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LOCKLEAR - DAVIS LEAD LEGISLATIVE DEFEAT OF ATTEMPTED PARKTON ANNEXATION TO ST. PAULS SCHOOL SYSTEM

-A NEWS ANALYSIS-

by Bruce Barton

RALEIGH-Rep. David Parnell's legislative attempt to annex the Parkton-Oak Ridge school attendance areas to the St. Pauls City School System was soundly defeated in the North Carolina House of Representatives last Friday by a 58-39 vote.

The fight to defeat the bill was engineered by Indian representative Horace Locklear and, after some initial floundering about, Black Representative Bob Davis. Locklear is originally from the Saddletree Community and Davis is a native of Maxton.

From the beginning Rep. Locklear firmly opposed the bill.

A little background...

Traditionally it is difficult to get "local" legislation passed in the North Carolina General Assembly without the unanimous support of all the local legislators. It is almost unheard of for "local" bills to be introduced in the house without the unanimous support of all the effected legislators.

That made introduction of this Parnell bill more interesting than most since Locklear and Davis had publicly lambasted the bill before it was ever considered.

By some questionable legislative deriding do Parnell seemingly introduced the bill by misrepresenting it as a routine local bill when the truth of the matter was that the Robeson County Board of Education (of which Parkton is a part of their jurisdiction) had gone on record opposing the measure along with Locklear and Davis. Still, in spite of all that, Parnell got the measure introduced anyway.

Pressure applied...

Immense pressure was applied politically against the legislators. Rep. Bob Davis, especially, seems to have been subjected to vigorous political pressure from sundry sources.

The basic argument to the legislators seemed to be how could anyone be opposed to allowing the people to vote? Still as the politicians saw it Parnell's bill cleverly denied the majority of the county voters a right to vote on the measure.

Because of the political pressure Rep. Davis acquiesced to the first reading of the bill.

Indians and Blacks call Rep. Davis...

After the first reading of the bill, many Indians and Blacks called Mr. Davis and spoke out against the bill forcefully.

A compromise bill offered

Additionally, an amendment was drafted to Parnell's bill by a local Indian attorney asking that the predominately Indian areas of the Red Springs School District around Oxendine, Rennett, and Shannon be allowed to vote on whether they should be joined to the county school district. The vis-a-vis rationale was that if the folk around Parkton were allowed to vote to join St. Pauls why not allow the Indian folk the same opportunity? The question formulated by the proposed amendment was: can Parnell justify granting one racial group a right to vote on an issue and deny the same right to another racial group?

Parnell rebuffs compromise bill...

Parnell reportedly "blew up" when Rep. Locklear asked him Friday morning if he would agree to allow the Indian folk to vote too. Parnell coldly stated, according to observers, that he could not agree without the consent of the Red Springs School Board although he presented the Parkton measure against the express wishes of the county school board.

Debate on the floor was heated, especially between Locklear and Parnell. When the measure was soundly defeated Parnell, according to observers, stormed off the floor slamming the doors behind him.

St. Pauls Commissioner Bill Herndon and several members of the St. Pauls Board reportedly witnessed Parnell's shenanigans.

Reactions here and there...

Tim Herndon (son of Bill), who was the titular head of the annexation effort, was quoted as saying in the Fayetteville Times that he would be after Locklear and Davis in the next election. He praised Parnell as "a capable" legislator.

But most of the response from the Indian and Black communities overwhelmily supported the strong stand against the measure by Locklear and Davis. Said one political observer "I see now why we need representation in Raleigh. You can get raped legislatively and not know a thing about it until it is done."

David Parnell

The real villain in the matter seems to be Rep. David Parnell. It was he that introduced the seeming nefarious bill; it was he who defied legislative tradition; it was he who denied the county school board an opportunity to be heard in Raleigh; and it was he who stormily denied Indian people the same franchise he so eagerly and actively sought for the Parkton dissidents.

