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December 14, 1984

Re: Treasury Department Tax Reform Proposals

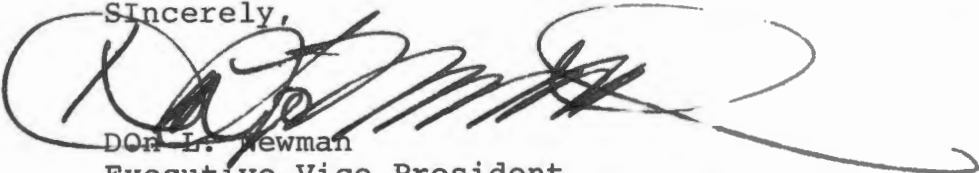
Mr. James A. Baker III, Chief of Staff and Assistant  
to the President  
The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Baker:

I urge you to immediately take a strong position against the tax reform proposals recently issued by the U.S. Department of Treasury. The uncertainty of future legislation is causing havoc in the investment community. This uncertainty is likely to result in an acceleration of the recessionary pressures already building in the present economic climate.

I believe that if enacted, certain provisions contained in the Treasury proposal would create a disincentive for capital formation, thus greatly damaging the economy of the United States. This in turn will cripple the construction and development industries resulting in the loss of millions of jobs, and ultimately creating a severe housing shortage and higher rents for millions of tenants across the United States. The proposal is economically damaging and ineffectual and conflicts with the underlying philosophy of the Reagan administration and re-election. I, therefore, urge you, in the strongest terms, to publicly oppose the recent Treasury proposal.

Sincerely,



Don L. Newman  
Executive Vice President  
Consolidated Ventures Corporation

Cont'd. p. 2

Postscript:

This proposal may appear to somewhat lower the Federal tax for low to moderate income households. However, it completely ignores the intent embodied in the existing tax code to help provide decent and affordable housing for low to moderate income households. In today's marketplace, fully 35 to 40% of the total rental housing capital investment is equity which is compensated solely through tax deferral and conversion with no current yield. Current rent will only support a market competitive cash yield for 60 to 65% of the construction cost (typical mortgage financing). If the pass through tax benefits are illuminated under the Treasury proposal, new rental construction will stop and rents on existing rental housing will quickly adjust to a 50% increase, thereby costing the average American renter about \$2,000 per year. In essence, Treasury proposal is a government mandated rent increase.



"DIRECT PARTICIPATION PROGRAMS"

December 13, 1984

Mr. James A. Baker III  
Chief of Staff and Assistant to the President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

RE: 087-000-079  
TREASURY DEPARTMENT TAX REFORM PROPOSALS

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Very truly yours,

REULE SECURITIES CORPORATION

David P. Reule, President

DPR:glf

**REULE SECURITIES CORPORATION**

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# Water quality laws concern planners

By JOHN WOOD  
Times-News Staff Writer

11/30/84

Henderson County will sing the blues like famous blues singer Muddy Waters, if someone doesn't do something to keep mud out of area rivers.

That's the opinion of a growing number of officials and concerned citizens, who are pressing for tougher sedimentation laws and better enforcement.

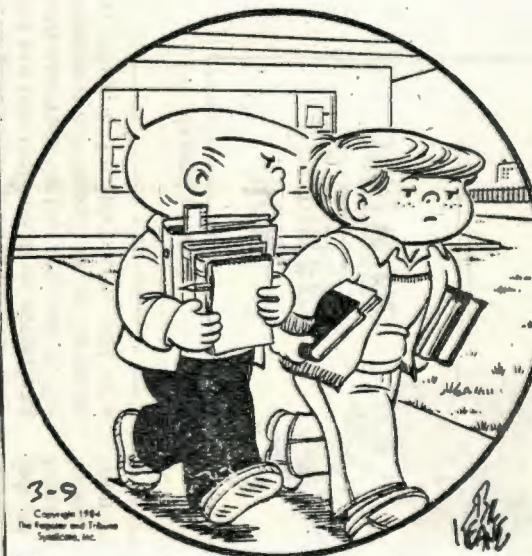
What they don't all agree on is who is responsible or how new laws might be written to help keep streams mud

free.

"Is this something we should do locally?" asked Luther Smith, landscape architect, county Planning Board member and outdoorsman. "Is this something that's even important?"

