

CONGRESSIONAL COUNTDOWN '90

Helms' Senate duties limit campaign efforts

By WENDY BOUNDS
Staff Writer

After remaining in Washington to wrestle with the budget crisis, U.S. Sen. Jesse Helms will base his final campaign efforts on Congress' adjournment, campaign officials say.

But how will the senator, whose lack of public appearances contrasts sharply with his opponent's efforts, use the remaining days to compensate for his absence?

Helms will try to get to as many places in the state as possible, said Beth Burrus, his campaign manager.

"Our schedule is tentative. Due to the fact that the Senate is in session, we have to wait and see when Sen. Helms can come home," she said in a written correspondence.

Helms' opponent, Harvey Gantt, has repeatedly challenged Helms to a public debate and asked the senator to campaign with him. Helms has refused these offers.

"Sen. Helms has said he does not want to be a part of a dog-and-pony show," Burrus said.

Interviews with both U.S. Senate candidates were scheduled to air on N.C. Public Television tonight at 7:30 p.m. Helms, however, will not be interviewed, Lisa Wilson, N.C. Public Television official, said Tuesday.

A write-in candidate from Greensboro, Richard Stuart, is also scheduled to appear in an interview.

Helms' support is wide-ranging, Burrus said, and the senator will win votes from every kind of group. Helms' main challenge will be to get his message out to voters, she said.

"(Helms' message) is distorted by Mr. Gantt and the liberal major daily papers," Burrus said. "One of Mr. Gantt's biggest assets is the millions of dollars worth of free press he receives every day from the major daily papers."

President Bush campaigned twice for Helms, but the senator declined a third offer after "tentative discussion with the White House," Burrus said.

At a recent fund raiser, Helms said his refusal of the president's offer stemmed from Bush's decision to raise taxes after promising voters he would not.



Jesse Helms

Gantt to direct focus to major urban areas

By WENDY BOUNDS
Staff Writer

During the final leg of his race to the Senate finish line, Harvey Gantt will shift his campaign focus to the major media and to the urban areas because of time constraints, staff members say.

But this concentration does not mean Gantt will neglect the less-populated areas of the state, said David Wofford, Gantt's deputy press secretary.

"We consider every part of the state winnable and have campaigned everywhere throughout the race," Wofford said.

Helms' lack of visibility cannot be blamed solely on his congressional obligations in Washington, Wofford said. During the August recess, Helms did little campaigning, he said.

"We are not questioning his duties, and yet these duties don't stop him from accepting our challenge for a debate," Wofford said. "Why is Helms afraid to debate Harvey Gantt?"

Helms has repeatedly refused to either campaign with or debate with Gantt.

"We think a candidate should be accessible, not hiding behind 30-second ads," Wofford said.

Gantt will visit college campuses around the state and is scheduled to appear at UNC-Charlotte today. He will visit Lenoir-Rhyne College in Hickory Friday and travel to Greenville to speak at East Carolina University in the next two weeks.

Gantt spoke at UNC-CH on Monday, Oct. 15, to a crowd of almost 3,500 students. The rally was very successful, Wofford said.

"Students' votes are crucial, and they understand as well as anyone the need for education," Wofford said.

Gantt's biggest struggle will come from his efforts to keep the campaign focused on the issues that really matter, Wofford said.

"It's a struggle we've been winning," he said.

Despite speculation that Gantt's popularity is minimal in his hometown of Charlotte, Wofford predicts Gantt will be extremely strong in the city.

"You only have to walk around in the city to find out how popular he is."



Harvey Gantt

Price visits campuses during final 2 weeks

By WENDY BOUNDS
Staff Writer

Hoping to resume his regular campaign strategy should Congress adjourn by the end of the week, Rep. David Price, D-N.C. will visit college campuses, including UNC, as part of his final re-election efforts.

Price is scheduled to rally at UNC in the Pit at 1:00 p.m., Oct. 30. He is tentatively scheduled to speak to UNC's Young Democrats. Visits to N.C. State on Oct. 31 and Shaw University or St. Augustine's College in Raleigh on Nov. 2 are also scheduled.

