

# EDITORIAL AND OPINION PAGE

...the voice of the drum is an offering to the Spirit of the World. It's sound arouses the mind and makes men feel the mystery and power of things. -BLACK ELK



## AS I SEE IT

Bruce Barron



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



### A RESPONSE, OF SORTS, TO REV. SIDNEY A. LOCKS

The letter appeared in the public forum of The Robesonian. Entitled "Says Blacks will watch associate school slot," the massive rubbed my sensitive nerve endings raw.

First of all, The Carolina Indian Voice did not receive a copy of the letter. That, in itself, smacks of a subtle, condescending back hand of sorts.

Anyway, for those of you who do not read The Robesonian, here is a copy of the letter as it appeared in the June 6 edition of the "seeming" -er of an outdated 1860 Democratic Party mentality and doctrine:

To The Editor: I think the appointment of Mr. Swett to the superintendency of Robeson County schools was a giant leap forward in the restoration of trust by minorities in our system of county government. I am sure all would agree that finally, though long since qualified, a minority individual is now given the opportunity to serve his county in a major leadership capacity. This is and has been particularly crucial since Indians make up a majority of the population in our county. Let's face it, fair is fair. I applaud the members of the county school board for being fair enough to make such a decision.

At the same time, all eyes must remain fixed on that same school board because, now the associate superintendent position is open. Will they complete the progression of qualified minorities by selecting a Black or will this exclusivism be perpetuated between Whites and Indians or Blacks and Indians in regard to the top administrative positions in the county school system? Sure there are qualified Whites, Indians and Blacks in the county and unless history is not repetitious anyone but a Black will get the second position.

I would not be surprised if the board recommended an "outsider" be brought in to not "arouse the natives", or what about creating three associate positions and populate them tri- racially. Some kind of trickery or deception will be employed to keep the top county school system from being staffed by two minorities; one Red and one Black.

In all due respect to the county school board members, we the Blacks of Robeson County will be watching and as far as we are concerned, it is put-up or shut-up!

S.A. LOCKS  
Pastor, Sandy Grove Baptist Church  
1600 Palmont Rd.  
Lumberton

Blacks, simply put, make up approximately two-thirds of the total population of fair (sic) Robeson. Two-thirds against one-third means effective control any way you look at it.

But many Indians like myself resent an Indian or a Black or a white from one of the, as I see it, decrepit city school systems, attempting to tell we county folks how to run our school system. If I were to write a letter and advocate policy for the Lumberton City School System I would be writing to the disadvantage of the county. People, generally speaking, like to run their own affairs.

Too, nothing was said in the letter about the qualifications of said associate superintendent. The associate or assistant superintendent should be an educator above all else and, as I see it, who ever is named should come from the county school system. And I hope the selectee will be a Black educator from the county school system. Why go to Lumberton to select a Black when we have Blacks in the county system eminently qualified to serve? No, leave Lumberton out of this important decision. They would still have us under the nefarious double-vote yoke if they had anything to do with it. Thank God, they do not!

Too, I doubt very much if many parents and educators in the Robeson County Administrative Unit appreciate advice or subtle threats from political operatives in Lumberton.

It seems to me that Blacks and Indians who reside in the Lumberton City School Unit should exert their energies and outages to the system that is, as I see it, shortchanging them, and let Indians and Blacks and whites do what they think is best for the county school system.

Indians have stood up and been counted in many instances, including the shoot-out of the Black on the county election board a while back, the election of a Black to the chairmanship of the Robeson County Democratic Party, the selection of a Black to head the health department in the county, the election of a Black on the Robeson County Board of Education, etc., etc. We haven't done as much as we should, but considering the historical perspective, Indians have made a definite commitment to the bettering of Indian-Black political relations.

Frankly, Rev. Sidney Locks, I thought the letter was in bad taste. I, most of all, resented the last paragraph that read:

"In all due respect to the county school board members, we the Blacks will be watching and as far as we are concerned, it is put-up or shut-up!"

Even now, as I write this column, I am cognizant of the fact that I cannot speak for anyone but myself. I would not be guilty of gross frontentry and say, in essence, that I speak for all Indian people. We are too diverse for that, and history has sent many of us scurrying in

## From The Insurance Commissioner

Dear Editor:

The North Carolina General Assembly is considering two bills supported by the insurance industry which would drastically change the present system of insurance rate making in this state to the disadvantage of the people.

HB 658 and SB 150 would end our present system of prior approval of insurance rates by an elected Insurance Commissioner. Instead, insurance companies would be turned loose on the people of North Carolina to set their own rates. The practical effect of these bills would be to make the elected Insurance Commissioner powerless to regulate insurance rates in the public's interest.