"My feeling," he said, answering his own question, "is that, yes, it's important. Whether it is handled locally or at the state level, it is important."

The state already has sedimentation laws that require developers to take Please see TOUGHER, Page 15



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"They can make us learn all this stuff now, but as soon as I'm old enough I'm gonna FORGET!"

# Tougher sedimentation laws needed

From Page 1

preventive steps to stop eroded dirt from leaving their property. The state even has a staff to enforce the laws.

Nevertheless, this month the Henderson County Commission, at the county Planning Board's request, asked its planners to think about sedimentation control here.

A report this year by Western North Carolina Tomorrow suggests several local measures, including local ordinances, that would assist state sedimentation law enforcement.

Why is there so much concern?

"Right now I have four people working for me here in Asheville," said Richard Phillips, regional engineer in the land quality section of the state Department of Natural Resources and Community Development.

Phillips and his staff are responsible for enforcing the state's erosion laws in 18 western counties, including Henderson. They are also responsible for inspecting dam safety and issuing mining permits.

They are overworked now, and Phillips says the river is rising.

"The staff," he said, "isn't large enough to match activity, which has increased drastically with the influx of people to this area. Over the next 10 years I don't see it getting anything but worse."

The sedimentation Phillips, Smith and others are most worried about results when land is cleared for development. Rains wash uncovered dirt into streams, carrying with it assorted pollutants, including the dirt itself.

"Sediment," said Phillips, "is the biggest single pollutant to the state."

Phillips says that's a growing concern because municipalities such as Asheville are increasingly turning to sediment-carrying rivers for drinking water.

Also, he and others point out, sediment-clogged streams and rivers flood

roads, bridges and property, causing damage downstream that can't be traced to any particular person or developer upstream.

Though he and other regional engineers across the state are asking for additional staff, Phillips doesn't believe he can keep up with the sediment problem. At this point he must rely on developers to submit mandatory erosion-control plans and try to make sure they do what they say they're going to do.

"The problem with the state's system," said Hendersonville developer D.O. Thompson Jr., "is not enforcing the plans they've received, it's catching the people who haven't submitted plans."

Thompson says sedimentation control is the state's responsibility because it is a regional problem. What one county lets flow into its rivers may not become a problem until it is in another county or state. He says the state needs to devote more manpower to catching violators.

Others disagree that that is the only way. Smith, for instance, says that the county can take measures to help Phillips.

"The mechanics of having five guys to cover 18 counties," he said, "you can have a lot of violations which adversely affect Henderson County they may never know about. So it becomes our problem inside our county to protect our land."

Smith, a tall, bearded landscape architect in daily contact with professional developers, engineers and surveyors, says his trade can increase awareness of the need to control sediment. He says there are developers already controlling erosion on their projects.

"Part of it is the need for staff," he said, "but I think the bigger part of it is an awareness on the part of the people who are actually implementing these

things that very incidental measures can be taken during the day-to-day course of a project to maintain these items."

At one large development site on U.S. 64 West, Smith points out the basins that have been dug to slow the movement of rainwater. As the water slows down, mud settles out. Burlap fences and rock piles filter what remains. Ridges, or "berms," are seeded with grass and direct surface water to basins and drains.

Smith is just as likely, however, to talk about the woman whose pond has filled with red mud from a neighbor's cleared lot.

But he says Henderson County need not pass its own laws or hire additional staff to control sediment or wayward developers. Smith sees advantages to simply increasing awareness of the problem.

"I don't know necessarily that the county has to have a local ordinance," he said. "But I think it would be good, if nothing else, if the county said everybody that works for the county is legally bound that if they see a project going on to report that project to the building inspector or somebody to see if a permit has been issued on it to help out the five guys in Asheville."

The planning board also has discussed, but taken no action on, including a clause in a proposed county subdivision ordinance that asks developers for proof that they've got approved erosion-control plans.

Thompson says any respectable builder will comply with reasonable sedimentation regulations. Smith says more people should be worried about sedimentation control. "It's a quality-of-life question," he said.

"It's pleasurable to me to see a nice mountain stream running and know that I can dip down and dip a glass of water out of it and drink it," he said. He's willing to take local steps to protect rivers and streams from sediment.

"That's protecting ourselves," he said. "I mean, if we don't care, and we live here, why should anybody else care?"

