

Primaries — a battleground

"The Maytag Primary." That is what North Carolina's great political cartoonist, Barbour, calls our upcoming May 7 presidential primary.

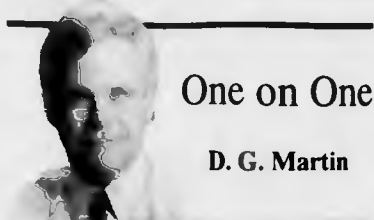
In case you haven't seen it, his cartoon shows a donkey and an elephant, sleeping at a work desk — like the Maytag repairman in the classics. The sign above their desk says "Media Registration — North Carolina Presidential Primary — May 7 (After It's All Over)."

Barbour's cartoon is right on target in one respect. The media has shown no interest in our presidential primary.

And those of us who like to get attention from the presidential candidates have been disappointed. They have been in Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina, making promises to the folks in those states — forgetting about North Carolina.

All this has made some of us wonder why the General Assembly did not listen to Representative Steve Wood. He urged them to establish an early presidential primary for North Carolina. If he had gotten his way, the presidential candidates would be visiting us this month — at least a little bit.

Barbour's cartoon reflects the common judgment of most experts that by



One on One

D. G. Martin

our May 7 primary, the contest for the presidential nomination will be "all over."

I wonder. It's true that well over 60 percent of the Republican delegates will be chosen in March alone — including those selected in the blockbuster states of California, Texas, New York, and Florida.

But there are two big reasons why I think North Carolina may turn out to be a battleground state after all. Here they are:

1. At Least Three Republican Candidates — Maybe Four — Have Enough Staying Power To Get Them To May 7.

Steve Forbes, who would have been gone if he didn't have money, has money. He is gathering followers. And he is having the time of his life. So he is not going to quit no matter how often he loses.

Patrick Buchanan has shown that

his campaign can run without all that much money. His ideas are catching on, too. And he is having a better time than Steve Forbes. He wants to have more fun at the convention. So he will be gathering delegates all the way to the end.

Bob Dole is taking his bumps. Others might have quit after getting so banged up. But he is no quitter. He is the only prominent candidate who could hold the whole party together. He will do better in the March primaries. But even if he doesn't, I think he is in it to the end.

If at least three of the guys hang on until May, probably none of them will have won enough delegates to lock up the nomination. And they will be looking for a place to fight it out one more time.

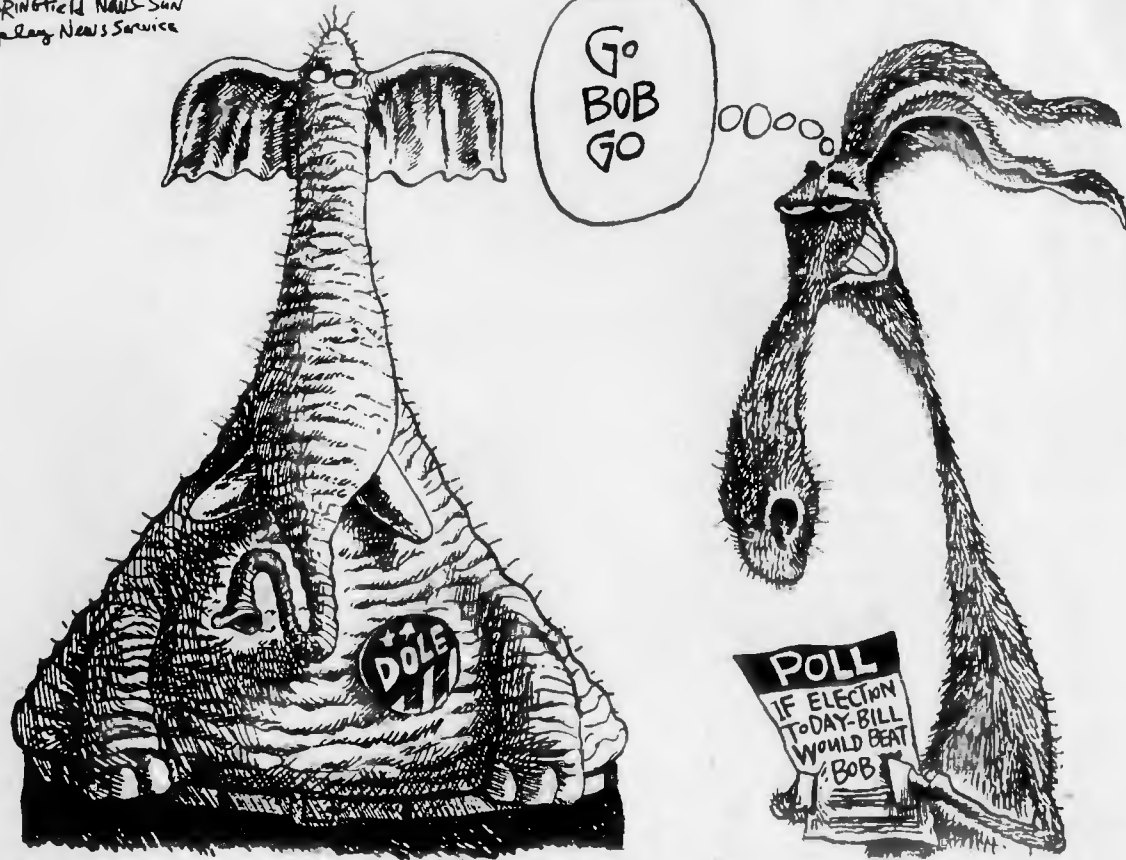
2. North Carolina Will Have The Stage To Itself During April And Early May.