If these bills are passed there will be a raid on the people's pocketbooks. Rates for automobile liability insurance alone will increase \$54 million dollars. Rates for other lines of insurance can increase by several hundred million dollars within the next year.

Both bills would effectively ruin two important laws:

1. The reinsurance Facility Law which abolished the discriminatory Assigned Risk Plan, and
2. the law abolishing age and sex discrimination with a good safe driver plan.

The insurance industry has the largest single group of paid lobbyists in the General Assembly. They are working night and day to enact SB 150 and HB 658. A large number of insurance agents are on both the House and Senate Insurance Committees. These bills could reach the floor of the General Assembly within the week.

I need your help to fight these bills. Write, call and telegraph your elected representatives. Let them know that you want your elected Insurance Commissioner to approve rates before they go into effect.

The citizens of North Carolina will have to pick up this

different directions, in many instances against our wills. I like to think that I ever once in a while espouse the Indian viewpoint and catch the tenor of our needs, but I do not and cannot SPEAK FOR ALL INDIAN PEOPLE! They (Indian people) will not allow me to do so.

Still, I will concede that I agree with most of the sentiment expressed in the letter, namely that my hope is, as you say, that a Black will be named to assist Superintendent Purnell Swett come July 1. But if I were Supt. Swett, I would look for a Black educator who was loyal to the children of the system above all else.

If I could not find one...well, a wild eyed Afghanistan, a mild mannered Saudi Arabian, a Scotsman, complete with swirling skirt, would do just fine. Most of all, I would not name an assistant this or vice that from Lumberton or the other hinterlands of our fair county.

And, finally, The Carolina Indian Voice has attempted, to the best of our abilities, to not pre-judge. Superintendent designate Purnell Swett of the Robeson County Board of Education. I have found, as a general rule, that fair-minded people will do the right thing most of the time if they are allowed to operate free of duress or pressure. Maybe all of us (including all politicians ought to give the Robeson County Board of Education and Superintendent designate Purnell Swett the opportunity to act on what they consider is best for the children, not the politicians.

multi-million dollar tab if these bad bills become law.

Sincerely,  
John Ingram  
Insurance Commissioner

## Cummings Evokes Praise

Dear Bruce:

Thank the Good Lord for People like McDuffie Cummings!

Sincerely,  
Drantley Blue  
Indian Claims Commission  
1730 K Street NW  
Washington, DC 20006

## Wants Further Action

This is in regard to the case of Mr. O'Neil Oxendine being brutally beaten by two state highway patrolmen. The incident occurred on the evening of April 22, 1977 on the Union Chapel Road, and was witnessed by the Town Manager, Mr. McDuffie Cummings. Just why did the district attorney refuse to let Mr. Cummings take out a Warrant?

For all I know, the reason he did not allow Mr. Cummings to take out a warrant on his patrolmen was because of racial discrimination, in my opinion.

What if two Indian patrolmen would have brutally beaten a paleface just because they were allowed to wear a badge? I wonder if the district attorney would have refused to let the white man take out a warrant against the Indian patrolmen. No! He would have taken out the warrant himself. I think it is time for someone to go to Raleigh and let's put a judge in Lumberton, Robeson County that believes in justice, and not just in a badge and racial discrimination. We don't need a judge like that in Robeson County. We need a judge like the one I described, who believes in justice and will allow an attorney to defend his defendants.

As judge, Charles G. McLean would not allow Mr. Henry Ward Oxendine to do this. The judge knew that his state troopers were guilty; they were seen by Mr. McDuffie Cummings committing their brutal crime against Mr. O'Neil Oxendine. I don't think this case should be left where it is. I think this case should be heard by a grand jury. Let them see that these state troopers are guilty as accused. Then the grand jury can return the true verdict against these troopers. I, myself am a Lumbee Indian. I subscribe to The Carolina Indian Voice and always will. I surely hope that someone, probably Mr. Henry Ward Oxendine, will take the outcome of this brutal case to elect Governor Hunt in Raleigh. Let him know the whole circumstances of the case. As I have said, let's not forget it without something further, and right being done about it. I wonder what Judge McLean was thinking about. It must be that he doesn't like the idea of double voting being outlawed and found unconstitutional in the County of Robeson. This, of course, should have been done hundreds of years ago. I am a Lumbee Indian. And I stand up for my people just like the whites stand up for one another. I do not enjoy seeing my people getting kicked around and beat up. I want to see them get justice. We all know, to start with, that the pale face breed don't care for any of us. They just want to see us marching down death row in Raleigh. I think that is the only time they are satisfied.

So, please let's take it to Raleigh where, probably, it will be given the true consideration.