A Plea for Good Will

Progressive people of all races hopefully will now unite to preserve the gains that have been made toward racial harmony and equality in Robeson County. A real and effective tri-racial board voted unanimously against the annexation effort and Indian legislator Horace Locklear and Black legislator Bob Davis have backed them up resoundingly by leading opposition to Parnell's "bad" piece of legislation.

It seems to be a good day for all the people of Robeson County. Hopefully "capable" leaders like Rep. Horace Locklear and Rep. Bob Davis will continue to speak out against those like Rep. David Parnell who would divide and conquer us.

A PUBLIC REBUTTAL OF OUR EDITORIAL EXPRESSION

AS WE FEEL IT "CONCERNING BILL HERNDON AND HIS 'BILL OF GOODS' OR... MR. BARTON, HAVE YOU ATTENDED A COMMUNITY MEETING AT SADDLETREE LATELY?"

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following communication was received from some citizens of the Magnolia-Saddletree community. We are pleased to present it to our readers. The expression was in response to the front page editorial expression of THE CAROLINA

INDIAN VOICE appearing in last week's issue.

The article was signed by Magnolia-Saddletree Concerned Citizens and was submitted by Ms. Judith Locklear, reporter.

It is not our contention to address every issue presented in last week's "Editorial Expression". It is however our intention to counter-act certain remarks which we feel were directed to us.

The "Concerned Citizens" group of Magnolia-Saddletree was well aware of Mr. Bill Herndon's presence at the first community meeting held at Magnolia High School. He was invited and well received. This meeting was open to the public and the "press" and was attended by over 50 people who were interested in Mr. Herndon's opinion. Among those that chose to attend was Scott Bigelow a staff writer for "The Robesonian". We are quite sure that this fact will be looked upon as racism too. However we were aware that no other press was represented.

The remarks made by Mr. Herndon that night left none of us with the feeling of being handed a "bill of goods". Bill Herndon pulled no punches in stating his position in the proposed Parkton-St. Pauls school mergers. He stated that he was in favor of the merger because of the location rather than "racial balance" of the schools. His statement concerning the term "dry-up" was in essence based on a memory of what has happened to the communities of Lumber Bridge and Barker Ten Mile. Mr. Herndon went on to say that even though he doesn't always agree with all issues from different communities he feels it is his job as a county commissioner to try and see all sides of these issues. As an elected figure he is bound to try to aid all the people.

Further more Bill Herndon's so called door-to-door soliciting of "damaged goods" turns out to be a single lunch with two community members in a public place with lots of witnesses. These two people invited Bill Herndon to attend the Magnolia meeting.

Mr. Herndon contends that his sole reason for being a County Commissioner is to serve the people. He goes on record saying he will attend any meetings he is invited to. We who listened to Bill Herndon at that meeting and since have no grievances against Bill Herndon. We feel he has presented himself openly and honestly. We stand assured to public denial of certain comments in the CIV and welcome remarks on these points.

We would further like to let it be known that Mr. Herndon does have two other grandchildren who attend the public schools.

Our attention was mostly attracted to that part of the Editorial dedicated to us. Entitled "Magnolia-Saddletree," we read in disbelief at someone (not an Indian but a person) suggesting that we as educated people, (not just Indians) what we "must realize". We therefore contend that the opinion expressed by the editor is somewhat questionable for example:

