

Still Overreacting

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission continues to overreact in the wake of Three Mile Island, handing down rulings designed more to serve its own political needs than the legitimate obligations of the industry.

We are thinking particularly of the order directing Duke Power Company to show cause why its three Oconee units should not be shut down by February 15 for certain modifications stemming from the Three Mile Island mishap almost a year ago.

But, in addition to that, we are thinking of the commission's handling of the so-called earthquake problem at Vepco, which has been forced to keep two of its nuclear stations off-line for more than a year while certain stress evaluations are being made.

This policy has already resulted in millions of dollars in additional costs to Vepco customers in Virginia and eastern North Carolina. In addition, the commission has dragged its feet in permitting Vepco to put a newly-completed nuclear station on line, forcing it to resort to more expensive oil generating processes.

If the commission sticks to its order and requires Duke Power to shut down its three Oconee units the middle of next month, that will impose upon Duke's customers an additional cost of \$250,000 to \$1.5-million per day per unit for replacement power.

Duke Power has filed a counter-proposal, calling for a sequential shutdown of the three units, which the company contends fully satisfies any realistic approach to public health and safety. What NRC will do with the counter-proposal remains to be seen, but we hope it will not show the callous disregard for the electric customers in this area that it has shown in the area served by Vepco.

Duke Power Company claims it has already completed 21 of the 24 changes ordered in the wake of Three Mile Island, many of them even before they were ordered. Further, the company contends that the situation is not so serious as to justify the simultaneous shutdown of the three units.

These changes, or course, are being ordered in the name of health and safety; but we submit that the simultaneous shutting down of these three units poses a greater threat to the health and safety of the millions of customers in the Duke territory than is posed by any lurking threat of a nuclear accident.

The winter will be reaching its coldest period in the middle of February and that is when Duke's demands for power will be peaking. To cut off 35 per cent of its total capacity at that time would pose a serious challenge to the utility in meeting the most basic needs of its customers.

A more sensible approach would be to permit Duke Power to shut down Oconee No. 2 in mid-February after Oconee No. 1, now closed for refueling and modifications, is brought back on line. And then shut down Oconee No. 3 after No. 2 has been returned to service. Under such a schedule, the company has committed itself to completing all the modifications by May 31, 1980.

Beware Of Offers

Reports by the Better Business Bureau indicate there has been a great increase in work-at-home

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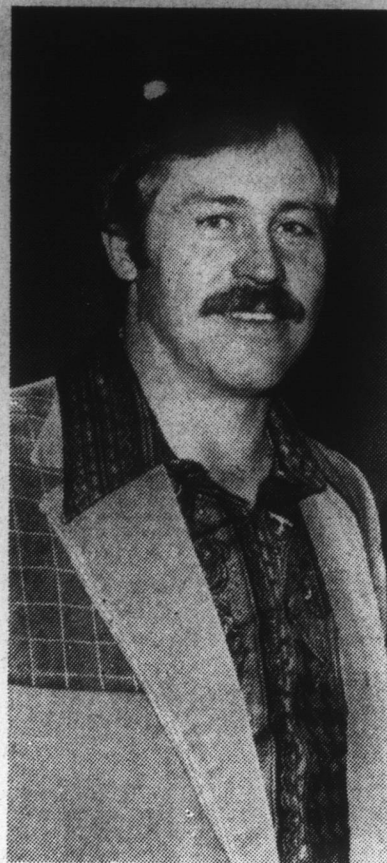
Peoples Bank Appoints Perry



Sidney L. Perry



GUESTS OF ACADEMY — Bucky Dent, New York Yankee's shortstop, left, and Jim "Catfish" Hunter, former Yankees pitcher, right, were guests of the Chowan Academy PTO at a steak supper held last Thursday night at the Edenton National Guard Armory. The annual supper is a fund raising project of the Parent-Teacher Organization.



State Agencies To Assist Operation Overcharge

The state attorney general and the public staff of the N. C. Utilities Commission have been asked to intervene on behalf of Operation Overcharge for a complaint filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission alleging that Vepco is charging excessively high rates.

The two agencies were directed to take action in a memo from Governor Jim Hunt addressed to Attorney General Rufus Edmisten and public staff director Robert Fischbach. They were asked to formally intervene and provide any assistance possible.

The complaint was filed January 3 by Operation Overcharge, a Greenville based consumer group formed by chambers of commerce in the 22 county Vepco service area, accusing Vepco of charging higher wholesale rates than Carolina Power and Light Co. or Duke

Power Co. The complaint concerned rates charged to municipalities that operate their own utility systems and to electric cooperatives.

In a statement last Thursday, Gov. Hunt said he hopes the FERC will investigate whether Vepco is buying electricity from North Carolina utilities and reselling it at higher rates to North Carolina customers.

Both CP&L and Vepco acknowledge that power purchases occur between the two utilities but that it is normal procedure when it is cheaper to buy power from one utility than to generate it at another.

