

Veeco

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What Northeastern North Carolina needs is some fundamental redirection in the way energy policy is set for this part of the state. There are several different approaches that might help. Probably at this point, efforts should be directed at exploring any and all possible changes with the view that some combination of them will redirect one of the key weaknesses to economic development in this part of the state.

One of the goals that Gov. James B. Hunt has set for his administration is a meaningful Balanced Growth Policy. Basically, this means directing jobs to where people live rather than moving people to where jobs are. This will never work in the 22 counties served by Veeco so long as its power rates are 20 to 40 per cent higher than elsewhere in the state.

One of the as yet missing links to the state's Balanced Growth Policy is a statewide energy plan. Work is underway on it at this time in several state agencies. An energy plan is vital for North Carolina since we are one of the few Sunbelt states that has to import virtually all its energy. The discriminatory rate structure that the 22 Northeastern counties have to contend with needs to be addressed in this plan. If it is to be more than a paper plan, workable solutions need to be brought forth.

One possible course of action that should be seriously explored is detaching the 22 North Carolina Veeco counties from the Virginia portion of Veeco. Perhaps they could be set up as a separate corporation, still owned by the parent company but with power for the North Carolina Veeco unit being purchased from other North Carolina electric utilities. This would allow spreading the benefits of North Carolina's greater industrialization as compared to Virginia throughout the state. As things now stand, the 22 Veeco counties are discriminated against because both they and the areas of Virginia that Veeco serves are less industrialized than either the rest of North Carolina or the portions of Virginia that Veeco does not serve. Both the rate makers and the power companies say having many large industrial users is one big factor in keeping power rates lower for all users.

As matters now stand, Northeastern North Carolina is less developed economically than the rest of the state. Local efforts to correct this imbalance are severely hampered by having to drag the albatross of Veeco's high rate structure along to every meeting with potential new industries.

Another more easily fixed problem today is that there is no member of the Utilities Commission from the Veeco territory. We are not represented as we should be in the decision making process. One evidence of this is the failure to exempt the blind, the disabled, and low income families from the new Veeco rate increase. A Duke Power Co. rate increase granted at the same time as Veeco's did include these exemptions. Does this make sense? Hardly. There is a greater percentage of low income families in the Veeco territory than in Duke Power's. This lack of representation should be corrected by Gov. Hunt the next time a vacancy occurs on the Utilities Commission.

The last time Northeastern North Carolina got really up in arms about the deal it was getting

outrage in recent days over Veeco electric rates."

Gov. Hunt said the situation is completely in conflict with "our economic policy of a balanced economic growth because it discourages economic expansion in this part of our state, which has a serious need for more and better paying jobs."

Veeco President Stanley C. Ragone said in an interview with UPI in Richmond, Va., Monday: "It's just a fact of life. The more remote you are, the harder it is to get electricity to you."

"We welcome the investigation, and we will cooperate. We think they will find that service is good in that area."

Veeco has attributed its higher rates to the fact that it must burn oil at some of its plants to meet environmental standards in the Washington, D.C., area.

Hugh A. Wells, a former commission member and executive director of the Public Staff, declared: "Enough is enough."

In another matter, Wells said he would testify at Veeco's fuel charge hearing before the commission this week. It will be the first time Wells has taken the stand since the Public Staff was formed on July 1, 1977.

Saying the investigation will be much more in-depth than previous rate increase investigations, Koger said the commission will look at the future and seven areas of the Veeco operation. They are:

— The allocation formula used for separating Veeco operating costs for North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia, the three states served by Veeco.

— The high cost of meeting air pollution standards in the Washington, D.C. area, which Veeco serves, and its possible effect on North Carolina consumers.

— The reasonableness of Veeco's heavy dependence on oil-fired generation of electricity. Veeco relies more heavily on oil-fired generators than does Duke or Carolina, which basically use coal and nuclear generators, Koger stated.

— Low, possibly usage of equipment during non-peak operating periods.

— The efficiency of serving North Carolina customers from electric generators located in Virginia.

— Construction costs of new Veeco generating plants.

— All other factors which may cause discrepancies between Veeco, Carolina and Duke.

"The last area is a catch-all phrase that will allow the public staff, which will do most of the investigative work, a lot of flexibility in the investigation," Koger explained.

on electricity — about 15 years ago

— Veeco decided to include a North Carolinian on its Board of directors. This slot was initially filled by the late Edwin P. Brown of Murfreesboro. We are represented today by Shirley S. Pierce of Ahsokie on the Veeco board. Some benefits have accrued over the years from having one of us inside the board room. But not enough.

