

SCOTT PROPOSES MASSIVE EXTENSION OF INEQUITABLE SYSTEM OF TAXATION

By Jack Rider

There had been some fleeting hope that Governor Bob Scott might come up with something basically new when he got around to recommending taxes to underwrite the programs he believes essential for the continued progress of North Carolina.

This fleeting hope fled last Wednesday when Scott unveiled his budget and the sources of

revenue in support of that budget.

Scott proposed nothing new; only a criminal extension of an ancient and inequitable system that is based on the most ancient of political principles: Which is to divide and conquer.

Although Scott called for a five-cent tax on each pack of cigarettes sold in North Carolina there certainly is nothing new about taxing cigarettes. The

federal government already collects 12½ cents on each package manufactured in the nation, and already North Carolina under its general sales tax laws adds another penny; so what Scott recommends is not a new tax, but only a sharply increased tax.

The same, only to a worse degree, is his recommendation of increased taxes on whisky and beer, which are already taxed to the point of diminishing returns.

And in adopting this compounding of an ancient tax felony Scott apparently has completely deserted any notion of turning toward the only equitable tax system, which is a combination of sales, use and income taxes.

The unprincipled principle that has been operative much too long is both cowardly and inequitable in that it imposes upon one or two legal items of trade a vastly disproportionate share of the burden of government.

The view that taxing luxuries is less onerous than taxing necessities is the grossest kind of class legislation; not against a class of people, since in our affluent society a larger per cent of the poor man's income is spent on "luxuries" than that of a wealthier citizen. So the class aspect of such legislation is against a specific class, or two of manufactured product.

It is too much, of course, to hope that all the ancient sins of this order could be corrected in a generation, and certainly not in one four-year gubernatorial administration, but it is not too much to hope that on some day some legislature will take the first step down the long, long road toward a fair system of taxation.

If the 1969 session of the North Carolina General Assembly adopts the recommendation of Governor Scott it will be walking backwards, rather than forward in the battle of fairness.

For the State of North Carolina to impose a five-cent tax on a manufactured product that costs less than 11 cents — less taxes — at the factory door is

legalized robbery. That other states do this badly, or worse is hardly an excuse for such abuse, and especially when that particular product is the No. 1 farm income item for the state and one of the major employers of industrial workers in the state.

The tobacco in a pack of cigarettes puts a fraction under one cent in the pocket of the farmer who grew it. At present it puts 12½ cents in the federal treasury, one cent in the North Carolina treasury. All the costs of sale, storage, transportation, and manufacture, plus the ad valorem taxes levied at each level have to divide the remains of whatever the retail price eventually is established.

Whether tobacco is a killer or a blessing is still undecided by either the medical or social scientists, but it is used by every class of citizen, regardless of race, creed, national origin or financial status.

So taxing tobacco is just as hard on one group of citizens as any other. Bread is used also by all except the dieting breed, and it makes no more sense to put such a confiscatory tax on tobacco than on bread, or milk.

Sales taxes should be levied on every commodity in trade, and at the identical rate. Only in the realm of gasoline taxes is this practiced by North Carolina. The person who rides a lot on the highways pays a lot of gasoline tax, but there is hardly a session of the general assembly when some sainted group such as school teachers or other state employees do not seek to divert highway taxes for other uses.

Passage of Scott's program and its supporting taxes is far from an accomplished fact at this writing, and if members of the General Assembly will avoid being stampeded and resist the temptation of official bribery there is just a little more than a fair chance that it will not be passed as presented.

A flat sales tax, with no exceptions and no maximums; a flat income tax with no exceptions and no maximums are the simple tax package that can most fairly provide the funds needed for operation of government.

And Scott and all others who have noble programs should have the guts to put forth a tax program that would hit every taxpayer and every commodity with equal force, rather than trying the ancient shell game device of putting the tax bite under a different shell while the taxpaying yokel's eye is distracted by political hocus-pocus and fiscal chicanery.

It is fortunate, despite some recent recommendations on the point that in North Carolina it is still the governor who proposes and the General Assembly disposes, and without the possibility of veto by the governor.

THE JONES COUNTY

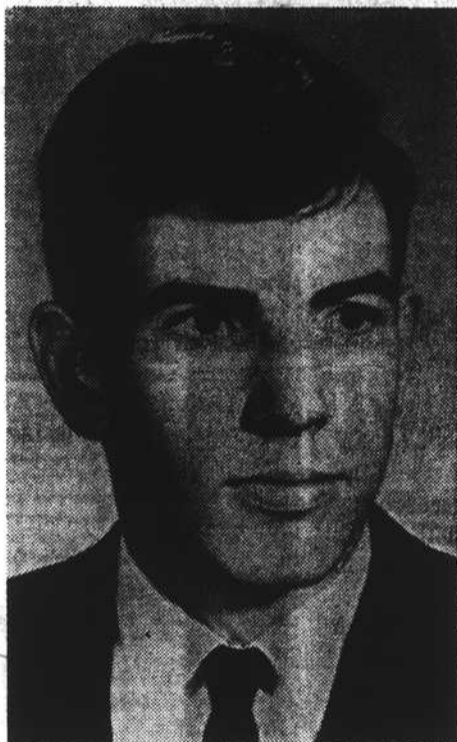
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Robert Noble One of 74 of State's 12,000 Students With Perfect Grades; Three Others from Jones Honored



A Jones County student has earned a perfect academic record to win scholastic honors at N. C. State University.

