and then fought for the approval of minimum-competency tests. Under Hunt's plan, any student who fails to pass the exam cannot be awarded a high school diploma; instead, the school will have to provide some form of remedial help or simply grant the student, if he or she chooses, a certificate acknowledging time spent at school.

Several groups still oppose the test, claiming that it will discriminate against minority students who do not have access to the better schools or whose cultural backgrounds are not conducive to a standard test. But a state government panel of six blacks, two whites and one Indian have found the exam culturally neutral, and we suspect that any lingering fears will be erased once the first results are in.

When the last heat of controversy subsides, the state might then realize that, while the students are taking the exams, the schools are also being tested. We hope they prove to be model students. For the good students, as many a teacher or professor will attest, are those who can learn and improve from even the simplest test.

## The Bottom Line

### Entertaining City Hall

All work and no play makes City Hall a dull place. That's what city employee Russell Liles thought, anyway. So Liles got the urge to stimulate a little excitement into an otherwise normal day at Raleigh's City Hall.

On Feb. 5, 1977 (you can look it up), Liles, an emergency radio dispatcher, arranged to show a five-minute silent skin flick to his fellow workers in the City Hall communications room. Needless to say, the word got out, the projector was unplugged and the City of Raleigh had an opening for an emergency radio dispatcher.

The story might have ended right here if Liles hadn't appealed his dismissal. After a recommendation from Superior Court Judge Marsh McLelland, the Raleigh Civil Service Commission overturned its decision to fire the dispatcher, and now it's only a matter of figuring out how much back pay Liles should receive before he's reinstated.

It could be surmised that the CSC had to retrace its steps on their action toward Liles because of a technicality. The commission, it seemed, released Liles due to a violation of city rules of personal conduct. But those rules merely prohibit "participation in any action that would in any way seriously disrupt or disturb the normal operation" of the office.

Apparently, Liles' co-workers were neither disrupted nor disturbed by the film. And Commission Chairperson Michael Boyd agreed that while personally he looks unfavorably upon skin flicks, "the

action of showing a pornographic film does not create a disruption or a disturbance."

So Liles will soon presumably be back at City Hall, thinking twice the next time he comes up with an idea to put a little life into local government.

### If you box, don't drive...

Former world heavyweight boxing champion Leon Spinks, try as he might, just can't seem to stay clear of trouble.

You all remember his difficulties after he won the title from Muhammad Ali last February—various traffic violations, drug charges, marital problems. Well, now his new playtoys—expensive cars—are his bane.

A few weeks ago Spinks drove his brand new \$13,000 silver Corvette through a fence two days after he bought the car. He told police he lost control of the auto because he wasn't used to driving it. Spinks was charged with failure to control a motor vehicle and freed on \$50 bond. Then his 1978 Cadillac was stolen.

And last Saturday Spinks went cruising again in the 'Vette, only to crash into a car while trying to avoid another one which had pulled in front of him. No charges here, though.

Spinks did get some good news about his cars, however. On Sunday, police in East Cleveland, Ohio, reported they found the stolen Cadillac.

We suspect that the boxing gloves inhibited Spinks' gear shifting, so the recovery of the automatic-transmission Cadillac can be only a blessing.

And that's the bottom line.

# Ingram myth can't hold up under scrutiny

By BRYAN WIRWICZ

As the U.S. Senate race between Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., and state Insurance Commissioner John Ingram draws to a close, Ingram and his backers urge voters to examine the commissioner's record to see how much he has accomplished for the people of North Carolina in the five and a half years since he became insurance commissioner. An examination of the Ingram record, the insurance commissioner and his supporters argue, will show Ingram effectively saved North Carolinians millions of dollars in insurance rate increase requests the commissioner opposed.

As a conscientious voter, I did examine the Ingram record as insurance commissioner. What I found appalled me.

Ingram and his supporters argue that Sen. Helms is more interested in pursuing ideological battles than in representing the people of North Carolina. Ingram and his followers say that he is an effective leader who has fought and beaten insurance companies, and who can battle and defeat special interests in Washington, D.C. Let's look at the record.

The *News and Observer* reported on Sept. 2, 1976, that the state Court of Appeals voted unanimously to allow a 16 percent increase in home owners insurance rates sought by several N.C. insurance companies. The court ruled the rate increase was justified because of Ingram's "persistent procrastination, unfairness and partisan procedures and decisions." The court criticized Ingram for not fulfilling his "statutory duties" of fixing fair and reasonable rates for insurance companies and ruled the increase would remain in effect until Ingram accepted his responsibilities.

