

# EDITORIAL AND OPINION PAGE

"We cannot know where we are going if we do not know where we have been."



As I See It



by Bruce Barton

### SCHOOL SITUATION IMPROVING UNDER SUPT. SWETT'S LEADERSHIP. LUMBERTON PLAN SEEMS FAVORABLE TO COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

Robeson County is a strange and provincial place, infected with racial and sociological madness that is directly responsible for five (six until Maxton Schools wisely merged into the Robeson County School System) school systems.

Until Superintendent Purnell Swett assumed the mantle of leadership in the Robeson County School Unit, the former superintendent and his predecessors, as I see it, simply put everything off, left it to the future generations to cope with the unwieldy educational mess that is prevalent in Robeson County even today. Their legacy now confronts all of us.

But Swett has not been afraid to tackle difficult problems. He has built new school plants (like South Robeson, East Robeson, Pembroke Elementary and West Robeson under construction), devised a county-wide vocational plan, worked toward accreditation and more.

But he now faces his toughest problem, the unsettling Lumberton situation. The Justice Department has refused to approve the renegade Lumberton annexations of a few years ago. As our readers know, these areas were unlawfully annexed from the county with the acquiescence of the then county board of education.

But Swett and his Board this time around have refused to rape the county school system they are charged to

administer. They refuse to be intimidated, outskicked by legislators and the like. They are holding firm for a sensible solution that is for the good of all the children in Robeson County, especially the children in their charge in the county system. It's interesting that the chairman is a Black (David Green), the superintendent an Indian (Purnell Swett) and the school board attorney an Indian (Dexter Brooks). They have negotiated in good faith with Lumberton Schools officials searching for a reasonable solution to an admittedly thorny problem. When the area was illegally annexed in the early 70's Blacks and Indians were not only denied the right, thanks to double voting to serve on the County Board of Education.

I think they have come up with a sensible and fair plan. The jointly negotiated solution will return the Clyburn Pines-Country Club areas back into the county system where they belong and, at the self-same time, allow Lumberton to retain Barker Ten Mile and Lakewood Estates. It's a Solomon like decision. Some contend that the county schools should hold out for all of the contested area; and others want nothing to do with any of it, hoping to keep the status-quo in place. But half a loaf is better than the less than crumbs given the county schools when a strangely-quiet school board sat idly by and let Lumberton rape them educationally and take the contested areas out of the system in the late 60s and early 70s.

The county school system will add approximately 360

out of the 750 students at stake. They will, of course, also add the areas of Clyburn Pines and Country Club. This seems a reasonable solution to me, accepted in the magnanimous and statesmanlike spirit that must prevail if Robeson County is to enter the 20th Century with the rest of America. I believe the Justice Department will approve this plan.

Our only concern is that the seemingly selfish motives of our legislators will upset the plan now awaiting approval in the North Carolina General Assembly. Rep. Horace Locklear has presented two bills, one affecting the contested areas and another concerned with a small area around his own home in the Barker Ten Mile section. Seemingly, he wants his home in the Lumberton City System.

Our legislators need to set a good example for the rest of us. All of us will have to suffer some sociological discomfort to make this reasonable plan work. We hope Locklear's concern for his own bill will not create a reactionary situation where everyone scrambles for what he thinks is best for him personally at the expense of the children, all of them—Red, Black and White.

It's time for all reasonable Robesonians to look to the future and cease their provincial tantrums. It's time to support the educational leaders in Robeson County who have, for once in their lives, come up with a plan that seems devoid of inhibiting racism and provincial madness. The proposed plan smacks of fairness.

In spite of the pain, the school situation in Robeson County is improving, thanks to visionary leaders like Purnell Swett who are not afraid to face the wrath of the sometimes provincial-thinking and racially-conscious citizenry of Robeson County.

Dear Michigan Friends: Lumbree Regional Development Association, Inc. and the Lumbee people send our congratulations to you for your work in helping to realize a dream for you and your children. What you have done will live for many years to come.