- Where does said opinionator gather his facts?
- How is it possible to form such strong opinions about an issue that is largely centralized in a community where said opinionator has not been?
- Is it possible that said opinionator cannot venture any further than Pembroke and his telephone to gather his information?
- In searching the remarks throughout the entire editorial we failed to read of any reference to the counter-petitioners in the Parkton area or the Rex-Rennett petition concerning the consolidation. We further feel that these two very important parts of this decision must not be overlooked.
- Consider if you will these facts: Parkton residents (what ever color) have been denied their right "to vote" -- What kind of double standard is that? Does it hurt any less because they are "white folks"?
- The folks at Rex-Rennett seem to be getting the best end of the stick. They opposed the merger of St. Pauls-Parkton and were in favor of the county consolidation with Magnolia. All this is good and well we would have no reason to oppose either if we would not lose our school. We ask why were no remarks aimed in this direction? Was the opinionator aware that a committee from this area did some "door hopping" of their own-mainly to the home of Commissioner Bill Herndon?
- We stand appalled that our fight in this matter can be labeled such as has been done in your paper. We certainly feel there is more to this consolidation plan than merely the "----" who will be making the determination as to the locations of these new schools? "We realize that consolidation in this county is most surely in the future". We cannot however understand how it can be followed out based on the plan from the Survey Committee if the first and foremost plan of organizing all six systems into one administrative unit is not carried out.
- We stand ready to defend any and all remarks concerning our children. We want a better education for them -- but we say as we have said before -- let's take that part of the \$16 million that belongs to the county and up grade the schools we have.
- We cannot begin at the middle of road to consolidation for this county. The local politicians must realize that the six systems must cease to exist before these plans can work. These same politicians must put their contentions behind them and for once "think" of our children.

In conclusion we say thanks to the Carolina Indian Voice for letting us sound off. We hope that there will be opportunities to do this again. We say to anyone interested that our fight is not over. We are at this time seeking information as to where we can go from here. We intend to find those answers -- and when we do you'll be one of the first to know.

MAGNOLIA-SADDLETREE CONCERNED CITIZENS

PEOPLE AND LAND THINGS... C E S

PROSPECT FACUTY AND STAFF CHALLENGES MAXTON FACULTY AND STAFF

At 7:30 p.m. Friday, March 23, the Prospect Lady Wildcats coached by Ms. Fodie Mitchell will lead the cats to a stunning victory over the Maxton Lady Eagles. Mr. Royce McNeill will coach and out play Mr. Wyvis Oxendine the leader of the weak Maxton Eagles Men's Squad.

To see the **greats of the past** in action attend this game for an entertaining and enjoyable evening.

The game will take place at the Prospect School Gym and admission is \$1.00.

REVIVAL SERVICES PLANNED

West End Baptist Church will hold a weekend revival beginning March 23 and running thru Sunday night, March 25.

On Friday night services will begin at 7 p.m. with a message by Rev. Sanford Locklear. Special music will be by Reedy Branch Baptist Church.

On Saturday night services will begin at 7:30 p.m. Special-guest speaker will be Rev. Michael Cummings. Special music will be provided by Mt. Airy Baptist Church.

On Sunday night services will be held at 7 p.m. Special guest speaker will be Rev. Kelly Sanderson and Rev. Nash Locklear. Special music will be provided by the host church singers.

Rev. Welton Lowry, pastor of West End Baptist Church, cordially invites everyone to attend these special services.

PROSPECT STUDENT TO PARTICIPATE IN SPELLING BEE

Kelly Denise Locklear, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Locklear of Route 3, Maxton will represent Prospect School at the Spelling Bee. Kelly is an 8th grade student and will participate in the county spelling bee on Tuesday, March 27, 1979 at 2 p.m. in the Board of Education Building in the Library.

PSU to host 4 games this weekend

PEMBROKE--Pembroke State University's baseball team will play four home games this weekend on the PSU campus. The squad, having the best start of any baseball team at PSU since 1968's team won their first 13 out of 14, plays exciting baseball and always has the potential to come back. The 1979 team has won 11 of their first 12.

On Friday at 1:30 p.m. the Braves will host Campbell College in a doubleheader. Then on Sunday at 1:30 p.m. the Braves of PSU will host Carolinas Conference foe Atlantic Christian. The Braves will be at home again on Monday hosting a game with Francis Marion at 3 p.m. There will be only two home games remaining for the Braves after this weekend with both contests scheduled at night.