Frank and Ernest



I GAIN WEIGHT EVERY WINTER AND LOSE IT EVERY SPRING. I HAVE A SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED FIGURE.



## Editorials

# Acid rain, acid test

While the Reagan administration continues to procrastinate on proposals to reduce harmful acid rain, a federal court has forced the Environmental Protection Agency to take steps that may begin to clean up air pollutants responsible for acid rain.

That is without question a back-door approach to the problem, but at this stage almost anything is better than the administration's official policy of blissful neglect.

That's because acid rain is a problem that is growing steadily worse. First, noticed in the northeast where forests were dying and lakes were becoming so polluted that fish were coming up for air, acid rain has hit North Carolina. Mountain trees in the western part of the state are dying, and scientists believe acid rain may be one cause — though not necessarily the only cause. Rains as acid as vinegar have fallen in North Carolina for several years, and biologists have detected damage to fish and other wildlife here.

Acid rain is caused by air pollutants, mainly sulfur-dioxide emissions from coal-fired power plants in other parts of the South and in the Midwest. Those emissions can — and do — drift hundreds of miles before they fall with precipitation to cause acid rain damage.

EPA Administrator William Ruckelshaus last year proposed a modest acid rain abatement program that would reduce those sulfur dioxide emissions. The proposals would have caused utility rates to increase because power companies would have had to switch to more costly low-sulfur coal or install expensive pollution control equipment. But the president, running for reelection, rejected the proposal as too expensive.

That left the acid rain question in limbo. Meanwhile, however, a court decision forced the EPA to take indirect steps that could solve or at least alleviate the acid rain problem. It stems from a court test of the Reagan administration's plans to relax federal air pollution standards.

For more than a decade, a controversy has raged over the use of tall smokestacks — some more than 1,000 feet high — to disperse pollutants into the atmosphere rather than installing pollution control equipment or switching to cleaner fuels. Using the taller towers, meant that pollution did not settle around the plant, but was airborne to other areas.

In 1982, the Reagan administration proposed allowing tax credits for the tall stacks — which would encourage the use of them and discourage the plants from cleaning up pollutants. Environmentalists sued and the U.S. Court of Appeals agreed that the tall stacks did not meet standards of the Clean Air Act.

The court ordered the EPA to issue new regulations eliminating the use of tax credits for stacks taller than 200 feet. That means industries seeking tax credits under the Clean Air Act must find other ways to reduce pollutants — and that means reducing sulfur-dioxide pollutants.

The EPA now estimates that the new regulations will reduce sulfur-dioxide emissions by 2.9 million tons per year — or almost as much as Ruckelshaus hoped to reduce in his unsuccessful proposal to the president last year. The cost of reducing these pollutants won't be cheap. The tab could run from \$300 million to more than \$1 billion, and utility customers in Ohio, Georgia, West Virginia, Missouri, Indiana and Tennessee will pay higher rates.

But if the country is to come to grips with the problems of acid rain and halt the horrendous damage to forests, wildlife and waterways, the cleaning up of sulfur-dioxide emissions must get under way. Perhaps next year the Reagan administration will come forward with a direct attack on the problem, despite the cost to utility consumers. But at least the federal court action has forced the administration to start cleaning up the pollutants, and perhaps stem the tide of acid rain.

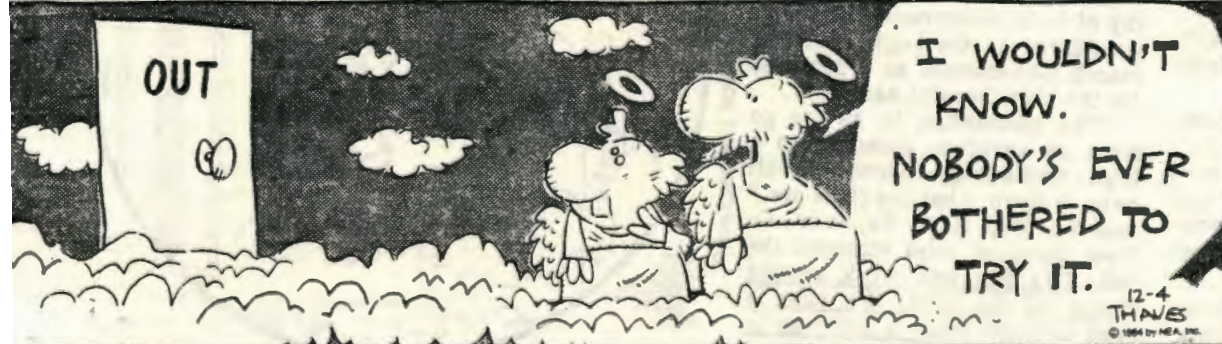


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Frank and Ernest



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**T**HREE major transportation modes face potential Reagan administration budget cuts — long-distance rail, mass transit, and Interstate highways. If enacted, the cuts would seriously harm all three.