This time around, we need more than a board member. The future of Balanced Growth — or any kind of growth for that matter — for this part of North Carolina ought to be decided either here or in Raleigh, not in Richmond. This time, nothing short of fundamental structural changes will do.

The News-Herald
Ahsokie



PROJECT UNDERWAY — Groundbreaking ceremonies were held recently at Chowan College for a \$2,150,000 gymnasium-physical education center on the campus in Murfreesboro. Playing a key role in the fund raising effort which are continuing is E.L. Hollowell of Edenton, second from left, chairman of "Accomplishing Our Mission." Others taking part in the historic event are, from left: Edgar Parker of Franklin, Va., president of the Chowan Alumni Association; H.D. White of Rocky Mount, chairman, Board of Trustees; Mayor W.W. Hill of Murfreesboro; Mrs. Dorothy Heath Brown, member, Board of Advisors; Chowan President Bruce E. Whitaker; and Mrs. Texie Camp Marks of Boykins, Va., honorary nation chairman, "Accomplishing Our Mission."

Churches, State Square-Off Over Schools

Churches that operate Christian schools may see their pastors, principals and board members go to jail over non-compliance with requirements of the State Board of Education regarding approval or disapproval of their institutions. Rev. Ashby Browder of Immanuel Christian School here is willing to "pay the consequence if it keeps our churches free."

Stressing an amiable relationship with Dr. John Dunn

'No' Votes

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choice and the board must now move to implement the "second choice" of means of consolidation.

Clarence Leary, Jr., a prominent local businessman who headed the Concerned Citizens for Better Education group, urged workers not to give up. He said "in the name of the children" they must maintain their interest in education, supporting the school board as it moves to implement the consolidation plan.

George Alma Byrum one of those who led the campaign which brought about the defeat, said: "It's a good win. Our committee is not against education or better facilities, but there was a fundamental difference in how it could be brought about. We are ready and willing to work in the best interest of the community."

Bill Norvell, another leader among the opposition, commented: "As a 'no' voter, I pledge myself to see that the children of Chowan County have the best the taxpayers can provide." He said he would work to provide those facilities for education use.

A third leader of the opposition who was questioned Tuesday night, W.P. (Spec) Jones, said: "If we had lost we would have supported the board of education and now that we have won we will do likewise."

Senator's Wife

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asked what she felt was important for the people of North Carolina to know about Sen. Helms. She responded: "Jesse cares about the people of North Carolina and he has lived up to his beliefs. He ran on them in 1972 and is running on them again in 1978...and he has lived them all the years in between. He has not deviated and has never cast a vote that he did not feel was right for the majority of people in North Carolina."

A native of Raleigh, Mrs. Helms attended Meredith College there and received a degree in journalism from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

She is no stranger to Northeastern North Carolina having edited two newspapers in Ahsokie at one time. She was working for the Raleigh News and Observer when she met Sen. Helms, who at the time was in the Sports Department at the paper.

and Edenton-Chowan Schools, Mr. Browder said the "root problem is in the area of the state having life or death power of church ministry." He said the Christian schools "cannot submit to giving the state the right to approve or disapprove (the schools) because it violates the mandate of the scripture."

Judge Donald Smith ruled in Raleigh on September 1 in favor of the State of North Carolina in a class action suit brought against the schools who failed to file a fall report last year. There are 63 such schools in the state.

Mr. Browder said one must realize there is "Only one Lord, Christ, and not the state." He predicted other skirmishes in the future, over Day Care licensing as well as problems with the federal government over non-profit status.

"The church is the only thing left the bureaucracy doesn't control by regulation and licensing and we are determined to keep it that way," he said.

Immanuel Christian School has 93 students in nursery through 12th Grade and last year graduated its second class. On two different occasions since its founding in 1972 the school has operated although disapproved by the state.

"To file a report is not the problem," he said during a recent interview. "We have nothing to hide." Later he said what the schools object to is some of the information sought which, in his opinion, is "of no concern to the state."

Why now? "We have come to the realization that some things are wrong," he answered. "We as churches that operate Christian schools have sinned and now we are doing something about it."

Churches "pretty well" finance the schools and the curriculum includes certain religious instruction. He defended the academic curriculum in the schools which he said is compatible with the religious prin-

ciples applied.