We congratulate Ms. Adelaide Locklear and her family for their time and efforts to see that the tuition waiver be granted to Lumbee students. Also our heart felt thanks go to Mr. Fred Boyd and Mr. Bob McFarland.

The tuition waiver granted by the State of Michigan will not only benefit the Michigan Lumbees, but the Robeson County Lumbees as well. We know that many of you will return to your Native Robeson to seek employment or for retirement and at any rate will serve to upgrade the general population everywhere.

We will also invite each of you to participate in our Tribal Enrollment Program. This program will ultimately certify you to participate in the Tuition Waiver Program offered by the State of Michigan. You may get applications from Ms. Adelaide Locklear or you may write to: Lumbee Enrollment Program, P.O. Box 68, Pembroke, N.C. 28372, C/O L.R.D.A. LRDA will be the certifying agency for Lumbees everywhere.

## Race Unity Day June 13 in Pembroke Town Park

Pembroke-The Baha'i Community of Pembroke will observe Race Unity Day on Sunday, June 13, with a picnic in the Town Park of Pembroke at 4 p.m. The people of every race, culture, religion and nationality are welcomed to this event.

The Baha'is of Pembroke invite you to join them in their annual observance of Race Unity Day.

### DANIEL H. DEVANE



N.C. HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

"I am wealthy in my friends." Shakespeare

Mangoes are an excellent source of vitamins and minerals, including "A" and "C". Most people love mangoes for their sweet, juicy flavor, but the fruit is also a favorite of dieters, who enjoy it peeled for "anytime" snacks or with cottage cheese for a "local" lunch!

## HELP ME HELP YOU

VOTE



William L. (Bill) Oxendine

Robeson County Board of Education

DISTRICT IV

- Raft Swamp
- Pembroke
- Burnt Swamp
- Union

A Candidate who believes that an Elected Official is a SERVANT of the PEOPLE, instead of the PEOPLE being a SERVANT of the Elected Official.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Salutes Michigan Lumbees

We sincerely hope more and more Lumbees will take advantage of the fruits of your labor. Congratulations once again and we hope to see all of you at Lumbee Homecoming 1982.

Go In Peace, Adolph L. Dial Chairman, L.R.D.A.

Kenneth R. Maynor Executive Director, LRDA

## Calls Herman Dial 'A Living Legend'

To the Editor:

Herman Dial has been a Robeson County Commissioner for some sixteen years. During that time, he has become the only Indian Chairman in Robeson County history, endeared himself to the hearts of many, and generally covered himself with glory rather than muck. It is darn near impossible to find anything wrong with him despite his long track record. I guess we're just going to have to face the truth about Herman:

He's just about become a living legend. And anybody who can do that in dog-eat-dog Robeson politics has to have a lot going for him.

Now, Hermas's not the only candidate I like. But we can only have one. And the truth is, Herman's already proved himself.

He's no rabble-rouser. He likes to work quietly. But when the community at large really needs him, somehow he's always there. How can you kick a guy like that—especially out of office when he still wants to serve you?

I've seen him overcome serious illness. And I believe his best medicine was the knowledge that people needed him. People need Herman. And Herman needs people.

I guess that's about all I had to say. I will have to reply like Pilate when Jesus

was hailed before him, if you can accept my far-reaching comparison. I find no fault in this man.

He's my friend, but he knows I'd holler if I did. In view of the man, and in view of his record, I couldn't live with myself if I let him down now. He's a real champion of the people. He cares about them. And we'd better stick with a sure thing while we have it.

I'm voting for Herman Dial. And I hope you will, too.

Lew Bariss

P.S. I hate politics, sometimes. But that just happens to be the only means the people have of helping themselves to better government. And sometimes you have to stand up and be counted, even when it means a choice between friends.

# Larry T. Brooks



## FOR YOUR COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Maxton - Pembroke - Smiths

- Experience In Government
- Extensive Business Experience
- Masters Degree In Administration
- Concerned Parent: The Only Candidate With Children (4) In The Local Schools

### An Incumbent Must Run On His Record . . . Let Us Examine The Record.

Let us examine the record of incumbent commissioner Herman Dial through the following excerpts from the official minutes of the Robeson County Board of Commissioners. In each case Dial supported the indicated action.