Vepco has maintained they make no profit on purchases, and said the cost of power purchased from other utilities is reflected in the fuel charge which is passed on to the consumer.

In a press release Monday, J. Larkin Little, chairman of Operation Overcharge, revealed that Vepco purchased more than 500-million kilowatt hours from CP&L in 1979. According to Overcharge that amounts to one-seventh of the entire demand by all the region served by Vepco in Northeastern North Carolina.

"That rankles me," Little said, "To know that we're doing everything we can to get cheaper electricity and to know that part of what we use is cheaper but we're having to pay the highest prices for it is hard to take," he said.

Little said his operation was buying cheaper power from other companies and reselling it to consumers when Overcharge filed a complaint with the FERC back on December 7, asking for an investigation of such practices "We didn't know the problem existed to the extent it does" Little said.

"Instances like this keep turning up the further we get into Vepco's mess," Little pointed out. "I don't know how much longer our people are going to stand for it," he said. "Something's got to give."

Little said Vepco's management practices have "the company in a deep hole and it is expecting the consumers to pay the price to get out."

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THE CHOWAN HERALD

Vol. XLVI-No. 4

Edenton, North Carolina, Thursday, January 24, 1980

Single Copies 20 Cents

Sen. Daniels Candidate For Re-Election

ELIZABETH CITY — Sen. Melvin R. Daniels Friday filed for re-election for the North Carolina Senate representing the First Senatorial District. The counties of Beaufort, Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hertford, Hyde, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell and Washington are in the First Senatorial District.

Sen. Daniels, now in his third term in the Legislature, is serving as the Chairman of the Senate Economy Committee, Vice Chairman of the Appropriation Committee and Vice Chairman of the Natural and Economic Resources Committee. He also serves as Vice Chairman of the Appropriation sub-committee of Transportation, Agriculture and General Government. He is a

member of the Committees on Higher Education, Human Resources, Ways and Means, Banking, Base Budget and Judiciary.

In the interim he has been appointed to the Legislature Research Committee and is supervising the study commissions on State Parks, Public Building Design and Alien Ownership of North Carolina Farm Lands.

Sen. Daniels has been appointed to the North Carolina Marine Science Council and serves as it's Chairman. In August 1979 he was named by President Carter to the South Atlantic Fishery Council to set policy for the 200 mile U. S. sea boundary.

Sen. Daniels is a Methodist, a member of the Masonic Order, the Elks Lodge and the Lions Club.

He is serving as senior vice president of Peoples Bank and Trust Company and a member of the Board of Managers of the Elizabeth City office. He is married to the former Gladys Toxey of Weeksville, and they have three children, Melvin Roy, III, Donna DeLane and Linda Dianne. The Daniels reside at 1618 Rochelle Drive, Elizabeth City.

Kidnap Suspect Is Arrested

Arnell Nathaniel Wilder, wanted by local authorities for the kidnapping of Nita Raines, a 20 year old Edenton woman, surrendered to probation officer Mike Thomas, last Thursday night. He had been sought since the abduction, Sunday January 13.

Capt. C. H. Williams, Edenton



Sen. Melvin Daniels

Police Department, arrested Wilder and charged him with first degree burglary and kidnapping. Wilder was confined in Albemarle District Jail under \$25,000 bond for kidnapping.

First appearance proceedings were held last Tuesday in Chowan

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U.S. Senator To Address Close-Up Group

U. S. Senator Robert Morgan (D-NC) formally announced his candidacy for a second six-year term, Saturday, at Harnett Central High School near Lillington. His first visit to Chowan County, following his announcement, will be on February 2, but the senator will not be here to campaign. He will be the guest of students in the Edenton-Chowan Close-Up program.

Senator Morgan, who was instrumental in getting a Close-Up program brought to North Carolina, will conduct an informal

work-study session with the 13 local club members in preparation for their participation in the National Close Up program, April 13-17 in Washington, D.C.

"As an advocate of Close Up," a program sponsored by a national foundation to involve youth in government by giving first-hand insights into how government runs and how it touches everyone individually, "Senator Morgan is quite experienced in advising student groups on how to get the most out of their unusual experience," commented Jim Pressley, local advisor and NC Close Up Steering Committee Chairman. "When Senator Morgan arrives," Pressley added, "we are planning on our students being prepared to discuss, intelligently, the areas of defense and domestic policy."

Pressley explained that one major benefit of Morgan's visit will be in letting the students know exactly what to expect in Washington and what will be expected of them if they are to

effectively interact with the different personalities and legislative groups, with whom they will come in contact as Close Up participants.

Mrs. Clara Boswell, local Close Up coordinator, has stated that the students are quite excited about Senator Morgan's forthcoming visit and honored that he could give them time to share the benefits of his experience. An informal buffet dinner, prepared by students, parents and advisors, is being planned prior to the work session being held at the Pressley home.

