

Editorials

ROTC vote is move in right direction

Members of the Hoke County Commission and Board of Education should be commended for putting their heads together last week to resolve the issue of providing ROTC training at Hoke High.

The move was significant, not only because the county school system needs the program, but because it also was the first time in a while that the two bodies appeared to be working together.

More than 100 Hoke High students will take advantage of the new program this year and many could develop military careers as a result of the instruction.

However, if the school board and the commission continue the spirit of cooperation shown last week during the joint meeting, then all the residents of Hoke County will benefit.

For a number of years both boards have maintained a mutual distrust, particularly when dealing with money matters. Although few major disruptions have occurred, the differences have hindered

the elected officials in their efforts to meet the needs of constituents.

The issue that developed over the school board's attempt to start ROTC during the coming year was typical of the past difficulties of the two county bodies.

Here is essentially what happened:

- School board members made a budget request for a 17.2% increase in funds over the previous year, which was more money than was needed. The move was not uncommon and is a procedure used by many boards across the state.
- Wise to the budget game and fulfilling their obligation to be fiscally responsible, the commissioners determined, with the help of some board of education members, a figure that was closer to what was actually needed to operate the schools during the next year. The school request was cut, but was still 10% higher than the 1982-83 budget.
- Publicly licking their wounds, the board of education decided that the new ROTC program could not be funded with the reduced budget, and made an attempt to gain \$20,000 more in a joint meeting with the commission.
- The commission refused the second requests for more funds,

but pledged support for ROTC and suggested that the needed money be taken out of the schools' revenue sharing budget. Some commission members later said they had noted a great deal of public backing for the program and wanted to see it funded out of the allocated money.

- School board members at first publicly rejected the revenue sharing idea, and blamed the commission for the failure to fund ROTC.
- Money for ROTC was later found by the board of education in the revenue sharing budget after re-roofing bids for the schools came in lower than expected.

The month-long battle over the funding of ROTC did little to instill public confidence in this county's elected officials. In addition the fight could have cost Hoke High students a valuable program.

We hope the resolution of the ROTC issue will spell a new unity between the boards, because without it, neither can complete the job they were elected to do.

In order for this county to grow and prosper, all of its elected officials will have to work as a team.

The vote last week for ROTC was a positive step for the future of Hoke County.

CLIFF BLUE . . . People & Issues

STROM THURMOND...I have been thinking about U.S. Senator Strom Thurmond.

South Carolina has produced some great statesmen, but in thinking about Strom Thurmond, he comes close to matching up with any from the Palmetto State.

We are not overlooking statesmen like John C. Calhoun, U.S. Senator and Secretary of State James F. Byrnes, to mention but two of South Carolina's statesmen of the past.

In politics, Senator Thurmond has taken many political risks and survived.

In 1948, while governor of South Carolina he deserted the Democratic ticket headed by Harry Truman and led the States Rights ticket for president. He carried only four states -- South Carolina, Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama.

Then, he ran on the Democratic ticket and was elected to the United States Senate.

He ran for re-election on the Republican ticket and won.

Now, as president-pro tempore of the U.S. Senate he is third in line for President in the event the President, the vice president, and the speakers of the house were killed or removed from office.

Now, several top Democrats have come out for Thurmond on the Republican ticket.

Former 5th District U.S. Rep. Ken Holland has agreed to be chairman of Democrats for Thurmond. State Controller General Earle Morris, Adjutant General Eston Marchant, Secretary of State John Campbell and Charleston Mayor Joe Riley -- all Democrats have also endorsed Thurmond.

William Jennings Bryan Dorn, 67, says he will challenge Thurmond if no other Democrat does. "He's a good man and he's done a good job," Dorn says. "If I ran I wouldn't run against him. I would run for a term that is open and runs until January 1981. That's a long time in American History. I think anyone in South Carolina would want some kind of a choice for a period that long."

JESSE JACKSON...There is serious talk about a black candidate for president in 1984 for the first time in history.

But black leaders, we read, are split on the question whether 1984 is the year for such an effort.

Obviously something over 23,000,000 are not likely to elect a president, in a nation of 236,000,000. But black candidates have been successful in major campaigns recently -- such as in Chicago -- and have won major races when a majority of the voters were white.

The most frequently mentioned black candidate is Jesse Jackson, who has considerable appeal and who often makes refreshing candid statements.

But those who oppose his possible candidacy argue, a race by Rev. Jackson would likely help the Republican candidate more than the Democrat. Jackson isn't trying to help either.

A Jackson candidacy could take away more Democratic presidential votes, and in the South this could doom some latter-day Democrats who depend on a black bloc vote, plus a minority white liberal vote, to win.

There's little doubt that a Jackson candidacy would help President Reagan in 1984. But it could also help black candidates in statewide races and increase black registration everywhere.

Is 1984 price worth paying -- for the long term? Black leaders, we feel are split on this and argue that question daily.

Meanwhile, chances increase that Jackson might run! And this is just a guess!

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Drought aid denied for 1954 farmers

By Sherry Matthews

It was about this time 29 years ago that President Dwight D. Eisenhower was serving his first term in the oval office and about that same time that it was reported that nearly \$8 billion in foreign military aid was given by the United States between October, 1949 and December 31, 1954.

Over 29 million households in 1954 proudly displayed television sets, which had been on the market for eight years (1947) and only 17% of American adults were reading a book, according to a national survey.

