

THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 15, 1981

Rural versus urban in N.C.

It probably comes as a surprise to Charlotteans caught in rush hour or in holiday traffic along the Salisbury-Lexington-High Point-Greensboro-Durham crescent on I-85, but the new Census Bureau figures confirm it: North Carolinians are among the least urbanized populations in the United States.

Only Vermont and West Virginia have a clearly smaller proportion of their people living in urban areas. Mississippi, Maine and South Dakota are only barely behind North Carolina in percentage of people living in urban areas.

The statistics are even more impressive when you consider that the Census Bureau's definition of "urban area" is a concentration of only 2,500 people.

According to the 1980 census, North Carolina's population is only 48 percent urban. Or, turned around, more than half of North Carolina's people live in communities of less than 2,500 population.

The statistics lead down some interesting paths in and of themselves. Nevada, for example, is the fourth most urban population in the country — ahead of even New York state.

And Alaska's population is more urban than Georgia's, South Carolina's, Kentucky's, Tennessee's and Alabama's. Obviously, states such as Alaska, Nevada and Utah with few cities or towns and vast expanses of open range, desert or wilderness will have a larger percentage of their people living in "urban areas" than states such as North Carolina, Vermont or West Virginia which have numerous small towns and country-store crossroads.

But the statistics don't tell the whole story. They don't tell how

many of those people living in communities smaller than 2,500 work or shop in the larger urban areas. The eight urban counties of Buncombe, Cumberland, Durham, Forsyth, Guilford, Mecklenburg, New Hanover and Wake have 32.8 percent of the state's population, but they generated 43 percent of the retail sales in fiscal 1979-80.

Nor do the statistics indicate the magnet effect of larger urban areas, with their service and transportation centers, in attracting industries and retail establishments to nearby small cities and towns.

Yet, since legislative representation is based on population, the Census Bureau statistics indicate that North Carolina communities with even the simplest of urban problems will continue to be outnumbered in the legislature by communities that feel none of those problems. Cities such as Charlotte, Raleigh and Greensboro that are feeling the full force of the problems of urbanization have only the power of sympathy and persuasion to seek state help in meeting those problems. They simply do not have the votes.

The non-urban nature of North Carolina's population is arguably one of its more valuable assets. But so is the economic health of its larger urban areas.

Urban voices in the legislature and administration need to be able to speak with a unity they have heretofore lacked. And they need to persuade their colleagues in nearby, non-urban areas that, despite cold statistics, the health and viability of North Carolina is going to depend increasingly on the health and viability of its urban centers.

A boost for urban transportation

Last week N.C. Transportation secretary William R. Roberson told an advisory group, "Although we will certainly build some major new thoroughfares in our urban areas, we'll have to do a better job of managing the current system."

His example of an approach to better management was a corridor improvement plan for Charlotte's Central Avenue. That plan concentrates on making better use of existing right-of-way, rather than adding traffic lanes. To encourage commuters to ride buses, for example, the plan envisions new park-and-ride lots and electronic devices that will change signals for

express buses.

The Central Avenue approach is important for Charlotte, and the state's other urban areas. Roberson, echoing what planners have been saying here, said that with funding for new highways scarce, solutions to clogged urban roads must go beyond adding traffic lanes.

The Central Avenue project will be the first thoroughfare in the state to use signal "preemption" to give preference to mass transit. The funds approved by the state are a welcome boost to this city's efforts to deal effectively, and fairly, with its transportation problems.

Teamsters probe should be revived

The Labor Department has some work to do if even half of what is contained in a Senate subcommittee's report is true.

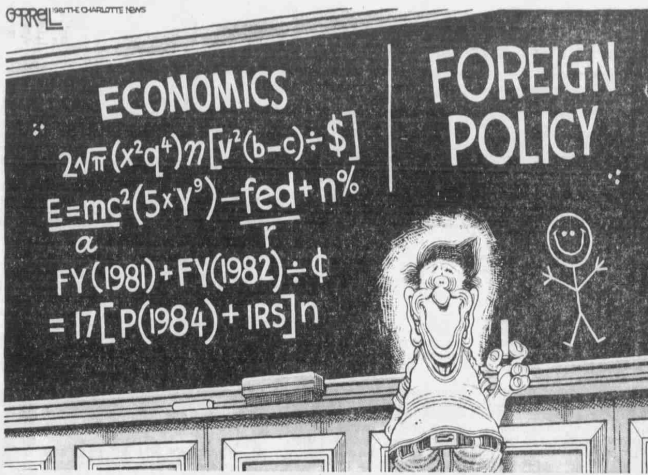
The Senate permanent investigation subcommittee issued a report Wednesday saying that the Labor Department mishandled an investigation of the Teamsters Union and its Central States Pension Fund. The report indicates that, giving the Labor Department the benefit of most doubts, the mishandling was careless and incompetent at best. At worst, the report says, evidence was knowingly destroyed and investigators engaged in compromising behavior and even had links to organized crime themselves. The department, says the report, missed "a historic opportunity" to rid the union and its controversial pension fund of organized crime influence.