The aforementioned court decision is not unique, however. The Feb. 19, 1978, *Charlotte Observer* reported that from 1973 to 1977, the insurance commissioner lost 10 of 11 major insurance battles in the state Court of Appeals. Ingram's sole

victory involved a personnel matter, not a rate increase request. During the same time, eight insurance matters were decided by the state Supreme Court; Ingram lost in seven of the eight cases. In his only victory, Ingram allied himself with the insurance industry in attacking one individual company's policies. "Repeatedly, the courts said Ingram exceeded his authority, failed to follow state statutes or didn't have facts to support his decisions. Ingram generally ignores specific questions about those court upsets," the *Observer* reported.

Obviously, there can be no exact dollar figure attached to Ingram's futile, ill-conceived and arbitrary court battles with the insurance industry. However, knowing that judges, insurance company attorneys, insurance department personnel and justice department attorneys must all be paid, one wonders whether or not Ingram has saved North Carolinians even one thin dime during his five and a half years as insurance commissioner.

Part of the explanation for Ingram's unenviable record of failure in the courts might be attributed to the quality of his key staff aides, his top deputies in the insurance department. The *Observer* reports those top aides include a former Asheville newspaper reporter, a former Raleigh television reporter, Ingram's former minister and an Ingram campaign aide formerly employed at the legislature.

Indeed, the 1977 North Carolina General Assembly was so distressed at the Ingram record that it stripped him of most of his rate-setting powers. According to the Sept. 14, 1977, *News and Observer*, the legislature acted with the tacit approval of Gov. Jim Hunt who, although he could have altered the outcome through his network of friendships in the legislature, did nothing to support the commissioner. Apparently Jim Hunt, too, grew tired of Ingram shouting "special interests" whenever his own shortcomings were exposed. In recent days we have read with



Hunt and Ingram...

"...Apparently Jim Hunt, too, grew tired of Ingram shouting 'special interests' whenever his own shortcomings were exposed."

interest that when, in 1976, Ingram sold his Asheville home and purchased a home in Raleigh, he arranged a complex property transfer transaction that allowed him to avoid paying potentially substantial capital gains taxes. Ingram is quick to point out the deal was legal; indeed, the deal was legal in the strictest interpretation of the legal code. But, as one deputy state attorney general said, it "smells." One recent Ingram campaign advertisement stated Ingram believes "the super-rich must pay their share (of taxes) to shift the burden off the working middle class." I submit that if Ingram had paid the taxes in 1976 that the spirit of the capital gains tax

law required him to pay, the middle class' tax burden would have been reduced.

The insurance commissioner says he wants voters to examine his record before deciding for whom to vote on Nov. 7. I, too, hope voters examine the Ingram record. If they do, they will see a record of failure. They will see a record of much talk and no action. And they will see a record of a double standard or morality. They will see why John Ingram does not merit their support on Nov. 7.

Bryan Wirwicz is a senior journalism and political science major from Raleigh.

## Letters to the editor

# No violation meant in Smyth campus mailing

To the editor:

On behalf of the UNC College Republicans, I would like to present our side of the controversy surrounding our use of campus mail for a political mailing.

On Monday, Oct. 30, Richard Smyth's wife took a box of letters to the campus mail office. The letters were in support of Smyth, were sent to UNC faculty and were signed by me.

Mrs. Smyth checked with the clerk on duty about sending the letter. He opened one, read it himself, and checked with her to make sure I was a student and College Republicans was a campus organization. He then OK'd the mailing.

There was no intent either on the part of College Republicans or Smyth to violate any laws. If we had had any idea of any law prohibiting this action, we certainly would not have done it.

We apologize to the UNC administration for any trouble this may have caused.

Jody Boyce, chairperson  
UNC College Republicans

### Editorial blast

To the editor:

How dare you presume to judge who needs peace and who does not? I refer to your editorial ("Sharing the prize," *DTH*, Oct. 30). It is very easy for safe and secure Americans to spout words like "intransigence" and "concessions" while people halfway around the globe are the ones who have to cope with the practical business of a working peace agreement.

Both Sadat and Begin have done things I do not like and do not understand. Yet while Sadat's major "concession" seems to have been his awakening to the fact that Israel does exist, which the world noticed in 1948, his action is courageous, given the political climate of the other Arab states. The fact that there are negotiations at all is promising. Begin and Sadat are extremely intelligent individuals who, I assume, grasp the political situation in the Middle East far better than you or I, and will act ultimately in the interest of peace for all.

