

2 Campus Opinion

Editorial: Mayor Fetzer

by Nina Mc Clellan

I was disturbed last week when I read the Wednesday morning edition of the *News and Observer*. Actually, these days I'm usually disturbed by what I read in the newspaper. What I read on this particular day was a map, showing by precinct who had voted for Fetzer, and who had voted for Herget. The city of Raleigh was practically divided in half; the northern half supported Fetzer, the southern half supported Herget.

I had voted. In fact, while I was at my polling place Tom Fetzer showed up to press the flesh. Although I had already made up my mind, as to whom I would vote for, I took the opportunity to speak with Fetzer, thinking that I would put my two cents in.

I have lived in Raleigh almost twenty years, just inside the beltline.

I have seen it turn from a quiet mixture of pasture and concrete, to an ugly sprawling mess. I remember feeling, growing up here, that if I simply blinked, a new strip mall would appear. It was the unchecked rampant development of the eighties that has made Raleigh what it is today. With this concern in mind on that crisp election day, I strode toward Tom Fetzer.

I'll give him one thing; he did listen to what I had to say. At first I was hopeful, because he agreed with me that this development out in North Raleigh was ugly. To my disappointment, he seemed to have no ideas for how to take care of the matter. I pressed him further; what were his plans for bringing Raleigh into the twenty-first century. How did he envision making Raleigh a real metropolitan area? He hemmed and hawed, not able to give me a real

answer. I gave him some of my ideas. How about rebuilding and renewing downtown? How about working on a better public transportation system? He nodded politely and told me it would cost too much money. Soon after that, he made a quick exit, and I went to vote.

That conversation with Mr. Fetzer did not sink in until several days later, when I'd had a chance to do more reading on the election, and when I saw that map of the city. It was then that I began to realize why the city had divided itself in this manner. North Raleigh has a disproportionate amount of wealth where individual family earnings are concerned. I began to realize that the people with the voting power in this area are white, wealthy, conservative people. I do not judge them for this. What bothers me about this situation is that people who are on the very edge of town, will be controlling the development of downtown;

their candidate won. The majority of people living downtown and within the beltline are lower to middle class. It is in this section that there is the highest concentration of minority groups. Fetzer does not seem to care about those who are the heart and the life of the city. He has been elected to provide support for people who say that public housing should be confined to downtown. That the poor do not have a right to live in safe, clean neighborhoods as they do. Fetzer represents the people who complain the loudest about taxes, yet who are often the wealthiest.

This election will further injure the growth of Raleigh as a major metropolitan area. If we ever want to overcome the image of the south as a white elitist country club, we must elect officials in our cities who are concerned about growth for every citizen. I myself will be anxiously awaiting the next race for mayor; this situation can not happen again.

Meredith Herald

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