

# The News - Journal



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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1977

## Reshaping steel

President Carter is under mounting pressure to do something about the deepening crisis in the U.S. steel industry. American steelmakers, like their counterparts around the world, have hit upon hard times, brought on largely by trading imbalances that have left more steel being produced than present world markets can use. Swamped by a tide of low-priced imported steel from Japan (where labor is cheaper) and Europe, sinking deeper and deeper into the red, and left with too many aging, outdated plants, the U.S. industry has been forced to some severe belt-tightening. Plant closings have brought total industry layoffs thus far to 18,000.

More layoffs and plant closings appear unavoidable even if, as industry leaders are urging, President Carter has a change of heart and moves to impose restrictions on steel imports. American steelmakers complain that imports are being "dumped" in the United States at lower prices than Japanese and European firms are getting in their own countries.

But President Carter thus far has wisely resisted the pressure to hike tariffs or build other long-term trading barriers. Such an action would run contrary to the U.S. commitment to freer trade and almost certainly would prompt retaliations abroad, moves that could do considerable harm to other segments of the U.S. economy so heavily dependent on selling their products abroad.

A new White House study calls "dumping" only a temporary problem and faults the U.S. industry itself for not being better able to compete with foreign steelmakers. It cites high wage settlements and dramatic increases in the cost of steel-making materials as major factors in the U.S. industry's decline.

However, temporary import cutbacks, such as the U.S. has negotiated with respect to color TV sets and shoes, could provide some short-term relief and give industry and government breathing time to tackle the highly complex long-range problems confronting the industry -- problems the private and governmental sectors must face jointly. Clearly the time has come to abandon the traditional adversary relationship that has existed between Washington and Big Steel, dating back to President Kennedy's confrontations with the industry in the early 1960s. Steelmakers too frequently encounter seemingly contradictory policies by such diverse agencies as the Environmental Protection Agency, which rightly enforces strict pollution standards, the Labor Department, which monitors health and safety standards, the Justice Department, which enforces antitrust laws, and other federal regulators. A planned coordination of government policies would do much to help ease the strained relations with Washington and should be a first step in any program to rescue the sagging industry.

One major proposal Congress and the Carter administration should follow through on is: change the tax laws to encourage greater investment in the steel industry, suffering from lack of capital. The President has hinted that his forthcoming tax reform package will include such investment incentives for steel and other heavy industry. Another encouraging approach already being tried is the creation of a new international body to monitor steel trade and to develop cooperative solutions to world-wide problems.

But even if these suggested government initiatives are taken, American steelmakers must face up to the unpleasant fact that many of their plants are old and outdated and should be closed; those facilities that remain will need to be upgraded and expanded, and further layoffs seem inevitable. A smaller, more efficient, more competitive industry should emerge -- one better prepared to cope with the now superior technology, cheaper labor, and government-subsidized industries abroad.

The U.S. Labor Department already has provided some assistance to steelworkers left without jobs; further efforts should be made to retrain those suffering from loss of jobs. The workers, like the steel industry itself, will need help in reshaping their lives to fit the mold of a changing world. *Christian Science Monitor*

## Browsing in the files of The News-Journal

### 25 years ago

Thursday, October 16, 1952

Miss Mary Ann Smoak, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R.A. Smoak of Ashley Heights, has been chosen by the student body at Montreat College to reign of May Queen in the 1953 May Day festivities.

### 15 years ago

Thursday, October 18, 1962

Albert Roland Currie of Antioch passed away Monday night at Veterans Hospital in Fayetteville after two years of declining health. He was 73.

Dr. Julian Lake preached to capacity congregations in the Raeford Methodist Church on the first three nights of the Union Revival services being conducted there this week.

A 70-yard punt return behind a wall of scowling blockers took halfback Eddie Baker into the end zone for the first Raeford TD that crushed the spirit of a fighting 2-A Rohanen team.

From Poole's Medley:  
I delight in church and Sunday School attendance. I have been going almost 94 years, and I enjoy it equally as well now as I did the time I first squaled in church.

A capacity crowd of more than 250 packed into the Hoke High cafeteria Monday night for the United Fund's Kickoff banquet. Featured speaker was Col. R.B. Lewis.

'Honor that it is, I'm thinkin' I'd like to swap my top priorityship for a job'



Cartoonist Le Pelley is on vacation

by Marty Vega

## Pay Attention Now

Some of you may have seen the item in last week's paper concerning the Young Democrats Club.

Some of you may not have seen it.

Some of you may not care if you saw it or not. You are the ones to pay attention now.

It seems we may have the nucleus for starting up a Young Republican Club. An informal organizational meeting was held out at the other restaurant one day last week.