Mr. Browder said if the State Court of Appeals does not agree to hear the case it is possible that some people related to the schools could face jail sentences. It is a real possibility that someone might go to jail this year because of the conflict, according to the pastor-principal.

"I have settled my conviction and the church has voted to pursue the course of action we are now in, even if it means the whatever," he added. Since the state filed the lawsuit in the name of the church he doesn't know how far the "arm of the state can reach."

He claims that state school officials are not willing at this point to listen to the grievances of the Christian school administrators.

Mr. Browder alleges that the state has two sets of standards for running public and non-public schools. "The bureaucracy is getting to the point where they don't think a parent is competent to be a parent. This is an insult to parenthood."

Staff Ruling Reversed

The N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission has reversed a staff ruling denying a permit to Richard F. Elliott, Jr., to bulkhead and fill an area around the old fish house at the foot of South Granville Street.

By its ruling, the commission found the project would not adversely affect fish species that utilize Edenton Bay.

Elliott appealed a decision by Dr. David A. Adams, assistant secretary, of the Department of Natural Resources & Community Development. The hearing before the commission was held Thursday morning in Elizabeth City

Biggest, Best County Fair Ever Opens Monday

The Chowan County Fair - 1978, has made tremendous strides in its efforts to truly become representative of all of the Albemarle - Roanoke - Chowan area. This feat, beginning Monday, has and is being accomplished because of the continuing and widening of cooperation and involvement of more individuals, organizations, institutions, and schools in an effort to portray the talents, ambitions and cultural base of Northeastern North Carolina.

The Edward G. Bond Post 40, American Legion, sponsor of the Chowan County Fair for the past 30 years, has seen it grow from a simple carnival to a gala affair involving hundreds of people and many organizations.

Each year a challenge is put forth to be bigger and better the next year. Thus far the challenge has been met and the 1978 Chowan County Fair promises to excel previous years.

Free entertainment presented on stage has been revamped with more variety to provide entertainment for all ages. Highlighting the stage this year are JoniLee and Charlie Tango, the son and daughter of Conway Twitty. They will be here two night only, September 28 and 29, and will perform two shows each night. Featured September 30, following the Regional 4-H Talent Show Contest Finals, will be the Followers, singing everyone's favorite gospel.

New attractions for 1978 include a Barn Yard Exhibit with over 200 birds and animals and various farm equipment of yesterday; also a Greased Pole for fun, enjoyment and prizes for whoever can get to the top.

No Fair is complete without a midway, and the Chowan County Fair is happy to announce that Fun Fair Amusements of Myrtle Beach, S.C., will again provide rides and amusements for everyone's enjoyment.

Credit for success of the fair belongs to the people of the Albemarle - Roanoke - Chowan area who participate. Without exhibits, craft displays, static displays, farm equipment, animals and fair goers there would be no county fairs. People love county fairs: "Love Your Fair" - The Chowan County Fair next week.

and was chaired by Chairman J.J. Smith of Hampstead.

Represented by Phil Godwin of Gatesville, Elliott traced the history of the waterfront and the fish house, explaining how it became a non-conforming use in the Town of Edenton. He said he would not have made application for a permit if he had thought the project would have any adverse effect on fish.

Elliott further said state officials were not objecting to the bulkhead, but to future back filling to make the site suitable for his "retirement" home.

Amos Dawson, attorney representing the state, challenged lay witnesses presented by Godwin. Chairman Smith overruled his objection and allowed Elliott, W.B. Gardner and William Shepard to testify as to their opinion regarding any adverse effect to the juvenile fish.

The project will convert to high ground by filling approximately 3,700 square feet of area below normal high water. "This filling of open water will offer no known public benefit," the July 13 denial claimed. "It will, however, adversely affect fish species that utilize Edenton Bay in that juvenile fish require these shallow areas for protection from predators."

Dr. Adams also pointed out that the Department of Administration also objects to the proposed filling and "cannot recommend favorably an Easement to Fill."

Godwin said Elliott will have several other agencies to go through before work on the project can begin.



FUNDS CONTRIBUTED — Historic Edenton, Inc. was recently presented a \$500 contribution from Belk Tyler to aid in the local program of preservation and restoration. A.B. Harless, Jr., chairman of Historic Edenton is shown at left above receiving the check from George Moore, manager of Belk Tyler in Edenton.

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