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Editorial: Casualties of budget battle
Thursday, April 21, 2011

When voters installed a Republican majority in the N.C. General Assembly for the first time in a century, they did so calling for change in Raleigh and a desire to see state spending curtailed in the face of a massive budget shortfall. The expectation was that the GOP leadership would find ways to work with Democratic Gov. Beverly Perdue.

Last weekend instead saw Republicans instigate a game of political chicken with the governor, taking 37,000 unemployed North Carolinians unwillingly along for the ride. The people of this state expect good-faith negotiations to resolve this budget crisis and deserve better than the use of jobless benefits as leverage to force Perdue's agreement to GOP demands.

Perdue continues to deal with blowback over her absence from the state on Saturday as a deadly line of storms rolled across North Carolina. Similar scrutiny should be given to the actions of the Legislature, whose GOP leaders approved an extension of unemployment benefits on the day they were set to expire.

Why the delay? Because the legislation passed included provisions intended to force Perdue into a corner over the state budget. Accepting the bill meant agreeing to $1.4 billion in cuts sought by the Republican majority and extending the jobless benefits. A veto would mean the governor retained her negotiating latitude but could be blamed for halting the checks to those struggling to get by without work.

It comes as little surprise that the governor vetoed the bill and sought to pin blame on the GOP leaders for forcing that decision. Republicans, knowing they lack the ability to override Perdue's veto in the House, are pointing fingers at their Democratic colleagues, calling them to account for hurting thousands of unemployed North Carolinians. Those
affected, for their part, simply want the bill split so that jobless benefits and budget cuts are considered individually.

That would be the mature and responsible course of action, and thus the most likely for the state's elected officials. The impasse on display in Raleigh is without modern equivalent and appears to set the stage for a grand showdown on the budget between a steadfast Democratic governor and an unyielding Republican majority four votes short of overriding a veto in the N.C. House.

North Carolina can ill afford political gamesmanship that inflicts further hardship on thousands. The two sides should agree to extend the jobless benefits, an effort to forge the common ground that will serve them in the weeks to come.
Protesters march in support of the legalization of medical marijuana during Hemp Fest, an educational rally organized by Young Americans for Liberty at East Carolina University, as they walk towards downtown Wednesday, April 20, 2011. (Justin Falls/The Daily Reflector)

**Hemp Fest: Students say 'get wise'**

By Jackie Drake  
The Daily Reflector  
Thursday, April 21, 2011

Some students at East Carolina University want the public to “get wise” about potential benefits of marijuana.

Chanting “get wise, legalize,” about 25 students marched through downtown Greenville on Wednesday as part of the nationwide Million Marijuana March to raise awareness of the legalization effort. The march was part of the second annual Hemp Fest on the brickyard in front of Mendenhall Student Center, hosted by the ECU Young Americans for Liberty (YAL), formerly the College Libertarians, and a group promoting marijuana as a safer alternative to alcohol.

“We've got a lot of enthusiasm out here,” YAL president Matthew Blackmon said. “This year we're trying to educate people and expand horizons beyond pop culture.”

While the SAFER (Safer Alternative For Enjoyable Recreation) group encourages Americans to consume cannabis in lieu of alcohol, YAL does not encourage abuse of any substance, legal or otherwise. Both groups call for the right of Americans to legally choose what they consume and for less money to be spent punishing a substance less deadly than alcohol.

“Greenville is a great place to do this; there's a lot of drinking here and violent things happen,” SAFER member Ryan Rivera said. “Marijuana is safer. We need to re-legalize it. There were no laws against it prior to the 1930s.”

“No one has died directly from marijuana,” Blackmon said. “At the federal level the U.S. spends $600 per second on enforcing the drug policy, and states spend more.”
“If we legalized marijuana, that would reduce 75 percent of the drug trade,” YAL founder Jesse Mignona said.

Both YAL and SAFER support the legalization of hemp for industrial purposes such as paper, rope, clothing, oil and food. Vendors on the brickyard had samples of hemp products available.

“Hemp is an amazing fiber; it really does everything better,” YAL member Richard Creighton said. “It's durable, the strength is incredible, it's rot resistant, and the crop is high yield and doesn't have bugs. It's literally a wonder crop.”