Involved are the basic philosophy of the federal government's role in providing funds to such programs, and the need to trim the nation's budget deficit. And, in the case of highways, disagreements over how much money Uncle Sam should provide for specific projects.

A long-distance train system, effective mass-transit systems, and a well-maintained and completed Interstate highway network are an investment in the nation. Over both short and long distances the United States is interdependent as never before. Many commuters travel an hour or more to work. For decades trucks have crisscrossed the country, carrying California fruit to New England tables and Massachusetts electronics to West Coast customers.

In recent years the national rail passenger network has shown vitality; in East and West Coast corridors it is a feasible alternative to airplane travel.

As part of its budget-cutting plan, the administration proposes ending the federal subsidy for Amtrak's long-distance passenger trains and for the operating costs of mass transit. Such proposals are likely to generate strong congressional opposition, and it is unclear how far the administration would be willing to push them.

But if they were to take effect, one result would likely be the end of long-distance trains in the United States for the foreseeable future, with the possible exception of the Northeast Corridor.

Although Amtrak has made substantial economies in recent years, the federal government provides half its funds. Amtrak has been able to decrease the subsidy, however — from \$896 million in fiscal year 1981 to an estimated \$684 million in the current fiscal year. But because of the size of the deficit, it is unlikely that private purchasers could be found for Amtrak lines.

Were long-distance rail passenger service to end, freight-carrying railroads and commuter rail services would have to pay considerably more for upkeep of rail lines and roadbeds; they now share that cost with Amtrak. In turn, this would jeopardize the future of some commuter rail and freight organizations.

Amtrak aside, commuters in many cities would be seriously affected if the federal government were to end its operating subsidies to mass transit. Many hard-pressed transit companies would have to raise additional funds locally, presumably by increasing fares, and at the risk of sending riders fleeing to other forms of transportation.

The transit systems' alternative would be to trim service that in many communities is at a bare minimum.

In many states the Interstate system faces similar financial problems. Forty-three of the 50 states are nearly out of money to complete the relatively few unbuilt portions of the system, and to rebuild or resurface the many areas that have deteriorated severely.

Yet the two houses of Congress were not able to agree this year on bills to release \$7.2 billion from the Highway Trust Fund for this construction and repair. Substantially at issue was whether projects in several states would receive federal funding and, if so, how much. Such disputes are generally worked out between the individual states and the Federal Highway Administration.

When Congress reconvenes next month it ought to reach agreement promptly on releasing highway funds. The nation's Interstates are deteriorating seriously, the money exists to repair some of them — and it should be provided.

Both Congress and the administration ought to think carefully about the kinds of rail and highway transportation systems they wish the United States to have. In this time of budget deficit, money is one important issue. At the same time it should be realized that these systems are a national asset; allowing them to go out of business, or to deteriorate even further, would be more expensive in the long run than providing funds today.

Family Circus



9-19  
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Bil Keane

"When will I be old enough to stay up till prime time?"

Frank & Ernest



THE STICKER IS ON THE TAILPIPE, SIR -- WE LIKE FOR PEOPLE TO BE LYING DOWN WHEN THEY LOOK AT IT.

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## New Train Gets Praise

First come the trailblazers. Then come the others in their footsteps.

Trailblazers from the Asheville-Hendersonville area have already marked the trail for others to follow and enjoy the new Amtrak Carolinian from Charlotte to New York with a through car from Charlotte to Richmond, Va.

The Carolinian was boarded at Salisbury and taken to Raleigh, where the time between trains was spent in exploring for subsequent trips later in the spring of 1985 to visit the museums, the state Legislative Building while our lawmakers are in session, the campus of North Carolina State, etc.