The planners at this meeting could foresee only one obstacle. We had tentatively set the age limit for membership at 46 so as not to exclude J.H. Blue Jr. when a change had to be made. Another fellow wandered over and expressed interest in membership so the age limit had to be upped to 49. At this writing, there it remains.

However, this is still subject to change. If we can't get enough, well, we can have a volleyball team instead. A Republican one.

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Bob Gentry came by the office Monday morning to give us a news announcement about the upcoming circus.

## Letters To The Editor

To the Editor:

In a recent issue of *Road Test* magazine, engineering editor Don Fuller invited automobile enthusiasts Brock Adams, Joan Claybrook, Ralph Nader, Clarence Ditlow II, William Haddon, Jr. and Archie R. Roe to put up or shut up. They refused to "put up" and it is highly doubtful that they will "shut up."

The invitation called upon each to drive an auto equipped with their much heralded, but still unproven, air bag into a wall at a speed of thirty miles per hour.

Conditions laid down by Fuller included the absence of crash helmets, the removal of brake pedals to insure against last minute chickening out, and closed windows which would provide ideal conditions to learn whether the explosive bang of the air bag will burst ear drums, as is widely suspected. Each participant would also be expected to pony up \$300, the approximate cost to consumers for the air bag that no one wants.

Fuller himself would also participate -- but in a car equipped with a seat belt and a shoulder harness.

Ditlow, director of the Naderite Center for Auto Safety, accepted the invitation but wanted to have his own experts install the bag. He obviously had no faith in standard autoworker performance. Haddon, of the Institute for Highway Safety declined. Secretary of Transportation Adams, National Highway Traffic Safety Administrator Claybrook, Allstate Insurance Company Chairman Roe and big government advocate Nader all refused comment.

Representative Bud Shuster has obtained over 160 cosponsors to House Concurrent Resolution 273 which would cancel Secretary Brock Adams' mandatory air bag order. Contact our Representative in Congress, Charlie Rose, and ask him to co-sponsor H.C.R. 273 which would cancel the mandatory air bag order.

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Betty Rose  
Wilmington, N.C.

Bob had all of the facts written down as to the time and date and place and all. From the sound of the information given it should be a very enjoyable performance for people of all ages. In fact, we plan to attend as we love to see wild animals like lions and tigers and elephants and monkeys.

But Bob, as conscientious as he is, didn't quite have all of the information.

Since the circus is to be on the Armory grounds, we were concerned about who would be in charge of cleaning up after all those big animals.

Bob said he didn't know the answer, but that he was concerned, too. He did say one or two of the reporters here would surely have enough experience in that field to do the job right.

## Puppy Creek Philosopher

Dear editor:

Some outfit in Washington is trying to trap me but I'm not going to fall for it. I'll explain further along.

As you know, there's a great hue and cry these days about the meaninglessness of a high school diploma.

Some people are saying the public schools all over the country have fallen down in their duties, that kids are coming out of high school with a diploma in their hand although they can't read and write.

"Schools used to be better than that," the critics are saying. "Why, when we went to school a high school diploma meant something."

There's truth in this, of course, but something has come up that makes me wonder just how good an education the older generation really got in high school.

It's the big to-do over the Panama Canal Treaty. Some Senators and Congressmen say it gives the U.S. the right forever to use the canal ahead of everybody else and to defend it against all enemies. Others say no it doesn't.

Even the men who negotiated the treaty now disagree on what it says, the American negotiators saying it says one thing, the Panamanian negotiators saying it says another.

There you have it. Middle-aged and older Senators and Congressmen and diplomats and officials from both countries are having trouble reading the treaty, yet every one of them has a high school diploma.

So, when that outfit in Washington sent me a copy of the canal treaty I caught on immediately to what they were up to. It's none of their business whether I have a high school diploma or what school I got it from.

A copy of the treaty is here on my desk, if you'd like to test your education, Editor Paul Dickson.

Yours faithfully,  
J.A.



## Report To The People

by Senator Robert Morgan

A proposal to give persons over 62 years of age lower electricity rates for a portion of the current they use was offered in the Senate last week.

Looked at on its face, it seemed a benevolent and compassionate idea, but after examining it closely, I could not support it, although it received a majority vote in the Senate.

Specifically, the amendment to the Public Utilities Policy Act afforded a "subsistence quantity" of electricity at the lowest rate the utility charges any customer. This means enough electricity to heat and light a home, and to cook.

There is no doubt the idea is politically attractive. It has instant appeal to senior citizens who have seen utility bills go higher and higher in recent years, along with other goods and services they require. And it may be that after the proposal is studied thoroughly that it could be put into effect in some form to help elderly people on fixed incomes better cope with higher power costs. But the proposal was made with little prior scrutiny and it would have some very undesirable consequences if it should be come law.