After the Kansas and Minnesota primaries on April 2, there are no more contests until May 7, when North Carolina, the District of Columbia and Indiana vote.

So those three places will get the candidates' full attention for more than a month.

Get ready. Tell that Maytag repairman to wake up. There might be a lot of action in North Carolina after all.

Cartoon
SPRINGFIELD NEWS-STAR
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Joys

(Continued from page 2A)

man in action. How was I to know that the music would be so fast that I wouldn't catch up in the next two hours?

The instructor yelled, "We will now do the 'butterfly'." Frankly, I had never heard of the butterfly. Placing your feet together and moving them apart twice reminded me of trying to step on an ant hill on each side of your foot. When we were given the command to move the right foot forward, then back, the left one the same and then move right and left I began to feel that I had over-played my hand. In addition to all the movement, the music began to get faster. I was already two steps behind. Some dads

were showing off, like they were hep to this game. Before I could do one of those "butterflies," the music increased another notch. I tapped the instructor on the shoulder and said, "If you were 69 years old, you'd slow that confounded music down." He grinned and hollered to the DJ, "this fellow wants you to speed it up." The young whippersnapper, if I hadn't been so old I would have popped him.

Peaches was having a big time — she was jumping around like a grasshopper on a bean stalk. I was staggering around like a drunk. Somewhere close to the 45th trip around the floor, someone grabbed a mike and said it was time to draw for the door prizes. It must have been five miles to one of

the stools. Fortunately I made it, Peaches looked at me and said, "Papau, aren't we having fun?"

Finally 5 p.m., as we started toward the entrance the announcer said, "Now, remember we teach the line dance every Sunday. Peaches grabbed me by the arm, "Papau, let's come next week."

I replied, "Honey, I had better talk it over with your dad, he will probably want to come." Folks get ready, when you see Peaches and me on "Prime Time Country," or "Opryland," you will know that we have arrived. Butterfly, butterfly.

My parting thought — Contentment is when your earning power equals your yearning power.

Letters

(Continued from page 2A)

the last several years. I don't mean to scare anyone with the big "change" word, but our county has grown in population tremendously in the past several years — which, in turn, puts a large financial burden on our county's resources and services.

I worked for Hoke County for four years in the water department as a well treatment operator and was being paid about \$5,000 a year less than the same job would pay in another county. The county said they could not afford to pay any more than they are paying. Which brings me back to my point — something different has to be done so the county can afford to keep and pay the employees that have been trained and have experience at their jobs.

I agree with Kim and Robin when they wrote in last week's paper that the county should be run like a business. Anytime you have a business that is not producing profits something needs to be done before it is too late. In the county's case, it is not too late. We have the work force, we just do not have the jobs for them. It seems that the county would be looking for some type of business or factories to allow the people of the county to work in the county instead of driving out of

the county for work. Instead, county officials are looking into paying a company a percentage of the money they can generate from going into our homes and businesses and tax us on our personal property.

We, as concerned citizens, went before the county commissioners a couple of weeks ago to ask them to finish something they started almost a year ago — to put the mixed beverage referendum on the May ballot so the citizens of Hoke County could decide whether we want it or not.

The commissioners took it upon themselves not to put it on the ballot. We, as a group, offered to pay the difference of the cost for the advertisement so it would not cost the county any money to add it to the ballot. Instead, they are requiring us to get almost 4,000 signatures to even put it on the ballot. If we had required them to get 4,000 signatures to get their name on the ballot, we probably would not have any commissioners. It would be very simple for them to put it on the ballot; but they would rather make us, as voters, make the decisions for them. If they cannot get together on such a simple issue as putting something on a ballot, then I am not sure they are the ones we want making any of the deci-

sions concerning our county.

In closing, I just want everyone to think about the revenue and jobs that would be generated by having mixed beverages in the county. I heard one person talking about the burden that it would put on the sheriff's department and the court system, but that is not true.

Right now, if you go out of the county to get a drink with your meal, you are taking a greater risk of getting a ticket or becoming involved in an accident because of the distance you have to travel. If you get a ticket in another county, you transfer all your probation and rehabilitation back to Hoke County, so the burden is here already.

So, why not get mixed beverages passes so the one who want to have a drink can and to have to drive 20 or 30 miles. I could go on with the reasons to have mixed beverages here, but I, unlike the commissioners, think Hoke County citizens can think and make intelligent decisions on their own.

So, remember, this is your county — you have the right to stand up and be heard. In May, let the commissioners know how you feel about the way they run the county by coming out and voting.

Tony Byrd

Sales

(Continued from page 2A)

panying trinkets and goodies for a longer time.

Or we can choose to remain ignorant, thinking we're rushing around at the last minute because the Easter baskets are almost gone, or because the Holiday Barbies are sold out. All the stress of preparing for a holiday at the eleventh hour is more than made

up for when I, on the day after the celebration, drag into the store for some headache remedy. On the way to the medicine counter, I find myself at some out-of-the-way table that has stuffed bunnies or Christmas ornaments for 75 percent off. Suddenly, my headache is gone. I fill my cart, and try to figure out where to put the stuff at home for the next 12 months. I feel savvy, arrogant. I can feel se-

cure knowing that other panicking shoppers will scurry around me as I calmly saunter through the aisles on the Saturday before Easter 1997.

"Are you ready for Easter?" I'll say to some desperate woman wildly grabbing at items to fill baskets for her children.

She'll think I've got it all together. She will not, however, find out my secret. I will never tell her.

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