

# Editorials

## Sales tax could help

During the next few weeks, members of the Hoke County Commission will be considering a new one-half cent sales tax proposal. If implemented, the tax is designed to dump funds into capital improvements for the schools as well as bolster general revenues for both Hoke County and Raeford.

Money collected here from the sales tax increase will be pooled with funds taken in by other North Carolina counties who are in the program. Those dollars will be divided among each of the participating counties on a basis of population.

For a small county like Hoke that could mean that we will receive more tax money than was paid by county residents.

Recent estimates by the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners has pegged Hoke's share for the eight months following October 1 at \$311,400. Forty percent of that money would be earmarked for school buildings. Another portion would go to the City of Raeford, and some of that money would have to be used for sewer and water improvements.

Although we are generally opposed to any tax increases, this new sales tax seems to be a fair deal for Hoke residents.

In addition to school improvements and city water and sewer expansions, the extra revenue could allow the county to fund projects like an ambulance service or countywide water system without having to raise property taxes. These services are needed in a growing Hoke County.

However, it would be unfortunate if the money is not used to move Hoke forward and is dumped into the general fund just to keep the county going at its present pace.

We encourage the Hoke County Commissioners to pass the new sales tax and implement it by October 1.

## Voters being cheated by payoffs of leaders

Testimony in the federal extortion trial of state Sen. R.C. Soles Jr. last week aired a festering illness which has permeated the American election system for many years.

It is an illness, which is costing taxpayers dollars, cheating voters of their Constitutional rights and forcing politicians to violate laws and principles they have sworn to uphold.

It is an illness which makes hypocrites out of most elected officials and criminals out of some.

In the South, they call the illness "providing gas money to haul voters." In the Northeast, it's called "vote buying." Throughout most of the country, it's condoned.

It is part of the "game" to get elected. "It's just politics."

In recent federal investigations in North and South Carolina, testimony has revealed that thousands of dollars in cash are forced

over to primarily black "community" leaders "to get out the vote." One witness in the Soles' case testified that he handled \$10,000 in cash to get black community leaders to "support the ticket," and other disclosures have revealed more than \$100,000 dumped into Congressional races allegedly used for "hauling voters." That's a lot of gas money.

For too long candidates have held to the Machiavellian philosophy that the ends justify the means. Cash has been used to direct the ballots of weak-willed and uninformed voters with the rationale that the "best man" was being elected.

There is also the argument that some of the funds have even gone for worthwhile community projects like building churches, however, there is stronger evidence that most of the cash has gone to line the pockets of a few individuals. All of it has gone to short-change voters.

For those that receive the money, elections are a racket. For most politicians, paying the money is rationalized as a fact of life.

Federal investigators can continue to wear disguises and arrest hordes of elected officials, and Jesse Jackson can march all over the nation to register voters, but their efforts will do little to change the system until the flow of under-the-table money stops.

Until candidates develop a code of ethics and enforce it, and until black voters stop going to the polls like sheep enslaved by corrupt leaders, the illness will continue.

Taxpayers will continue to fund federal probes and lengthy trials, politicians will continue to rationalize payments, and the Constitution of the United States will become a little more meaningless.

### CLIFF BLUE . . .

## People & Issues

**THIS IS THE IRS . . .** In the Concord (North Carolina) daily, the AP had this brief article: Gov. George C. Wallace and Democratic presidential hopeful John Glenn were trading compliments in the governor's Capitol office when the telephone rang.

Glenn, 62, was in mid-sentence and Wallace, ever the Southern gentleman didn't want to interrupt, after all, the room was filled with supporters.

So Wallace, 63, quietly picked up the phone to stop it from ringing. Then, to make sure the caller would not call back, he spoke into the receiver, "This is the IRS" and hung up!

**"SNOW HOLDING"** . . . It was interesting to note that Lewis R. "Snow" Holding, chairman of the First Citizens Bank and Trust Co., and a leader in the Democrat Party, appears to be a spokesman for the Helms for Senate campaign. Speaking of the Helms candidacy, Holding said: "We think this success (raising of \$1.7 million for Helms as compared with \$1 million for Hunt) reflects the feeling the people of North Carolina have for Senator Jesse Helms."

R. Brent Hackney, Hunt's deputy press secretary, said Hunt hoped to raise \$4 million to \$5 million should he run for the Senate.

Big money! Big money! from both sides.

**PRETTY SORRY . . .** We think it is pretty sorry when a paid officer goes out and leads a good man or woman to do something that they would never have done had they not been lead down the primrose path by a government paid officer.

If the person had a record of doing illegal things, good and well, but when you try to make a criminal out of a law-abiding citizen, it's a wrong thing to do!

**TITANIC . . .** I do right much history reading, recently I have been reading about the "Titanic" -- the British steamer -- regarded as the "unsinkable" ship. But it struck an iceberg about 1,600 miles northeast of New York City. With 2,200 passengers, The Titanic was the largest ship in the world,

measuring 882.5 feet long 1,517 were reported drowned. The "Unsinkable" Titanic was believed to be the safest ship afloat. Recently, another fruitless search was made for the sunken ship. It went down on the night of April 14-15, 1912.

**JOTTINGS . . .** In Hoover Adams Daily Record we read that Former U.S. Senator Robert Morgan and his pretty daughter, Margaret, returned home last week after two weeks in England. Robert attended a legal seminar at Cambridge University and then spent a few days visiting London and other places in that historic and lovely old country.