The groups also support two circulating pieces of North Carolina legislation, House Bill 324 to amend possession penalties and House Bill 1380 to allow medical marijuana use. For more information, visit www.eculiberty.org.

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The average American, as parent, student and taxpayer, has little idea of the academic rot at so many of our colleges. Save for a tiny handful of the nation's colleges, what distinguishes one college from another is the magnitude of that rot.

One of the best sources of information about our colleges is the New York City-based Manhattan Institute's quarterly Web magazine, Minding the Campus, edited by John Leo, former columnist for U.S. News & World Report.

The magazine's Winter 2010 edition contains an article by Dr. Candace de Russy, former member of the board of trustees of the State University of New York (SUNY), titled “Hate-America Sociology.” De Russy's colleague sent her a copy of a student's exam from an introductory sociology class found lying in a room at an East Coast public college. The professor had given it a perfect score of 100. Here are some of the questions asked and the student's written response:

“Question: How does the United States ‘steal' the resources of other (third world) countries?
“Answer: We steal through exploitation. Our multinationals are aware that indigenous people in developing nations have been coaxed off their plots and forced into slums. Because it is lucrative, our multinationals offer them extremely low wage labor that cannot be turned down.
“Question: Why is the U.S. on shaky moral ground when it comes to preventing illegal immigration?
“Answer: Some say that it is wrong of the United States to prevent illegal immigration because the same people we are denying entry to, we have exploited for the purpose of keeping the American wheel spinning.” ...

“Question: What is the interactionist approach to gender?
“Answer: The majority of multi-gender encounters are male-dominated. (F)or example, while involved in conversation, the male is much more likely to interrupt. Most likely because the male believes the female's expressed thoughts are inferior to his own.

Out of retaliation fears, de Russy withheld the name and university of her colleague who sent the exam. Teaching students hate-America indoctrination is widespread, as I've documented in the past.

A few years ago, according to UCLA's Bruin Standard, Mary Corey, UCLA history professor, instructed her class, “Capitalism isn't a lie on purpose. It's just a lie.” She continued, “(Capitalists) are swine. ... They're bastard people.”

Rod Swanson, a UCLA economics professor, told his class, “The United States of America, backed by facts, is the greediest and most selfish country in the world.”

University officials are aware of this kind of academic rot, but not university trustees who bear the ultimate responsibility for the university's welfare. Trustees are mostly yes-men for the president. Legislators and charitable foundations that pour billions into colleges are unaware as well. Most tragically, parents who cough up thousands in tuition to send their youngsters off to be educated, rather than indoctrinated, are unaware of the academic rot as well.

You say, “Williams, what can be done?” Students should record classroom professorial propaganda and give it wide distribution over the Internet. I've taught for more than 40 years and have routinely invited students to record my lectures so they don't have to be stenographers during class.

I have no idea of where those recordings have wound up, but if you find them, you'll hear zero proselytization or discussion of my political and other personal preferences. To do otherwise, I consider to be academic dishonesty.

Walter Williams is an economics professor at George Mason University and a columnist for Creators Syndicate.
Bill Friday, speaking frankly
Published Thu, Apr 21, 2011 02:00 AM

BY JIM JENKINS - Staff Writer

Editorial

Last week's festivity in Chapel Hill was planned as a celebration, a 40th anniversary, strictly huzzahs all around for William C. Friday and his public television show on the UNC-TV network, "North Carolina People." When the program reached the 35th anniversary milestone, a black-tie fundraiser was attached, and the state's most illustrious citizens turned out in high number.

This time out, UNC's President Emeritus, Bill Friday, agreed to an event more reflective of his own quiet nature, so lunch was served in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's alumni center. (Like many buildings on that campus and others in the UNC system, it is named for someone Friday knew personally and from whom he often got support for worthy projects on campus: the late George Watts Hill.)

A cross-section of people attended, 400 or 500, and included folks who just wanted to say hello and thanks and congrats, and family, and yes, those same attendees from five years back.

Just put it this way: If anyone in North Carolina needed something moved or shaken on last Thursday around noon, they'd have had to wait until this party broke up.