"The train is a dream! It carries three brand new streamline coaches behind a new modern diesel locomotive. The whole thing makes less noise — it seems — than a new diesel Cadillac!" is the way one WNC rider described the train. Another, a business man from Raleigh, commented, "While I was relaxing with my eyes closed, the train began to move. It wasn't until after I opened my eyes and looked out that I realized the train had been moving for some time, the ride was so smooth."

Individuals in the Research Triangle area, Charlotte and Wilmington are looking forward to the day when we will have through service from Asheville to Wilmington.

## Backtalk

Others are thinking in terms of a through Asheville-Miami train. This too will come to pass before too many years.

Alex Duris



# Randleman Dam setback could prove fatal

THE COURIER-TRIBUNE, ASHEBORO (NC) \* SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1984

By KIP RUDGE

Courier-Tribune Staff Writer

In the short span of 24 hours the Randleman Dam project, some 30 years in the making, may have suffered an irreparable setback.

On Nov. 6 the voters in the Fourth Congressional District of North Carolina elected Bill Cobey to represent them in Washington, D.C. Cobey, an avowed opponent to the Randleman Dam, was chosen over Ike Andrews, who leaned

heavily in favor of the project.

Since it is nearly a foregone conclusion in the nation's capital that one doesn't locate costly water projects in districts where the local congressman is in opposition, the future of the Randleman Dam is in doubt.

But the leader of one of the most ardent groups aligned against the dam says the battle may have been won but the war is far from over.

"We won't stop until it's been de-

authorized," said Kemp Davis, chairman of the Deep River Citizens Coalition, a group of about 300 Randolph and Guilford County citizens opposed to the project.

Davis' family has spent seven generations on the banks of Muddy Creek, a tributary of the Deep River. He says there are many families who have been situated in the area longer than that.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been making plans since the 1930s

to plug Deep River and flood the area which Davis calls home. He said nearly a quarter of his family's 500 acre farm would be taken by government land purchases.

Davis estimates that some 50 other farmers would also be adversely affected by the dam project and the 10,000 acres it is expected to consume.

Davis and the DRCC, along with other groups such as the Conservation Council, Sierra Club and National Wildlife

Federation, have been waging political war against the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the dam for four years.

During that time support for the dam project gradually gained momentum until, in October, the project was nearly funded.

Despite the near miss during the Congressional continuing resolution battles in October, proponents were ready to try again in January, when Congress

See DAM, page 9A

## Dam

From page 1A

meets again. Optimism was high that the project might finally get approval. Reasons for that optimism included that fact that no water projects had been funded by the federal government in more than 10 years, the state's two senators, Jesse Helms and John East, favored the project, and the need for a water supply for the Triad was obviously there.

Although Davis doesn't like to admit it, many in the county were resigned to the reality of the Randleman Dam.

"Sure we were a bit frustrated at times," he said. "But there was not a thing we could do. We hoped it would turn out our way, we suspected it would and it did."

Sixth District U.S. Rep. Robin Britt spearheaded the project

and moved it inexorably through the House. Andrew also voiced his support for the dam project.

However, after the appropriation package containing funding for the dam was approved by the House and included in the continuing resolution, President Reagan vetoed the money for the water projects.

Less than a month later Britt and Andrews were on the wrong end of the Republican coattails. The political climate for the dam took a 180 degree turn.

Davis said he feels much more secure with the present congressional representatives.

"All this will start again in January more or less," he said. "However this time the officials are on our side. Now there's an ear for us to talk to."

Although the outcome of the election was favorable to the DRCC and its allies, Davis said the groups were not as active as they were in 1982.

"We maintained a low profile this time for political reasons, mainly to see how the tides were flowing," he said. "We are just people from the country and Randolph County, not political strategists. We thought we pushed them as far as they needed to be pushed and we decided they could not be pushed any further."

Although the most important piece of the puzzle, Cobey has been added, all Davis's ducks still aren't in a row.

Helms and East are still on record as favoring the project. Cobey, Helms and East are political soul mates and it is unclear how the three will align themselves to the project.

Republican Howard Coble, who defeated Britt for the 6th District House seat, is an unknown quantity. He has admitted he is not well informed on the project and both opponents and proponents of the dam claim to have his ear.

Gov.-elect Jim Martin has not stated his position, indicating he is not informed either.

Davis said most of the pressure will be on Cobey.