Yours truly,  
Mr. Cesory Jacobs

## Questions Legality in School Systems

### "SCHOOL OFFERS DIBLE LESSONS, SUIT RUMORED"

An article appeared in the News and Observer on January 23, 1977 bearing this headline: I would assume that most people are aware of the drawn out questions concerning the legality of what is, and is not constitutional in our public school systems today. This controversy has slowly spread its claws into our businesses, and even worst yet, into the homes of our nation.

As we the older generation can give witness to, there has been a change over the past 15 years of rebellious feelings between children and parents known as the generation gap. I have heard it expressed that this is in large part due to the fact that children are in a state of insecurity on the part of the parents. What child can feel any degree of love or acceptance, when he, or she feels that their parents have no interest in their future, or their growing up process. Through my own experience, and my studies in the field of sociology, I find that children are born with potential, but without a knowledge of life, and the expectations thereof. We as parents do our children a grave injustice when we become so negligent that we leave the growing up process to them, and will not afford them the same equal opportunity we were handed down by those before us.

The question is so often asked, WHY? Our young people are turned off at the idea of spending time at home, or in church, or end up in drug addiction, detention centers, prison, and sometimes dead. We should, instead, ask ourselves what programs, guidance, or leadership abilities do we display before these young, impressionable minds? What examples, or patterns do we hold up high enough for them to have a path to follow? What quality of education are we allowing to be taught in our public school systems?

I would like to give you some first hand quotations of our past generations, that we find worthy to preserve, yet not worthy to be applied, or used for our own children, and their progress.

A. Abraham Lincoln: I believe that the Bible is the greatest gift that God gave to men, all the good from the savior is communicated to us through the Bible.

B. George Washington: It is impossible to govern the world with God and the Bible.

C. John Q. Adams: So great is my veneration for the Bible, that the earlier my children begin to read it, the more confident I am that they will prove to be useful citizens of this country, and respectable members of society.

D. Andrew Jackson: The Bible, sir, is the rock on which our republic rests.

E. Sir William Herchel: All human discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming the sacred scriptures.

and the truth thereof.

Here we read statements given by some of our most loyal and beloved forefathers, that fought and some died to pass on a heritage to the future generations of Americans. A heritage of standards, and values that this nation was founded upon.

We so boldly boast of our progress and advancement, and the various fields of endeavor we have undertaken. But how much effort have we directed to the American home, child rearing, education levels, skill levels, and our standard of communication, and honesty? Do we, the American people, lack the insight and wisdom needed to know that the examples we set before our children, the values we teach, and allow to be taught in our public schools, are the very foundation on which our children will be establishing their future or do we not care to have a part in their future?

I am a firm believer in the American way: freedom of speech, of worship, life and the pursuit of happiness. The question is: to what degree of these institutions can we, or our children ever hope to enjoy, if we so idly stand by and do nothing while they are so recklessly abused and torn from the pages of the very constitution that many Americans gave their time, talent, and their lives to write, preserve and protect?

There are so many ways that we can speed up the time factors in achievement, but data plainly proves that the hands-on methods are the most successful way to build and maintain a high quality of learning and achievement. Our forefathers both knew and realized this important fact: that a spirit of unity, properly constructed goals, and an internal /external motivation was needed to begin and accomplish this never-ending process. We would do well to take a look into the way our institutions are performing today.

An elderly businessman was asked: sir why do you not employ any salesmen? He answered: I base my operation on the principle of giving my customers the very best of all my services, and in return I find that they are the very best sales personnel that I could ever hope to employ. We should also see to it that we afford our children the very best of our parental guidance, leadership services, and understanding that we are able to give. Let them should look back in years to come with regret to the day when their parents had no time to invest in the growing up process of their formidable years. This, along with the combined efforts of a nation determined to maintain and display an honest concern for the future and well being of these young citizens, will insure to a greater degree a future people united in the common bond of the welfare of all mankind. Let us all be assured that the investment we make in our young people's formidable years of learning will be the return we shall see in years to come.

Earl Locklear

## Residents of Maynor Manor express Appreciation

Dear Bruce:

The residents of Maynor Manor have asked me to express our THANKS to the many people who were concerned about our welfare during the recent flood we experienced. The management of Pembroke Housing Authority, along with the staff of their Social Service Teams (especially Ruby Locklear and Sylvia Sanderson) carefully monitored the water problem from its beginning. When it became necessary, they safely evacuated families and temporarily housed them at the Locklear Court Community Building.