It was also during this time that "Stranger in Paradise" and "Hey There" hit the popular song chart and back home in Raeford "Crazy Legs" starring Lloyd Nolan and Joan Vohs was playing at the local theatre.

During this time, News-Journal editor Paul Dickson reported the "disastrous" drought conditions that the county was suffering.

"A group of Hoke County farm leaders, local government farm service workers and others met here Tuesday morning with Forrest J. Isenhour, State Director of the Farmer's Home Administration, to discuss the critical farm situation in Hoke County due to drought conditions.

"The group unanimously decided to ask Gov. Umstead to recommend to the President that Hoke County be declared a "Farm Disaster Area" for 1954.

"Last year this county was approved for emergency loans, but the group feels that crop conditions this year definitely warrant its approval as an emergency area eligible for help in the national feed program.

About This Time

"He said this conclusion was based on a field survey made in the state.

"While we are sure the state has rather serious problems, they didn't stack up so we could recommend it," Scott concluded.

Talk turned from agricultural drought to tragedy when in the September 23 edition of *The News-Journal* the headline read: "This Community Saddened By Mountain Death of Couple."

"This community was shocked and saddened when the news reached here of the tragic death on Sunday morning of Dr. and Mrs. David M. Tuttle of Gastonia, in a fall over scenic, slippery Toxaway Falls in Transylvania County.

"Mrs. Tuttle, 29, was, before her marriage in 1949, Mollie Cameron, daughter of Mrs. Florrie Upchurch and the late H.A. Cameron of Raeford.

"Mrs. Tuttle died of a fractured skull. Her husband, 37, a prominent Gastonia dentist, was knocked unconscious and drowned.

"Transylvania County Sheriff, John B. Kilpatrick said the Dr. and Mrs. Tuttle apparently slipped while taking pictures. Their bodies were found at the foot of the falls, a camera lying a short distance above them. Dr. Tuttle's wristwatch had stopped at 10:05 a.m.

"They apparently walked out on the rock ledge near the top of the falls to take pictures, the sheriff said.

"The rocks are mighty slippery," said a spokesman at a local funeral home. "Probably one of them slipped and grabbed the other one. It might have been that as one slipped and started to fall, the other one tried to make a rescue."

"The falls are like a staircase, with many small ledges down below, and they tumbled about 100 feet to the first big ledge then slid down to the bottom of the falls," the funeral director said.

"Sheriff Kilpatrick said that many people had lost their footing and slid down part of the slippery, moss-covered rocks but to his knowledge this was the first time anybody had been killed at the falls."

"In the September 16 edition of *The News-Journal*, it was reported that the August disaster appeal by farmers had been "turned down."

"The Department of Agriculture Drought Committee in Washington on Tuesday refused to recommend disaster designation for North Carolina. Committee Chairman Kenneth L. Scott, who is director of the Agricultural Credit Services said seriousness of drought conditions in North Carolina "didn't seem to warrant that the committee recommend such designation to the President."

Tofu could be answer to Hoke festival needs

By Warren Johnston

There's been some loose talk around lately about having a festival in Hoke County.

The talk is that we should have the sort of festival that would bring in 30,000 yelling and screaming tourists, fill them up with assorted foods, make them listen to Bluegrass music, look at "arts and crafts" and send them away saying, "Wow, what a great place!"

Of course, we would become enormously wealthy because the tourists would be willing to pay handsomely for having such a good time.

"There's been some loose talk about having a festival here," I told my wife one night over dinner.

"What sort of festival are they going to have?" she asked, not looking up from her meal.

"They haven't decided. They're looking for suggestions."

"They should have a tofu festival," she said.

The idea was preposterous. What sort of crowd could be attracted to a festival serving a gray-white rubbery glob of soybean curd.

I knew that the farmers, who raise \$4 million in soybeans in

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this county each year, would attend, but I doubted that even they would eat the tofu.

"Tofu is the way of the future. Someday everyone will be eating it," she said, pointing out that what I had believed to be meat chunks in my spaghetti sauce were actually bits of the curd.

Although I had heard all the propaganda about tofu, and I knew that it was higher in protein than meat, lower in fat and could taste like anything it was cooked with, I couldn't get the taste of that first encounter out of my mind.

It had happened during a dinner party we had about three years ago on Pawleys Island. It was a casual affair with a few friends. One of those meals where everyone brings a different menu item.

The person who had been assigned the appetizer brought tofu.

"I saw this in the store, and thought it looked interesting. It's supposed to be good for you," she said naively.

The unadulterated tofu was cut into squares, placed on a

platter with crackers and garnished with a sprig of parsley and a cherry tomato. It looked lovely.

Eagerly, everyone dug in. Pieces of the curd were scooped onto crackers and popped into mouths.

Then, suddenly it was like a scene from a Laurel and Hardy movie where chunks of Ivory Soap were served at a cocktail party by mistake.

Instead of blowing bubbles as they did in the movie, everyone at our party began discreetly retching into napkins and the nearby philodendron.

"Boy, this tofu sure is great," one guest lied politely.

The appetizer maven, who had not tried the fare, offered seconds, but there were no takers.

After everyone had gone home, I gave the tofu to the dog. He didn't eat it either.

The evening of the tofu will live in the annals of Pawleys Island.

During those long winter nights, when local residents are bored and searching for something to do, the suggestion, "Let's have a tofu party," still comes up, and those who were there on that first evening turn slightly green.