"We feel that our students, because of their interest and willingness to study to become

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Sen. Robert Morgan

Burglary Charge Is Lodged

An Edenton man is charged with second degree burglary in an incident that occurred over the weekend, and two more cases of breaking and entering and larceny are under investigation by the Edenton Police Department.

Charged for burglarizing the home of J. P. Partin, 1 Queen Anne Drive, is Curtis Thomas Davis of 63 Davis Place.

According to Cpl. F. M. Parker,

investigating officer, the Partin residence was broken into on Sunday prior to 8:25 P.M. and 12 to 15 silver dollars plus a good luck charm were removed from the house.

Entry was gained by smashing a sliding glass door in the back of the house. After ransacking the house, the suspect was said to have left the scene on a bicycle owned by Partin.

The arrest came on Monday after Davis sold several of the silver dollars to a local jeweler. He was apprehended on the way to the bank to cash the check.

Parker reported that seven of the silver dollars, the bicycle and the good luck charm were all recovered.

Police are still investigating the theft of two gold watches and a flashlight from the home of Roy Leary, 108 Blount Street, on Saturday night.

Cpl. Parker reported that Leary's home was apparently entered with a key. There were no signs of forced entry.

One of the missing gold watches is a Gruen; the other is a Walton.

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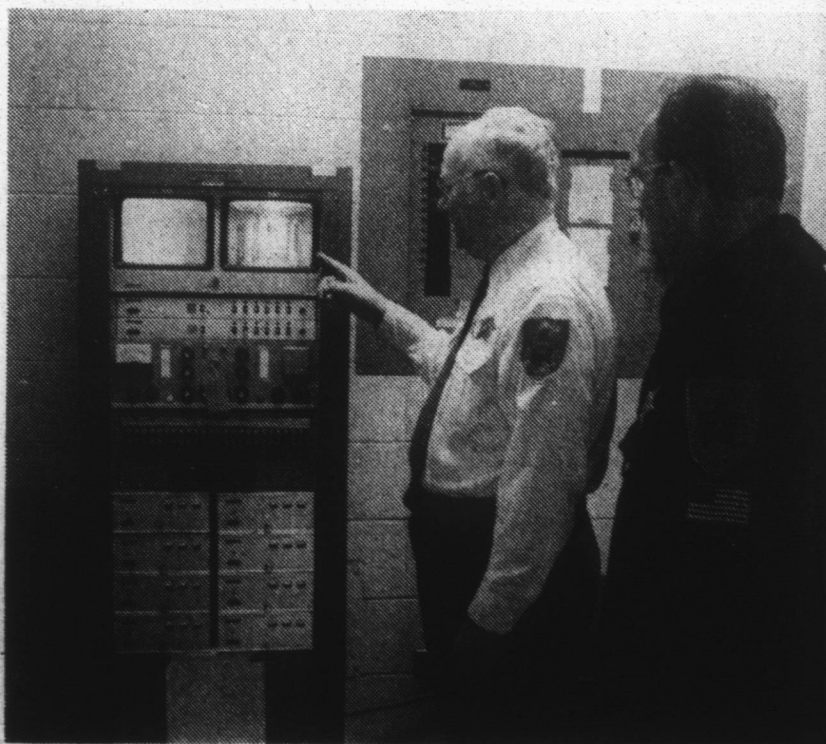
Three Arrested For Marijuana

First appearance proceedings were held Tuesday in Chowan County District Court for three men charged with felonious possession of marijuana. They were arrested by Edenton Police early Sunday morning.

Chief J. D. Parrish identified them as Leon Roulac, Jr., U.S. 17 North, William Holley and James Williams, Jr., both of Route 2.

All three are charged with possession of more than one ounce of marijuana, and Williams faces an additional charge of possession of 17 tablets of Librium.

They were arrested by G. K. Bonner and Cpl. F. M. Parker.



NEW OFFICE — The Chowan County Sheriff's Department has settled into new offices at the Detention facility adjacent to the new Chowan County Courthouse. In addition, other offices formerly contained in the old courthouse have been moved and are being organized in anticipation of the upcoming dedication on Sunday, February 3. The photo above shows Sheriff Troy Toppin and Deputy Glenn Perry as they test out video monitors of the jail cell blocks.

Jaycee DSA Banquet Tonight

The Edenton Jaycees have extended an open invitation to attend their Distinguished Service Award banquet, tonight, beginning with a social hour at 6:30 P.M., followed one hour later by the banquet.

This year the annual event will also include presentation of the Outstanding Young Educator award.

Joe Wood, internal vice president for the North Carolina Jaycees will be guest speaker.

Tickets at \$5 per person may be obtained by calling Lewis Evans at 482-2189 or 482-8155 after 6 P.M., and by calling Blake Harmon at 482-3617 or at 482-8769 after 6 P.M.