"He's got to try to influence the President to leave it out of his budget," he said. "Cobey's going to have to carry most of the weight, but that's why we voted for him."

Davis said he has not spoken to Cobey concerning the Randleman Dam since before the elec-

tion. He said he does not know how Cobey will go about reversing the trend towards the project.

"I'm hoping to find out what his plan of action is," he said. "There are people in this county and this town, Randleman, who are pushing for it for speculative reasons."

"This is a political cupcake. People see the money to be made and seats to be filled."

Lindsey Cox, of the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments (PTCOG) supporters of the dam project, said the last shots have not been fired.

"I don't really know what the outcome is going to be," he said. "There are still some issues to be decided."

He added the project may be damaged but it isn't dead.

"I think it's going to have a hard time of getting approved in the foreseeable future, but it's not dead in the long run," Cox said.

Cox explained that the water needs of Greensboro and the Triad area will have to be solved, Randleman Dam notwithstanding. Already the PTCOG has begun studies to solve the short term water needs of the area.

"We are going ahead with some water alternatives studies, because even if the Randleman Dam were approved we would still need something for our short-

HENDERSONVILLE, (NC) TIMES-NEWS 11/17/84

## Commission endorses rules to outlaw sea walls, jetties

The Associated Press

WILMINGTON — Regulations that would all but outlaw sea walls, jetties and other "hard" structures to retard beach erosion were endorsed by a North Carolina Coastal Resources Commission committee Thursday.

The proposed rules, supporters say, would establish state policy that the public's right to walk on a beach takes precedence over the desire by property owners to buttress shorefront buildings against a rising sea.

"This is the real gut, fundamental issue" of North Carolina's coast-

al program, said Paul S. Denison, a Wilmington engineer who took part in a study that led to the regulations.

Representatives of Ocean Isle Beach and Kill Devil Hills dissented from the decision, saying the rules would allow too little flexibility in coping with erosion.

If adopted, the regulations would be the first comprehensive rules for beach erosion control in North Carolina. The commission now prohibits owners of buildings built since June 1, 1979, from taking even temporary erosion control measures.



# Regulation Of Chemicals Scant In N.C.<sup>84</sup>

CHARLOTTE (NC) OBSERVER 12/10/84

RALEIGH — Chemicals such as those that killed about 2,000 people near a Union Carbide plant in India may be stored and handled in North Carolina without state or federal governments knowing about it, officials say.

State officials said substances such as methyl isocyanate, the chemical that leaked from the plant at Bhopal, may fall through the cracks of government regulation. The state and federal governments regulate pesticides, hazardous wastes and radioactive materials, but apparently many toxic chemicals used for manufacturing are not regulated.

"Obviously, we don't have the degree of control that is probably desirable or even necessary," said Paul Wilms, assistant director of the environmental management division of the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development (NRCD).

"In some respects we have more control over hazardous substances," Wilms said. "There are federal laws . . . that begin to approach the issue, but they are severely limited."

The disaster in Bhopal, India, focused new attention on possible inadequacy of toxic-substance laws and might give new impetus to state and local efforts to provide statutory controls. One such "right to know" bill, which would require companies to label and report to the state toxic substances they use, might be considered by the legislature next year.

Spokesmen for various state agencies with responsibilities for human health and environmental protection said last week they could do nothing about toxic substances used in manufacturing unless a health or environmental problem occurred.

"We don't have any control over toxic substances," said Bryant Haskins, a spokesman for the Department of Human Resources. "We only have control over waste materials."

James Burnett, assistant pesticide administrator at the N.C. Agriculture Department, said his agency's regulations just address pesticides as far as control over storage and handling. Elaine Matthews of NRCD said identification and tracking of chemicals is left up to the Department of Human Resources.

"We have no regulatory authority over this kind of industrial operation or any other," said Robert Mellott, deputy director of the N.C. Department of Crime Control and Public Safety. "The only two things we have any kind of regulatory authority over are nuclear plants and the transportation of hazardous materials, but as far as production, storage and things of this kind, this department has no authority."

A major concern of experts on toxic substances is that companies are not required to report the substances they use on a plant-by-plant basis.

"The universe of chemicals is much larger than what is covered" by various substance control laws,

## Toxic Chemicals In N.C. Largely Unregulated

Continued From Preceding Page  
said Ted Taylor, a toxicologist with the Department of Human Resources.