- February 26, 1973. Architect Elizabeth Lee advises commissioners that the old county courthouse could be remodeled for \$400,000-\$500,000.
- April 10, 1973: Dial moves to appropriate \$5,000 to pay architect to prepare plans for a new courthouse.
- July 2, 1973. Dial seconds motion to demolish old courthouse and to build a new one on the old site. Most counties, however, have been able to make do with renovation of existing facilities at much less expense.
- February 4, 1974. Dial seconds motion to authorize architect to prepare plans for letting bids on demolishing old courthouse and building the new one.
- April 1, 1974. Dial moves to appropriate \$25,000 for construction of an arena at the Lumberton Jaycee Fairground. The property is owned by a private, exclusive corporation. One cannot belong to the corporation unless he is a member in good standing of the Lumberton Jaycees.
- August 1, 1974. The commissioners accept bids for the removal of the old courthouse and the construction of the new one. The cost of the new facility including furnishings would be approximately \$5,700,000 in 1982 dollars. This amount of money could substantially resolve the school plant deficiencies of the county schools.
- September 10, 1974. Dial moves to contribute \$4,000 to a private organization to buy back the dome of the old courthouse from the demolition company.
- February 17, 1975. The commissioners accept a bid of \$43,800 for an extension of the Lumberton water system to service the Lumberton Jaycees Fairground.
- December 20, 1976. The commissioners appropriate \$14,996 to purchase land to be given to the Town of Parkton as the site of new National Guard Armory.
- February 7, 1977. Dial seconds motion to appropriate \$15,000 to the City of Lumberton for its new National Guard Armory. Vote was 4 in favor and 2 against.
- February 21, 1977. The commissioners appropriate an additional \$10,000 to the City of Lumberton for its Armory.
- May 25, 1977. Dial seconds motion to appropriate \$69,000 to purchase seven (7) acres of land for Robeson Technical Institute. The land was bought merely to prevent its development. The vote was 4-3 in favor of the purchase.
- September 6, 1977. The commissioners approve \$1,000 contribution to the Flora McDonald Highland Games.
- June 5, 1978. Dial seconds motion committing \$60,500 to the proposed Parkton Armory-owned by the Town of Parkton.
- November 27, 1978. The commissioners appropriate \$1,500 to Flora McDonald Gardens, a private entity, for restoration of gardens on the campus of the Robeson Country Day School.
- June 2, 1980. The commissioners commit \$50,000 for the Luther J. Britt Memorial Greenway, a park owned by the City of Lumberton. Dial, who was then chairman, breaks a tie vote in favor of the expenditure. Voting no were Locklear, Hunt and Jones.
- June 2, 1980. Dial seconds motion to pay one-half the cost of \$17,184.99 for a heliport for the Lumberton Rescue Squad. A substitute motion to pay the full cost was unanimously approved.
- November 3, 1980. The commissioners appropriate \$15,000 for tennis courts and \$7,500 for land purchase for the Littlefield area. Dial, who was then chairman, breaks a tie vote in favor of the expenditure. Voting no were Locklear, Hunt and Jones.
- Early 1982. The commissioners decline to contribute any monies towards extending sewer service to the new West Robeson School. Although monies were available to serve the Lumberton Jaycees Fairground, no monies are available for our children in Western Robeson.
- May 28, 1982. Dial moves to "use as much from surplus as possible" to hold tax rate at 0.82. The "fat" is not cut from the budget, but rather \$340,000 of educational "muscle" as the level of funding for our schools is reduced from last year's level. The county school system was already next to the bottom in local support per child, but we may now claim the dubious honor of being at the bottom.

The excerpts above demonstrate the amount of county money flowing into other districts especially Lumberton. If you believe that our district is not getting its fair share of county monies, then you have a clear alternative on June 29. Larry T. Brooks has demonstrated his effectiveness as a member of the Pembroke Town Council. Let's put him to working for our district.

Paid for By Supporters of the Candidates.