WCHL radio and The Chapel Hill Newspaper tried to schedule a debate between Price and his challenger, John Carrington, on Oct. 22 and Oct. 30 respectively, said Rachael Perry, Price's press secretary. Both groups called back to say Carrington had canceled, she said.

A joint public appearance was scheduled for Oct. 21 by B'nai B'rith, a Jewish activist organization. There was discussion about which candidate would speak last. B'nai B'rith called Price's headquarters to say they had held a coin toss with Carrington and because he had won, he would be allowed to speak last, Perry said.

Price agreed to speak first, and Carrington canceled the next day, Perry said.

"If (Carrington's) schedule is too busy to stand up to the issues for voters of the 4th district, then that says a lot about his campaign," Perry said. "He would rather hide behind 30-second commercials."

Although his support is widespread and includes moderate Republicans, Price does not expect to win the votes of extreme right-wing conservatives.

Price's most difficult struggle will be the search for campaign funds. The Federal Elections Committee reported last week that Carrington has spent a total of \$609,000 since the beginning of his campaign, Perry said. A little more than \$550,000 of this figure has come from Carrington's own money.

After being forced to cancel and reschedule numerous events because of his congressional duties, Price will continue to run a grass-roots campaign once he is home in North Carolina. He will focus on his accomplishments in the areas of education, consumer protection and housing, Perry said.



David Price

Carrington wraps up with added publicity

By WENDY BOUNDS
Staff Writer

With a final flurry of paid political advertisements, television commercials and personal appearances, John Carrington will soon wrap up his campaign to unseat incumbent Rep. David Price, D-N.C.

"We've spread our campaign efforts over the entire district," said John Evans, Carrington's assistant.

Carrington's paid political advertisements, which appear twice a week in The (Raleigh) News & Observer and other district newspapers, have confronted such issues as free congressional mail privileges, political action committee (PAC) campaign contributions and the congressional pay hike.

Some people have argued that the lengthy ads should be shortened, Evans said.

"But we did them for people who want to educate themselves," Evans said.

New advertisements will continue to appear in the final weeks of the campaign.

During the next few days, Carrington will make new television commercials and have an interview with The Chapel Hill Newspaper's editorial board. He will travel to Randolph county on Saturday to campaign with NASCAR driver Richard Petty, his campaign chairman, Evans said.

Carrington's biggest struggle is to get his message about the deficit and national debt across to voters, Evans said. Carrington has stressed the need for deficit reduction above most other campaign issues.

Although two debates and a public appearance were scheduled to include both Carrington and Price, none ever took place.

Carrington wanted to debate Price before Oct. 15, but Price refused, Evans said.

"We reluctantly tried for a later date," Evans said. "But Price said no, and then we were all booked up."

When asked what is the biggest Price asset Carrington must combat, Evans said, "You tell me. We have a hard time finding one."

Evans pointed to Price's use of the congressional mailing privilege and acceptance of PAC money as negative actions in the incumbent's last two terms. Carrington has said he would not engage in either activity if elected.



John Carrington

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Republican strategy works minus Bush endorsements

From Associated Press reports

WASHINGTON — Doves of Republican candidates are shunning television ads of themselves with President Bush, and they've got their reasons.

They couldn't get to the White House for a taping. The quality of the footage is bad. They don't have money to buy the TV time.

Endorsements don't work in their race.

And, well, maybe it's not such a good idea to latch onto a guy whose ratings are slipping. Who promoted a wildly unpopular budget plan. Who's part of the Washington establishment that this year's candidates love to hate.

"If something is radioactive, your natural inclination is to stay away from it," said Craig Tufty, a spokesman for Rep. Fred Grandy, R-Iowa. Is there a

Bush endorsement in Grandy's future? "We don't have one," said Tufty, "and we don't plan on getting one."

Bush has taped about 100 endorsement spots for Republican House, Senate and gubernatorial candidates. But an Associated Press spot check of campaigns across the country indicates few are finding their way onto the airwaves.

Many candidates seem to be taking their cue from freshman Rep. Jim McCrery of Louisiana. He scrapped plans to show his ad with Bush before the state's unique open primary on Oct. 6. Instead, he ran ads against Bush's budget compromise.

McCrery coasted to re-election 10 points ahead of a Democrat who had been expected to give him trouble, and a winning strategy was born.

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