"We certainly can't tell a company how to run its business," Taylor said. "But we want to prevent the release of chemicals, and if we don't know what (chemicals) are there, we're kind of behind the eight ball."

In an effort to tighten loopholes in toxic-substance regulation, state legislation has been drafted

requiring identification and labeling of toxic substances. It is being considered by the Legislative Research Commission as a proposal for the 1985 General Assembly.

"The assumption is, as we go from an agrarian economy to a high technology economy, all have to learn what the risks are," said N.C. Rep. Harry Payne Jr., D-New Hanover, who supports the bill. "We live and work around toxics all the time. We have a need to know what is going on in our communities."

# 'Not in my backyard, you don't!'

HENDERSONVILLE (NC) TIMES-NEWS 11/19/84

Times-News Raleigh Bureau

RALEIGH — Almost no one would dispute the supposition that if North Carolina is to continue its steady growth, the state must come up with ways to safely handle its own hazardous wastes. The big question is twofold: how to do it, and where.

As Attorney General Rufus Edmisten said during his gubernatorial campaign, waste disposal centers are like prisons: nobody wants one in his backyard.

North Carolina legislators are now grappling with those very problems and trying to come up with some solutions.

Meanwhile, citizen groups continue to fight overtures by private waste treatment firms. In Bladen County, Concerned Citizens for Ecology are protesting a Kentucky company's proposal to build an incinerator for low-level radioactive wastes in their rural county. In Scotland County, members of SCAT — Serious Concerns About Toxics — are trying to run out of Laurinburg a company that is considering construction of a hazardous waste disposal facility there.

The protesters are adamant, and they are also tenacious. And sometimes they come across evidence that reinvigorates them.

That's what happened last month to SCAT leader Ann Slaughter. A friend of hers went to the beach one weekend and came home with a series of newspaper articles from Greenville, S.C.

Anne Jackson



The articles told the sad tale of South Carolina's experience as a national "dumping ground" of chemical wastes, in the words of S.C. Gov. Dick Riley. Since 1978, when SCA Services took over the operation of what was once a small landfill in rural Sumter County, hundreds of thousands of tons of chemical waste have been brought to the Pinewood landfill, one of only two large commercial hazardous waste landfills in the Southeast.

According to a chart that accompanied the first installment of the *Greenville News* series, hazardous wastes from 29 states were trucked into the landfill during 1981. North Carolina was the chief out-of-state contributor, shipping 59 million pounds of sludge, solvents and pesticides to its neighbor to the south.

A former South Carolina environmental official told the newspaper that the Environmental Protec-

tion Agency "flat-out lied to us" when agency officials told South Carolina that other states would build landfills of their own.

No other state built a comparable disposal center, and when South Carolina tried last year to stop other states from using theirs, the EPA refused to allow it.

If South Carolina's history holds a warning to North Carolina legislators, it probably applies most to Bladen County. The proposed incinerator that U.S. Ecology wants to build there would be the only one of its kind in the nation, according to Dayne Brown, chief of the state's Radiation Protection Section.

Brown recently received the final two parts of U.S. Ecology's license application. After reviewing the bulky document, he requested answers to page after page of questions about it.

"It lacked a lot of detail that we felt was important to be in the application," said Brown, who will decide ultimately whether the license is granted. "We have trouble with overly generalized statements."

Rightly so.

While most North Carolinians probably would agree that the state has a responsibility to take care of its own wastes, they also want to make sure that no decision is made in haste or without proper information. The state is charting a course vital to its future. It must be mapped with utmost care.



"No, Jeffy! It's not connected!"

-12

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KEARNEY

FAMILY CIRCUS



# Acid rain and the planet Earth

Times-News Columnist

**A**cid rain is something everybody would like to do something about, but nobody wants to pay the cost.

So acid rain stays around to haunt us.

Acid rain, if you are not familiar with the stuff, is rain heavily laden with sulfur and other chemicals thrown out by smokestacks of heavy industry. The particulates released in the air combine with water to form rain drops. The rain is acidic. When it falls on land and is leached into streams and lakes, it kills fish and marine life. The result is lakes that are crystal clear with the ph value of vinegar.

Certain soils counteract the acid, but for the most part acid in the form of rain kills wildlife and plant life.