RESULTS THE BRAVES HAVE POSTED THUS FAR:

- PSU 10 Francis Marion 9
- PSU 6 Morris College, SC 2
- PSU 3 Morris College, SC 1
- PSU 3 Armstrong St. GA. 2
- PSU 4 Armstrong St. GA. 3
- PSU 8 Fla. Inst. of Tech. 5
- PSU 6 Univ. of Virginia 2
- PSU 10 Delaware State 5
- PSU 5 Delaware State 9
- PSU 7 Univ. of Virginia 2
- PSU 4 Univ. of Virginia 2
- PSU 9 St. Andrews 3

AREA BRIEFS

W.C. WILLIFORD TENDERS RESIGNATION

W.C. "Bill" Williford longtime head of Robeson County's Extension Service used the forum of Monday night's meeting of the Robeson County Board of Commissioners to announce his retirement after 35 years.

His resignation becomes effective in June. Williford noted that "I'll continue to make Robeson County my home..." He is rumored to be in line to replace Bob Thompson as sales supervisor for the Lumberton Tobacco Market.

COMMISSIONERS CERTIFY BOND VOTE RESULTS

The Commissioners officially approved the March 13 bond issue vote. The final canvass showed 3,448 in favor and 2,373 against.

COMMISSIONERS SET CETA WORKSHOP

Chris Antwi, Robeson County's director of the Department of Human Resources, appeared briefly before the board Monday and presented them CETA handbooks to be perused before an April 23 workshop set for an as yet unannounced site "probably out of Lumberton so we can concentrate..." as Antwi put it.

COG "SERVICE CHARGE" PAID

The Lumber River Council of Government recently voted to assess each member of the council an additional \$2,241 service charge on a \$25,000 law enforcement grant received last year. COG noted that cutbacks in administrative funds accounted for the additional charge.

Commissioner Bill Herndon noted that Robeson County pays "some \$18,000 in years fees" and questioned the additional charge.

The board agreed to pay after COG representative from the board, Bobby Dean Locklear told the board that he had voted in favor of the county paying its share and that the county had acquiesced in the matter by taking no action. They agreed to pay but told Locklear to be cautious in committing the board to anything with out prior approval.

Robeson County just recently rejoined COG on a 4-3 vote after leaving on the same vote count. New Lumberton Commissioner Sammy Cox joined Commissioners Herman Dial, Bobby Dean Locklear and J.W. Hunt in rejoining the agency after new Senator Sam Noble voted with H.T. Taylor, Bill Herndon and Thomas Jones in leaving.

"HOLD THE LINE" MOTION PASSED

On a motion by H.T. Taylor the commissioners unanimously passed a resolution calling on all department and agency heads in Robeson County "to hold the line" in submitting budgetary requests. Taylor said, I would like the department heads notified ahead of time that we want them to help us hold down taxes in every way except in cutting salaries.

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION AND REVIEW WILL MEET FIRST MONDAY IN APRIL

Lumberton--The board of commissioners, at their Monday night meeting, set the first Monday night in April as the night when they will change hats and appear as a tax board of equalization and review. This is the time when taxpayers with complaints are given an opportunity to appear before the board and present grievances.

Revival to begin at Pembroke Church of God

Revival services will begin at the Pembroke Church of God on Monday night, March 26-30, 1979. The revival will be preceded by a special singing at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday at the Pembroke Church of God.

Montana Locklear, pastor of the Shannon Holy Assembly.

The Rev. Jack Hunt, pastor of Pembroke Church of God, extends a cordial invitation to the public to attend.

Special guest speaker will be the Rev.

Pembroke Housing Authority makes Payment in lieu of Taxes



Mayor Reggie Strickland, right, of Pembroke is shown receiving Pembroke Housing Authority's payment in lieu of taxes from Executive Director, Clinton Thomas. The payment amounted to \$4,095.21. A new 100 unit development which is nearing completion is expected to bolster the Authority's payment to around \$10,000 each year. The additional expected revenue according to a current comparison would make the Authority the second largest taxpayer to the Town of Pembroke.