Many had been guests on "North Carolina People," which is the network's longest running show and could advertise itself as featuring everyone from "artisans to Andy," meaning the multiple-time guest Mr. Griffith. Had Mayberry's sheriff been there, and heard Friday's forceful closing remarks, he might well have rendered the oft-used phrase from the show which sometimes signaled a sheriff's pride: "You beat everything, you know that?"

Yes, Bill Friday, the most influential force for good in North Carolinia over the last 50 years and then some, might have merely enjoyed himself, basking in ovations and recognition. At 90, his eye is not dimmed nor his passion diminished, and thus the reason for what might be dubbed "Friday's Thursday surprise."

Here is what happened. As the forks were hitting the salads in Chapel Hill, the word was ringing 'round Jones Street, in the halls of the Legislative Building, that lawmakers (with Republicans in the lead) were looking at cutting the $12 million state appropriation to support the UNC-TV network. The warning from the free-market critics of public funding is, raise the money yourselves and do the best you can do.
This may be the ramification of a state budget in dire straits. Or, it could be that conservative lawmakers buy into what is a frankly silly notion shared by some in Congress that public television and radio everywhere is part of some liberal media conspiracy. And while the UNC network has had a few stumbles along the way (what private or public institution has not?), it provides really the only statewide news network that goes from the mountains to the coast, and broadcasts some very fine entertainment programming that includes sophisticated drama and comedy and music from symphonic to bluegrass.

It is a force for unity, for pulling the state together.

It also represents what in hindsight was a bold, even brazen idea, the construction of such a network from scratch. In the early 1950s, Kay Kyser, the retired big band leader living in Chapel Hill, the late Billy Carmichael of what is now the UNC system and Friday (not yet the UNC system president) set about to raise the money for a public television project. They put together $1.8 million, got more from the General Assembly and rallied the determined folks within the university's ranks. (Friday gives them most of the credit.)

The building of a network took time, and more private and public money, but the UNC-TV range is now deep and broad and takes the public service mission seriously.

So does Friday, who closed his remarks at this luncheon celebration in this way: "On a personal note I speak for no one else. Yesterday morning, I read the news reports on the budget recommendations being placed before the General Assembly related to public TV and the institutions of the system. These proposals if implemented would be a tragedy for public television, our institutions and the state itself. These proposals should not be allowed to stand. Tomorrow morning we must go to the people and explain the destructive consequences that will surely follow. When the people know and are informed, they have not failed the university. They will not do it now."

Those who have chosen to attack the public television network have picked a foolish cause. And they have acquired the wrong enemy. He is 90, and he still beats everything, you know that?

Deputy editorial page editor Jim Jenkins can be reached at 919-829-4513 or at jjenkins@newsobserver.com
Chris Hondros, a graduate of N.C. State University who spent the past decade taking photos in the world's nastiest war zones, was killed Wednesday while covering a battle in Libya.

Hondros, 41, was one of a group of journalists who came under fire during a battle between rebels and government troops in Misrata. Tim Hetherington, a documentary photographer who directed the Oscar-nominated "Restrepo," also was killed in the battle.

Employed by Getty Images, an international photo agency, Hondros has won some of photography's top awards for his work on the world's hottest battlegrounds - from Kosovo to Afghanistan to Iraq to Sierra Leone.

In recent days, his images from Libya appeared across the world. On the day he died, his photo of a Libyan man digging a grave for a dead civilian stretched prominently across four columns of the front page of The Washington Post.

Born in New York City, Hondros was young when his family moved to Fayetteville, where his mother lives. He studied English literature at NCSU and graduated in 1993.

While an NCSU student, Hondros was photo editor of the Technician, the student newspaper. One day, Editor-in-Chief Bill Holmes told Hondros his photo budget was being cut.

So he quit.
"He wanted to do a good job and felt he needed the money and those resources," Holmes, now communications director for State Rep. Joe Hackney, the House minority leader. "That has always stuck with me."

Hondros then got a master's degree in visual communication from Ohio University and worked in that area before returning to North Carolina to work for The Fayetteville Observer, where he spent three years on the photo staff.

"He was very well-read," remembered Johnny Horne, the Fayetteville newspaper's photo editor. "He knew a lot about the world around him, which let him make the connections he made with so many people on assignments."