Chancellor John T. Caldwell announced that Robert Theodore Noble of Dover was among 74 out of 12,000 NCSU students to score a 4.0 record during the fall semester.

Noble, son of Mr. and Mrs. Clifton Noble of Route 2, Dover, is a senior electrical engineering major. He also had a perfect academic record for fall semester last year, and was on the Dean's List with an average of "B" or better last spring.

Three other Jones County men were named to the Dean's List, announced Chancellor Caldwell.

They are Walter L. Adams Jr., Randall O. Dawson and Cecil S. Hargett Jr. Adams, also an electrical engineering student, of Route 2, Trenton, is a junior.

Dawson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Mike Dawson of Route 3, Kinston, is a sophomore studying in the agricultural institute.

Hargett is a sophomore liberal arts student of Route 2, Rich-

lands. He is married to the former Annette Gray, and they have one child.

Cove City Branch Craven Technical Institute to Open

A formal opening will be held Thursday, February 27 at 7:30 p.m. for the Cove City Programmed Learning Laboratory located in the former Cove City Elementary School building.

Featured guest speaker will be Joseph E. Carter, Coordinator Learning Laboratories, North Carolina Department of Community Colleges.

This will be the first time Craven Technical Institute's Learning Laboratory officially opens an extension unit.

Mrs. Shirley T. Jones, Director of the Library-Learning Center, and William D. Newberry Craven Technical Institute's Learning Laboratory Coordinator, will acquaint those in attendance with the materials available in the Cove City Branch.

Mrs. Barbara Matthews, Cove City Learning Laboratory Coordinator, invites the public to attend.

SELDOM USED CHARGE

James Stallins was indicted by the sheriff department last week on a seldom used charge: receiving a worthless check, knowing it to be worthless at the time it was issued.

Some Life Sentence

In 1961 a young Ayden high school student, Kenneth Jolly, was given a "life" term in prison for the extremely brutal murder of a young Wayne County housewife. That he was only 16 was the excuse for not sending him to the gas chamber. Governor Terry Sanford paid a political debt to a member of Jolly's family just before his term ended when he commuted the "life" sentence to one of 30 years. Monday Jolly was before the state paroles commission, trying to get out of prison after less than eight years. His parole was denied but an official said it would come up for automatic review again on February 17, 1970, and each year afterward until the housewife has been completely forgotten and then he will be released, at least this is a logical presumption.

To Eglin Field



Airman Helen M. Wilson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thurl B. Wilson, Route 1, Dover, has received her first Air Force duty assignment after completing basic training at Lackland AFB, Tex. The airman has been assigned to a unit of the Air Force Systems Command at Eglin AFB, Fla., for training and duty in the administrative field. Airman Wilson is a 1967 graduate of Farm Life High School, Vanceboro.

CHASING CHECK ARTISTS

The Lenoir County Sheriff Department spent a goodly part of its weekend chasing bad check artists in the western end of the county. The roundup listed Lew Arthur of La Grange, Jesse Joyner, Jr., Leslie Lee Joyner, Norman Cannon, Moseley Lee Hardy, and Frank Harris all of La Grange route 1 on charges of passing worthless checks.

Three from Jones County Complete ACC Degree Work

Sixty-four seniors at Atlantic Christian College completed degree requirements at conclusion of the fall semester and will be awarded bachelors degrees at the college's commencement scheduled for May 30.

Among those completing degree requirements were Linda Sue Andrews of Trenton; Rosemary Mallard of Pollocksville; and Frankie Greene Penny of Trenton.

REALLY AWOL!

Last week Kinston police picked up Victor Brown of 105 West South Street on charge that he was absent without leave from the armed forces. Records indicate that he had been absent from his post since September 28, 1968.

March 1st Application Deadline for Grants to Future Tar Heel Teachers

Applications for the Prospective Teacher Scholarship Loan Fund, a program created by the 1957 General Assembly to encourage students to train as teachers, must be submitted no later than March 1, 1969.

Students interested in teaching in the North Carolina public schools and who are in need of financial assistance for college training during the 1969-70 school year should write to: Scholarship Section, Division of Teacher Education, Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh, 27602.

According to Morris C. Brown, supervisor of the Teacher

Scholarship Loan Program, about 600 awards will be made in March in April. Each recipient will receive \$600 per year for up to four years of study. "Priority will be given to applicants who plan to teach in the elementary grades; however, other areas of study will be considered," he said.

A scholarship loan recipient may fulfill his obligation to the State by teaching in the public schools of North Carolina one year for each year of assistance received. More than 2,000 students are currently receiving financial aid through the program.

First Weed Charge

Last week Kinston police arrested 22-year-old Robert L. Hart of 19-F Carver Courts and charged him with possession of a small quantity of marijuana. This is the first indictment of this nature for Kinston, but local officers aware of the widespread use of the weed around Camp Lejeune and Fort Bragg have been constantly on the alert for its use and sale locally.