Alan Greenspan warned U.S. governors to expect a slowdown in the economic recovery. Speaking at the governors' meeting in Portland, Maine, the former chief economic adviser to President Ford called for a domestic summit to devise a bipartisan plan to cut the federal budget.

About this, Mr. Greenspan is barking up the right tree!

Polls point the way the political winds are blowing, but when the first primaries are held in late winter or early spring in 1984, we will really begin to feel the way the presidential sweepstakes among the Democrats are running!

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### Letters To The Editor

#### Puppy Creek Philosopher

Dear editor:  
One argument about why Americans are being out-competed by Japan and some other countries in some areas such as automobiles and high school diplomas, is that Americans have lost their will.

They can't keep from eating too much, they can't make themselves take enough exercise, they watch too much television and go fishing on election days.

I don't know how much willpower is left in this country. Congress hasn't funded a committee to measure it, I guess because nobody has thought of it, but if you're short of the commodity there's a way around it.

If you don't have any willpower of your own, you can buy some.

That's right. In big cities now top business executives, actors, models, TV announcers and other over-paid people are hiring individual trainers to come to their homes and make them exercise and eat right.

They say about 7 a.m. the trainer shows up, rouses them out of bed if they're still sleeping away and makes them do the calisthenics they don't have the willpower to do on their own. Then, as far as I know, he tells them what to eat for breakfast. Don't know if he shows up at the other two meals to see they don't go for seconds.

I can imagine one business executive saying of another: "Hmmm, I notice he's getting flabby, his business must be on the rocks, can't afford to hire somebody to make him exercise."

As for TV anchor people having to hire somebody else's willpower to keep them looking trim on camera, I'd turn off the set when they come on and pick up a newspaper, if I had more willpower.

Yours faithfully,  
J.A.



And, as your senior class president, I'd like to wish my fellow grads Luck in the social promotion, cultural awareness and minimal competency fields!

## Free enterprise is alive and well

By John Sledge  
N.C. Farm Bureau Federation

A rather large segment of the United States population unfortunately believes that the free enterprise system is no longer functioning in this country.

However, the free enterprise system does work in America, as well as in all other countries.

Stated another way, no civilization can sustain itself without relying on the exchange of personal property in the marketplace.

Socialist countries, such as

Russia, claim that the truly socialist economic system will work when all nations of the world have such a system. This is not so.

When the exchange of personal property in the marketplace ceases, the citizens will find a way over, under, or around the restrictions, in an effort to feed themselves.

The Wall Street Journal recently reported on the use of the marketplace exchange of personal property in Russia.

For example, sales in the marketplace in Russia continue to provide about 9 percent of the pro-

duce shoppers consume in the Soviet Union.

This produce is grown on small plots of land that individuals are permitted to farm. The article estimated that farmers of small private plots account for 3 percent of the cultivated land, yet they provide 25 percent of the nation's farm production.

We can be proud that American agriculture is the miracle of the modern world, but not by chance nor simply the good fortune of having millions of acres of fertile soil and an appropriate climate to work with.

# With every new floor, there is a little pain

By Warren Johnston

Most people don't think about floors too much.

I was like most people. I didn't think about floors either.

Oh, there was the occasional notice, like when I walked into a ramshackle house and the floor caved in, or when I stepped on a recently mopped kitchen floor and slid across the room.

Since my wife assigned to me the task of installing one in our newly reconditioned bathroom, I have been thinking about floors a great deal.

"Today looks like a good day to install that floor," she said to me one Saturday morning.

"Couldn't we find a pool and spend the day working on our tans?" I asked.

After she rejected my list of 27 other activities that I thought might be more fun, I knew that the day was lost.

My wife has launched a career as a contractor by remodeling our house. Although she is pretty handy with wiring, trim work and painting, she usually assigns the heavier jobs to me.

In an effort to be professional about her work she keeps files on everything, even her subcontractors.

### The Puppy Papers

In my file she had written, "complains a lot, but works cheap."

It wasn't my first time out with flooring, but it had been about 10 years since I had installed the tung-and-groove pine planks.

The first few pieces went down with ease, and it was not until the fifth line that I noticed the pain.

It wasn't a sharp or curt pain. It was a polite dull twinge. It was one of those pains that comes with age, and it was in my right foot.

After stooping over the sixth line, it became a little difficult to stand up, but it didn't bother me.

The pain had moved from my foot to the calves of both legs. I ignored it. The job was all that mattered.

Trudging on, I carefully cut and fit each board and nailed them in place. I envisioned myself as a 14th Century master craftsman fulfilling some assignment for my liege.

The project had entered its fourth hour. I had completed one-third of the floor. The pain had moved to the back of my thighs.

The hammer glanced off my thumb. This was a new pain. A youthful piercing pain. I knew that if it did not stop, I would have to commit suicide.

In keeping with the age of the pain, I sucked my thumb until it stopped yelling.

Another hot and sweaty four hours passed before the last board was hammered into place.

I no longer felt like a 14th Century craftsman, but as I settled into the easy chair in our den, I felt as if I had lived that long.

The nice old kindly pain had moved into my back and was heading for my neck.

"Your floor looks great," my wife said, adding that she was so pleased with the job that I had done that she had decided to let me do the rest of the floors in the house.