In Fayetteville, he snared top assignments. In 1996, he snapped photos of Hurricane Fran's catastrophic damage.

He left Fayetteville to join The Associated Press in New York City, then moved to Getty, where he set out to photograph the world's battlefields.

He was engaged to be married this summer.

He was always clear about his career ambitions, recalled JD Pooley, who became friends with Hondros when they worked at the Troy Daily News in Ohio during the mid-1990s.

"He could give two flying licks about shooting a basketball game," Pooley said Wednesday. "He wanted to be in a war zone."

But Pooley won't remember his friend as a reckless adrenaline junkie. Hondros went to war zones because the photos and stories were poignant, powerful and important. He had a healthy respect for war zones but didn't fear them, Pooley recalled. The photos made it worth it.

**A passion for stories**

"He was fearless and had a passion for telling stories," Pooley said.

His work has been widely lauded. In 2004, he was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for work in war-torn Liberia. And in 2006, he received the Robert Capa Gold Medal, war photography's top honor, for his work in Iraq.

His best-known work may have come from the Liberian civil war. Among Hondros' photos are two shots of a young, bare-chested Liberian rebel. In one frame, he fires a rocket from a launcher resting on his shoulder. In the next frame, the exultant soldier leaps high in the air, smiling proudly for Hondros' camera, celebrating a direct hit.

Hondros wasn't overly boastful about his work, friends say, but he liked that photograph enough that he displayed it at his New York City apartment.
But he wanted more. He wondered about that young soldier. Did he survive? What happened to him?

So a year or two later, Hondros returned to Liberia and tracked him down. The former rebel had become a family man, enrolled in school.

Hondros chronicled that part of the young man's life as well, closing the loop.

"That was Chris," Pooley recalled. "He always thought about the people he photographed."

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College hopefuls look for green universities
By Mary Beth Marklein, USA TODAY
Updated 22h 16m ago | April 20, 2011

The nation's college-bound students are increasingly looking for green — and no, that doesn't mean just money.

2008 photo by Vince Palermo, Global Institute of Sustainability
Arizona State University graduate student Lana Idriss harvests campus-grown foods to be served at campus dining facilities.

Green means eco-friendly, and 69% of college applicants this year say having information about a college's commitment to environmental issues would contribute to their decision to apply to or attend the school, according to a survey of 8,200 students by The Princeton Review. That's up from 64% in 2008.

Academic reputation and financial aid still matter most, but "the environmental factor (is) definitely one of the things that makes a difference," says Tucker Johnson, 19, of Harrison, Maine, who was offered admission to nine schools and must commit to one by May 1. Like other students nationwide, he is visiting campuses this month with a checklist of criteria. Among them: a sincere commitment to sustainability.

Colleges are responding in kind, touting environmental-minded academic programs, green buildings for living and learning and opportunities for students to make a difference.

"Many more schools are simply talking about their commitment to the environment because so many college-bound students are asking those questions," says Robert Franek, senior vice president of publishing for The Princeton Review, which today is releasing a free downloadable Guide to 311 Green Colleges. The guide, published in partnership with the U.S. Green Building Council, also is available at usatoday.com.
Colleges were selected based on a range of factors, including how much local food is served, how much waste is diverted from landfills and whether transportation options such as free bus passes or car shares are offered.

Students are "incredibly smart consumers, and they make their decisions based on a pretty deep understanding" of sustainability, says Rachel Gutter, director of the council's Center for Green Schools.

**What they're finding:**

- College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor, Maine, includes the travel mileage of every prospective student who comes to visit as part of the carbon debt it must offset to remain carbon-neutral.
- At Elon University in Elon, N.C., a touch-screen allows students and parents to monitor energy and water consumption in real time at the school's greenest building, one of the first stops on campus tours.
- At Warren Wilson College in Asheville, N.C., prospective students can "see, hear and smell best practices" in sustainability on the school's Green Walkabout; stops include an Eco Dorm, farm and recycling center.

"We celebrate that mainstream colleges and universities have embraced this, but it is humorous," says Richard Blomgren, Warren Wilson's vice president of admission. "We've been doing it as a way of life for so long. Many of the major initiatives we've done over the decade have been student-driven."