But for you to decide the value of peace—if such a sacred thing can be measured—is outrageous. When you say "peace is worth considerably more to Egypt than to Israel," are you also saying that some lives are worth less than others? A peace treaty may be a political objective, but peace itself is a profound human goal that is the common aim of Israel and Egypt and their citizens. Who are you to say who needs it more than others? Not only is your attitude devoid of human understanding, it lacks intelligence. Your editorial bespeaks an ignorant arrogance that is as dangerous as it is ill-founded.

Jane S. Gabin  
Department of English

### And again

To the editor:

I would like to take objection to the views stated in your editorial ("Sharing the prize," *DTH*, Oct. 30) concerning the illegitimacy of Begin and Sadat's joint receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize. As an informed follower of their peace process, the arguments you printed, that

"Sadat has been doing most of the peacemaking this year" appears to me to be absurd at best. Before you again repeat views that slander either Mr. Begin or Israel, please consider but a few of the fallacies upon which these erroneous opinions are based.

Initially you mistakenly imply that Sadat's visit to Jerusalem was some sort of magnanimous stride toward peace. I hardly believe acceptance of an invitation to talk to one who has requested such a dialogue for 30 years to be generous or unprecedented. Israel's constitution deservedly received no fanfare in 1948 when it called for direct negotiations with Arab neighbors, as an inherent principle of the country. The trip to Jerusalem was but a sign that Sadat had finally reached Israel's level of maturity in dealing with the Middle East conflict. Sadat didn't stride forward, he simply joined Begin, "got off his butt" and stood up.

The *DTH's* inferences that Sadat's concessions are much greater than Israel's seems equally ridiculous. Israel is returning the entire Sinai to Egypt, will concede half her geographic area and most valuable natural resources. Begin returned a land which has been used by modern Egypt almost exclusively for the purpose of liquidating Israel. Once already, in 1956, Israel made this concession, and received the near suffocation of Egypt's '67 aggression. Beyond this, to whom is Israel returning Sinai? Peace champion Sadat has other achievements in life; among them a career as a World War II Nazi-collaborator and 1973 advocate and architect of Israel's annihilation. Thus I would perceive Begin's concessions to be courageous if not foolhardy, and unlike

the observers you cite, would categorize him a "serious peace seeker."

I also object to the praise you cite of Sadat's purported sacrifices. It appears that Egypt has duped not only the *Tar Heel* but many Americans on this subject. When I look at Egypt after the accords I see that they will not have lost any Saudi Arabian or American monetary aid. Sadat will not have lost his people's support or any of his dictatorial powers, and he certainly will not have lost any land. I see nothing significant about a few radical Arab leaders' renewed hate for him, in comparison to Begin's loss of support from lifelong friends and Likud party members.

The American media has somehow bought Mr. Sadat's self-proclaimed image as a peacemaker. It is my conjecture, however, that on the basis of tangible concessions, Sadat has much less right to such a reputation than Begin. I do not infer that Sadat is undeserving of the Peace Prize (it takes two to treat), but to say that to suggest that Begin has not as seriously pursued peace is simply irresponsible nonsense. Menachem Begin does not deserve the abuse our press has given him, for when the actual concessions made at Camp David are measured, he emerges as the truer catalyst for peace in the Middle East.

Al Rosenthal  
Tau Epsilon Phi

### GOP actually going down

To the editor:

I have enjoyed reading Kathy Curry's series of articles and columns about Orange County politics. She omits one of

the most crucial pieces of data available, however—namely, party registration of new voters. Despite her assertions that the local GOP has nowhere to go but up, the hard facts indicate it is actually going down.

Data from the Orange County Board of Elections show that of the several thousand new voters who have signed up in Orange County in the last six months, GOP registration is lower than it has ever been. Seventy-nine percent of the new voters are Democrats, 11 percent are Republican and 10 percent are unaffiliated. Even during Watergate, new GOP registration in Orange was higher, and it was about 20 percent during the 1972 fall elections, when Helms got beaten by a 5-to-1 margin in Chapel Hill.

Gerry Cohen

### Embarrassing boom

To the editor:

In response to the celebration of the T&A boom ("One man's celebration of the T&A boom," *DTH*, Oct. 26), I would just like to say—again—that we're still here, all those people who would rather not read about a tits and ass boom. Tits and ass has been celebrated ever since there was any, and that's fine; but TV is cartooning, not celebrating, them. I have enough trouble dealing with this steak and car nation without hearing that now it's undergoing a tits and ass boom. Let's not make America any more embarrassing than it already is.

Lynette Iezzoni  
West Rosemary Street.