Ties between the Teamsters and organized crime are no secret. Nor is the number of federal indictments and conviction of top Teamsters officials. Nor, unfortunately,

is the cozy relationship the Teamsters Union and its leaders have enjoyed with most recent presidential administrations, including the present one.

Since most of the allegations of carelessness and misbehavior contained in the subcommittee's report took place in previous administrations, the present administration's labor Department is in a good position to take the subcommittee's report as a call for a new investigation, one that will not make the same mistakes and one that will not be under the same pressures and influences.

An administration that came into office on a pledge of restoring clean government, responsive government and moral government cannot afford to ignore the evidence in the subcommittee's report or the larger body of evidence amassed against the Teamsters leadership. The Senate — and the people — should expect no less. And they should get no less.



Moonbeam's muff

Medfly mess should end Brown's national pretensions

It may be small comfort for a big chunk of the California agricultural community facing disaster, but the bitter among them could seek delight in the very real possibility that Gov. Jerry Brown will be the most prominent casualty of this summer's Mediterranean fruit fly fiasco.

There's no doubt that, from a continent away, it is difficult to understand all the antics of Brown (known appropriately by some as Governor Moonbeam). But there seems little chance that his lack of wisdom and leadership through the medfly mess will go unremembered by voters across the continent if he seeks to once again satisfy his pretension to national prominence.

Governor Moonbeam has muffed it. And for those who feel that he should someday be entrusted with the country's destiny, it's instructive to consider the medfly mess in some detail.

Last year, officials found that the Mediterranean fruit fly was present in small orchards and back yards in the area surrounding San Jose. The discovery properly concerned those officials, who pointed out that if the medfly spread, a big chunk of California's fruit and vegetable crop could be lost. It was suggested that the medfly could be stopped with aerial spraying of malathion, an insecticide used for many agricultural and domestic purposes including flea powder for domestic pets.

The reaction was strong. Thousands of San Jose area residents seemed to become convinced overnight that spraying malathion from helicopters or airplanes would cause birth defects or cancer. No way, they said, will you spray. And how did the governor respond?

Brown, jaw jutting and eyes blazing, thrust himself to the front of the frightened San Jose constituency,



Kent Bernhard
EDITOR

and agreed — despite the fact that aerial spraying of malathion had been used effectively for years, despite the fact that the overwhelming body of scientific evidence fails to show danger to humans if malathion is properly used and despite the fact that the medfly posed a danger to the livelihoods of thousands of Californians.

Through the months, the medfly continued to thrive, until the national administration of another Californian, Ronald Reagan, muscled Brown into allowing the aerial spraying to begin last month.

The spraying is probably too late. Agricultural officials say that there's a good chance that the medfly will get into the country's richest agricultural region, the San Joaquin Valley, where crops that are susceptible to the medfly were valued last year at more than a quarter of a billion dollars.

If we'd have sprayed last year, they say, there'd be little doubt that we could have stopped this from happening.

Meanwhile, across the continent in Florida, officials this week were taking prompt action to put down a potential danger from the medfly to that state's citrus crops, while Brown has continued to complain about the possibility of importing Califor-

nia's medfly.

If there's a lesson to be learned from the medfly mess, it's not that we — or our leaders — should ignore the potential environmental consequences of our actions. But we should understand — and leaders such as Brown should help us — that living in any society involves assessing and dealing with risks that may be necessary to keep the society functioning.

In the medfly case, the known risk of aerial spraying of malathion was so close to being nonexistent that it couldn't possibly outweigh the damage to society of failing to check the medfly and its potential for damaging thousands of people's livelihoods.

And that's where Brown blew it. He chose the path of political expediency rather than leadership. Governor Moonbeam just didn't show the grit we've got to expect from our leaders.

In a way, that's a shame.

First, because Brown's antics have always been good for a laugh. More importantly, though, in the past, Brown has had some important and interesting things to say about the kind of world we'll be inhabiting over the next several decades. He has raised, in an apparently thoughtful way, some questions about America's role in a world that will see two billion people added to its population in the next 20 years, and how we, as a society, can equip ourselves for vast changes.

Last year, at the Democratic National Convention, he said in a speech: "In a world made small by jets and satellite communication, our oceans and missiles will not protect us if we separate ourselves from the wider longing of humanity."