Areas hard hit by acid rain include the Northeast and especially the Adirondacks in Upstate New York, Canada's eastern provinces, North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains along the parkway from Plott Balsams to Mt. Mitchell, and now the Wild River Mountains in Wyoming. Alaska has reported acid rain on the tundra.

The problem is that industrial societies are less inclined to do something about acid rain for two reasons: 1. The evidence is not enough as to the cause and effect; 2. Industry says that in a

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case of options, either employment with acid rain or unemployment without acid rain, the choice is acid rain to keep people working.

Of course, the fallacy there is if the environment is destroyed nobody will be around to work or purchase the goods turned out by the industries that pollute.

The Wyoming problem really has Western states in a dilemma. Underpopulated for years and slow to develop, the states turned to industrialization for relief and paychecks for the population. Now it turns out the price is greater than what the states bargained for. Acid rain is destroying some very fragile rivers and lakes in the mountains, rivers and lakes people depend upon.

When people mention acid rain there is a feeling that the problem is somewhere else and not here and now. The federal government has failed to act because maintaining productive factories is considered more important than lakes in the Adirondacks and

Northeast. Canada has asked for relief but to no avail.

The solution is simple, but costly. Either shut down plants that are not equipped with modern chimney scrubbers to end the pollution, or put on the expensive chimney scrubbers that remove particulate matter and chemicals from the air.

A number of Western North Carolina plants have reduced the amount of sulfur in the air with the use of scrubbers costing millions of dollars and higher product costs, but the benefit of the state and region has been immense.

While public officials say acid rain can't really be traced to a particular plant, the fact it is a general problem reduces the need for specifics.

All particulate matter released in emissions should be reduced.

The cost-to-benefit ratio doesn't favor pollution in the long run. American industry, if it is to stay viable, must consider the environment.

Efforts to clean up acid rain, now a problem in the West, should be a priority of government, big government, rather than left to local and state governments which have no power of enforcement over factories three states and 300 miles away.

It also is a world-scale problem that must be addressed unless we wish to remember the late planet Earth.

# Time for new faces

The question of how and where Wake County should grow comes into sharp focus Monday when the county commissioners begin discussing new appointees to the planning board.

Terms of five of the board's 10 members, including four who have shown little or no concern for careful development, expire Dec. 1. The commissioners thus have the opportunity to correct an imbalance that threatens a quality of life that residents of Wake County have tended to take for granted.

For years, both the planning board and the board of commissioners have been dominated by the influence of those developers who believe that bigger is always better. The majority mind-set is reflected in the words of commissioner J. Stewart Adcock: "There's not anybody better qualified to make a planning and zoning decision than a developer."

No fewer than six of the 10 members of the planning board depend for their livelihood directly or indirectly on development. Two others — U.L. "Buddy" Lee and J. William "Billy" Smith — have regularly joined them in looking after the developers' interests.

None wears two hats more blatantly than Bern F. Bullard, a developer who built the Research Triangle Factory Outlet Mall and opposed tougher billboard restrictions along Interstate 40.

The past chairman of the board, John Y. Phelps, is a surveyor. James L. Purser is a vice president of Cameron-Brown Co., a major bankroller of development. The present chairman, Regina McLaurin, is vice president of McLaurin Parking Co. Geoffrey McLean is a

landscape architect. So is Anne Edmondson, though she has shown a commendable regard for protecting the environment.

It's long past time that Bullard, Phelps, McLaurin and Lee left the board. The fifth member of the board whose term expires next month, N.C. State geology professor Charles Welby, has often been a voice in the wilderness — it was he who earlier this year cautioned the board that it was doing less to protect the Falls Lake watershed than what state environmental specialists recommend.

The commissioners should waive the tenure rule in Welby's case as they have in Phelps'. But the commissioners need to do more than simply return Welby to the board. In the interest of all Wake residents, they need to bring the board into balance by appointing members whose first interest isn't in bulldozing the landscape and paving it over with wall-to-wall concrete decorated with shopping centers and condos.

Regulating growth in the interest of residents instead of that of developers is something most Wake residents, if asked, would say they want. Without that regulation, the day will come when voters take a negative attitude toward any further growth at all. That healthy balance cannot be struck without ridding the planning board of its developer bias.

## Good Morning

North Carolina's holiday tables offered ample proof that this state hasn't even come close to sending

Frank and Ernest