It must be understood that the utilities are not going to be paying for this lower rate to senior citizens. The subsidy, and that is what it really is, would be paid by an increase in rates to consumers who are under 62 years of age.

There is no income limitation in the measure, which means that the retired president of a bank or a life insurance company would be eligible for the low rates. And the difference in the rates given affluent seniors would be paid, in part, by persons whose incomes are at the poverty level. There can't be

anything equitable about that.

I realize that many senior citizens are having a desperate fight to pay utility bills and obtain the bare necessities, and no one would deny them all reasonable help. But I think the time has come when the Federal Government must stop giving to one group of citizens at the direct expense of another.

These people who would be faced with higher electricity costs are the same people who are confronted with higher Social Security taxes from their pay checks and, in reality, their higher power bills would be an extension of those taxes. It is important to realize that in the coming decades, it is inevitable for a larger and larger percentage of the population to be at or near retirement age -- about 40 percent in a few years. All would qualify, under this measure.

Many state and local governments have provided for these "lifeline rates" as they are called, which give relief from utility bills to those in need. I think that is fine and I think that is the place to do it. I cannot, however, see that a federal mandate, which would have far reaching effects on every state and local regulatory board, could be implemented without confusion and in some cases, chaos.

For example, in many states -- including North Carolina -- in which there has been a concerted effort to attract industry and provide jobs, the lowest electric rate is actually below cost. The Federal Government would be mandating that this special rate be given all those over 62, regardless of income.

As attractive - sounding as this bill was, I could not support something which was well - intended, but ill - considered.

## CLIFF BLUE . . .

## People & Issues



STRAWS IN THE WIND... Town Officials in Lillington endorsed the State Bond Issue for \$300,000,000 in Highway Bonds and \$230,000,000 for Clean Water Bonds.

The Johnston County Democratic Executive Committee last week on a 15 to 14 vote rejected a proposal to support the two bond issues and five proposed constitutional amendments at a meeting in Smithfield. Twenty-four of the county's twenty-nine precincts were represented at the meeting.

In Moore County the Sandhills Area Chamber of Commerce also endorsed both bond issues.

Governor Holshouser has a hunch that the succession bill for Tar Heel governors will probably win since no formidable organized opposition has surfaced thus far.

Mayor Beth Finch won re-election with a lop-sided vote on October 13th.

Emmanuel Douglass, a black member of the Southern Pines city council and mayor-pro-temore led the ticket in the primary held last week with Mrs. Hope Brogden coming in second. For awhile it was customary for the vote leader in Southern Pines City Council to be named mayor, but two years ago Mrs. Sara Hodgkins, now Director of the N.C. Cultural Resources Department was top person but failed to be named mayor.

MINIMUM WAGE VOTE...An issue in Congress over which many Tar Heel people became concerned was the proposed sub-minimum wage for youths under 19 for their first six months employment.

The Labor Unions opposed the sub-minimum wage proposal for young people. Many people felt that the new law applying to all people and all ages would increase the unemployment among the young in particular. However the Labor Unions opposed the differential. In the congressional vote Tar Heel congressmen voting for the sub-minimum wage were Congressmen Broyhill, Fountain, Hefner, Jones, Martin and Neal. Voting with the Labor Unions were Whitely, Andrews, Gudger, Preyer and Rose.

COY PRIVETTE...The Rev. Coy Privette in opposing Federal grants to Wake Forest College was not only speaking the sentiment of many Baptists across the State but also the sentiment of many other church members.

Out-stretched hands toward Washington seem to have forgotten the separation of religious institu-

tions from government.

Back within the memory of living man, church schools, colleges and universities prided their independence and held fast to the principle of separation of church and state. This is what Coy Privette has been trying to do, but frankly we are afraid that the standards of the church institutions so far as the teachings of the Bible are concerned is but little different from that in secular institutions.

TIMELY QUESTION...The Laurinburg Exchange asks this timely question in an editorial. "If the intent of congressmen is to add the Social Security plan to pension plans already in existence among government workers -- and this has been implied -- the public also has a right to ask why. Why should the over-taxed Social Security system be further over taxed in order to provide retirement luxury for those who are already being accommodated better than workers in private industry."

VACCINATION...While North Carolina has a protected vaccinated level of an estimated 84% among the one to four year old children, which leaves some 55,000 children in this age group without adequate protection. Governor Hunt has announced the start of a special effort to protect all children in North Carolina from the most serious childhood diseases -- polio, mumps, measles, rubella (German Measles), whooping cough, and tetanus.

