

Libertarian candidates vow 50% cut in deficit by 1996

By Dale Perry
Piedmont political reporter

Two Libertarians running for Congress today say unless drastic cuts are made in the federal deficit, the nation is headed for an economic catastrophe.

U.S. Senate candidate Mark Johnson of Columbia and Jo Jorgensen of Greenville, who is seeking the 4th Congressional District seat, pledged to reduce the federal deficit by 50 percent by 1996.

They also pledged not to seek re-election if they failed.

Johnson said he would start reducing the federal deficit by cutting military and welfare spending by at least 50 percent.

"We are now a warfare and welfare state, and we cannot afford to keep spending in these two areas like we have in the past," said Johnson, who also ran for lieutenant governor in 1986 and state House District 72 in 1988.

A third Libertarian candidate

seeking a state Senate seat said in a prepared release he thinks there is a way to cut state taxes without cutting services.

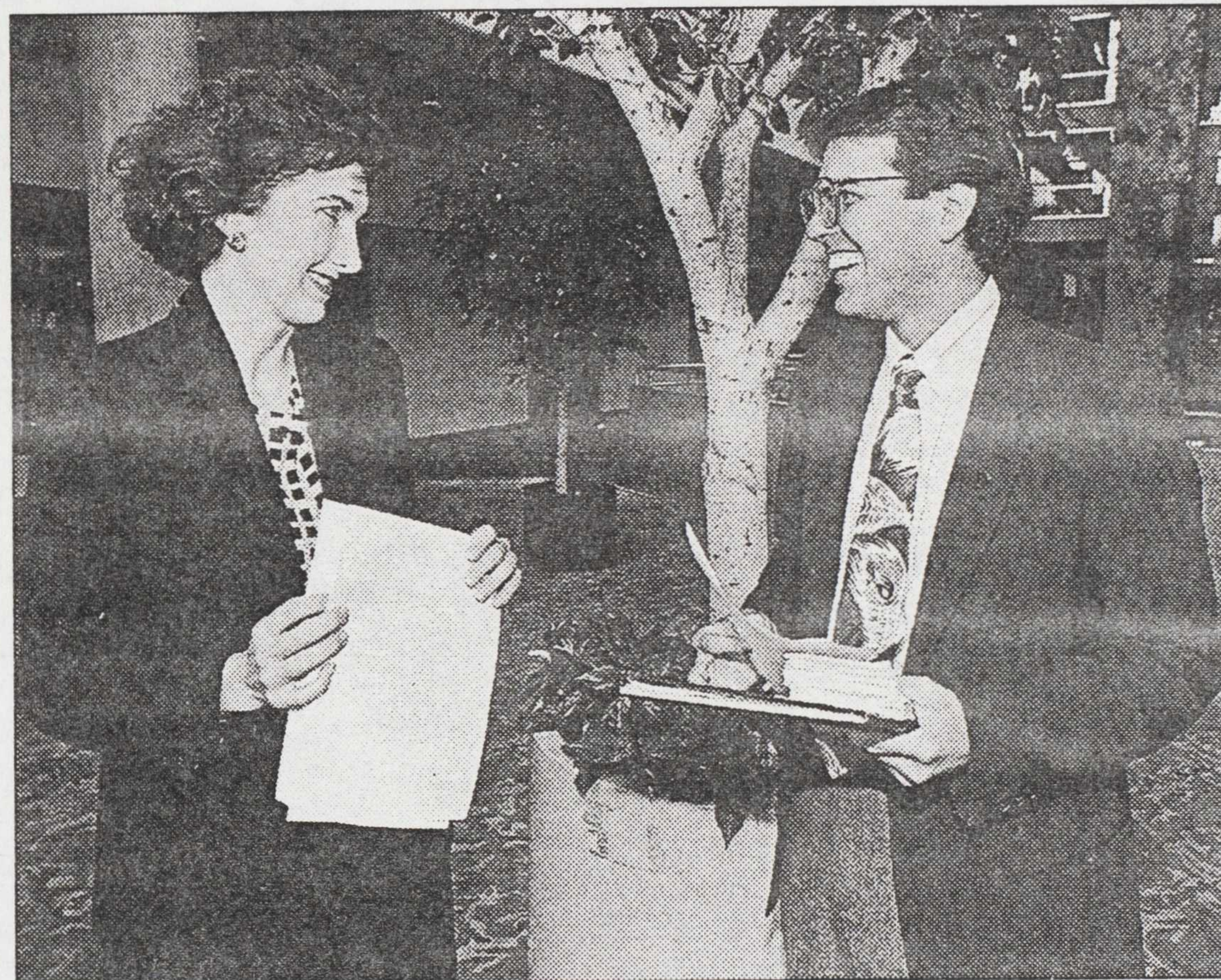
Rick Watson of Greenville, who is running against Democratic state Sen. Theo Mitchell in Senate District 7, said he would privatize some state services to lower taxes.

Johnson said that he would cut military spending by closing expensive bases such as Camp Pendleton near San Diego and building another base to train Marines.

"The land that Camp Pendleton sits on is worth \$50 a square foot, and we can get land in the North and South for 50 cents a square foot," Johnson said.

Johnson said that the federal government has no business in welfare and that if he is elected he will work to privatize social services.

Johnson said that in signing the pledge to reduce the federal deficit by one half, he is challenging



— Bill Kalis

Jorgensen, left, and Johnson on at morning news conference

Democratic U.S. Sen. Ernest "Fritz" Hollings and Republican candidate Tommy Hartnett, both of whom are from Charleston, to do the same.

Mrs. Jorgensen said she also is issuing a challenge to Democratic U.S. Rep. Liz Patterson and Republican candidate Bob

Inglis.

Johnson and Mrs. Jorgensen said that they are supporting a national grassroots effort called "Lead or Leave," which Libertarians have created to put pressure on candidates to cut the federal deficit or quit the jobs to which they have been elected.