It's too bad that a man with that kind of vision can't see because of the flies in his eyes.

letters Address: Letters, Box 30308, Charlotte, N.C. 28230. Include day and evening phone numbers.

U.S. can't afford overpaid federal workers

Charlotte

Editors, The News: It's about time we had a leader that would stop the greed of federal workers who demand higher pay for less work than their civilian counterparts who actually pay their wages. I can afford neither a \$40,000 air controller nor a \$10 minimum per hour postal delivery employee or clerk who sells stamps.

In addition they are exempt from Social Security contributions and do not contribute to the aged and disabled, even though their families may benefit through the program.

They pretend to fight the administration but actually are fighting and demanding from us, the taxpayers, excessive pay that will come out of our

pockets. It would easily solve our national problem in Social Security and excessive taxation if federal workers and all others that earn an income contribute their fair share to provide a decent life for all citizens that are aged or disabled and unable to earn an income.

Politicians can get away with greed for awhile until they are voted out of office. But we can't vote federal employees out, so we must depend on a strong leader to monitor excess in demands of people that threaten our country.

Greed destroyed the Roman Empire; it will destroy the U.S. What happened to patriotism and dedication to service? I felt it in World War II, but cannot feel it now.

The air controllers will learn a great

lesson while out looking for employment. In the absence of dedication and productivity, no person deserves more than the minimum wage.

JOSEPH EIFRID

No more liberal cartoonists

Charlotte

Editors, The News: How about keeping Kate-Salley Palauer's editorial cartoons out of The News (The News, Aug. 3). Charlotte's newspapers already have an ample number of left-wing cartoonists without readers having to endure Miz Kate's penny's worth.

J.R. CHERRY

In places where wine flows like water, the water flows like wine

"There are not in this world any lords of higher lineage than the great wines of Medoc, which form the first nobility of the vintages of France, whether they be Margaux, Saint-Julien, Saint-Estephe, Pauillac or Moulis. They rival each other in their incomparable elegance and in their rich, ruby-red color."

That is what they would have told you if you had gone to Bordeaux for the harvesting of the 1959 grapes. As a guest of Alexis Lichine, proprietor of the Chateau Priure-Lichine and Lascombes, I spent a few days in the Medoc, watching one of the great vintages being brought in.

M. Lichine promised to take me on a tour of the Medoc and we started, quite naturally, with his own Chateau Lascombes. He told me that in the course of the tour I would be asked to taste some wines and he didn't want me to disagree



Art Buchwald
LOS ANGELES TIMES
SYNDICATE

him. I practiced by tasting some wine from one of his vats. It tasted good and I swallowed it. "No, no, no," he said. "Don't swallow it. Swish it around in your mouth." "Clockwise or counterclockwise?" "Clockwise. Counterclockwise is for

Burgundy. And then spit it on the floor." I practiced a few times until I got it right. "Now say something," he said. "It sure puckers the inside of your mouth."

"No, that's not what you're supposed to say," Lichine cried. "You're supposed to say something beautiful like, 'How full and generous. It will fulfill its promise.'" "Okay, but it still puckers the inside of your mouth."

Our first stop was Chateau Margaux, one of the four greatest wine chateaux in France. We visited the chateau, the long shed where the grapes are put in vats and barrels. The master of the chateau asked me if I wanted to taste some. I nodded and he gave me a glass.

I swished it around and spat it out. Lichine looked pleased at his pupil. "It

has a texture all its own," I said. "It tastes like cotton." Lichine kicked me in the leg. "What he means," he said to the master, "is that it tastes like velvet."

After we were shown around the Chateau (I discovered that no one in Bordeaux presses wine in their bare feet any more), Lichine took me to the Chateau Latour, another of the four greatest vineyards in France.

I tasted the Latour wine and said, "A great wine. It has such a rich, soft flavor."

Lichine smiled. "Could I have some water?" I asked the owner, Count Hubert de Beaumont. Lichine's face dropped. "Water?" The count looked puzzled. "Do you want to wash your hands?" Before I could say I wanted to drink

the water, Lichine dragged me away.

"Never, never, never ask for water in Bordeaux," he admonished me.

"But I tell you my mouth is all puckered up. My cheeks are stuck to my teeth."

Lichine would have none of it. The last chateau we visited belonged to Philippe de Rothschild, owner of the Mouton-Rothschild vineyards. M. Rothschild, a gracious host, showed us through his caves and invited us to have a glass of champagne with him in his house, one of the most beautiful in France.

We went upstairs and a servant served us each a bubbling glass. Lichine toasted his host, and we each sipped some. Then as Lichine looked on in horror, I swished it around in my mouth.

He screamed, "No." But it was too late. I spat it on the floor.