I enjoyed a very heart warming experience as I participated in the evacuation and witnessed so many concerned citizens pitching in and helping. We, as residents like at Maynor Manor, would like to join Pembroke Housing Authority in saying THANK YOU to the following people and organizations who assisted us during this time of need: Mayor Reggie Strickland, Councilman Milton Hunt, Town Manager McDuffie Cummings, Four County Community Services, Police Chief Vernon Oxendine and his officers, State Highway Patrolman Clyde Fields, Fire Chief Ray Hunt, Fireman Larry Roberts, and other members of the Pembroke Fire Department, Members of the Pembroke Rescue Squad, Sgt. Max Burnett, U.S. Marine Corp., Mrs. Eva Mae Locklear, James and Janice Sheffield. We would like to extend a very special THANKS to Hardes Restaurant and Rudy's Restaurant of Pembroke for their donations of food.

Again, may we say THANK YOU to all of you who so generously gave of your time to help us during the flood.

Very truly yours,  
John A. Lowery, President  
Maynor Manor Residents Council

## Pen-Pal Program in Progress

"Aren't they the enemy?" a black third grader asked me when I asked his class to write letters to Indian children in a school out west. Not a surprising response to those of us who are aware of the brainwashing about Indians done on all of us by TV and Hollywood films, and the lack of adequate or proper information in social studies textbooks. We even find the effects of this brainwashing in attitudes Indians have toward themselves. This is epitomized in a statement by Evan Haney, an American Indian and veteran from the Vietnam War while speaking at the Winter Soldier Investigation. "When I saw a child watching cowboys and Indians on TV, I would root for the cavalry not the Indians." (From pages 349, 350: CHRONICLES OF AMERICAN INDIAN PROTEST, compiled and edited with commentaries by the Council for Interracial Books for Children, Fawcett Publications, Inc.).

teachers which has a large national circulation. We expect to have the article completed early in the fall so that it can be published during the 1977-78 school year.

We suggest that all interested teachers and administrators contacting us give, in addition to the following information grade level(s) of children to be served, tribe(s) represented, area(s) they would like to hear from (if specific areas of the country of interest) if teachers or administrators would like to have their names and addresses along only to teachers in New York City area, but do not have them published, or written that, too, should be enclosed in the letter to us. All letters should be addressed to: Mrs. James, Director of American Indian Progress, 280 Broadway, Suite 1000, New York, New York 10007.

## A Mini Editorial

When will District Attorney Joe Freeman finish his investigation of the high patrolmen charged in the brutality of Oxendine? And what will he find?

It is a fact that many Indians and Blacks weary of "justice" as a color blind instrument of Robeson County.

The record shows conclusively that Indians and Blacks are tried in the county Robeson County. And they (Indians and Blacks) are tried by white judges and solicitors. Are most of the "evil ones" Blacks or Indians? Many of us tend to believe that springs from deeper roots than sociological notions. Many of us also believe that justice is not applied fairly Robeson County. In the perjorative get many Indians and Blacks think they get more than their fair share of that racially attituded Justice's dispensation.

So, when will District Attorney Joe Freeman Britt finish his investigation of the high patrolmen charged in the brutality of Oxendine? And what will he find?

Pembroke Town Manager, McDuffie Cummings, who observed the Oxendine incident, and alleges brutality against Hubert Covington and T. J. Evelyn, has posed the possibility of taking out a warrant against the troopers. District Attorney Britt, the reporter's witness, said that he also completed his investigation. He also McDuffie Cummings that he (Cummings) could not take out a warrant against the troopers until he conducted an investigation.

So, when will District Attorney Joe Freeman Britt finish his investigation of the high patrolmen charged in the brutality of Oxendine? And what will he find?

## A SPECIAL DAY PLEASANT GARDEN CHURCH

The congregation at the Grove United Methodist Church observed a very special Sunday, May 29, 1977. Guest speaker for the hour was the Reverend McDuffie Cummings, Coordinator Ministry Outreach, N.C. During the worship there were eight people received membership in the church on profession of faith. Also, Mr. Cummings was presented to Mr. Harold J. Jr., Chairman of the Trustees, a grant for \$500.00 used in the creating of a fellowship hall.

The pastor, Sidney Cummings stated that the very commendable hour -

## Reader shares a poem

Hello Bruce:

I really enjoy The Carolina Indian Voice. I find it very informative. I would like to share a poem with you.

TO A TREE

Young sapling-I saw thee growing in the forest Sheltered by companions  
Thy life ordered-the means of survival to maintain.  
Reaching for the distant sky-  
Thou didst stretch thy eager branches towards the sun and rain-  
Came hunters looking for thy kind,  
And uprooted from thy bed of loam thy fragile roots-  
And took thee far away from home-to an alien place-  
And thou weren't sold for monies and thrust into a meagre hole-  
A bed of acid dirt ringed by steel and stone  
Struggled thou to stay alive through cold and drought and thrashing winds that came to shivel thee-  
And thou weren't there all alone when life itself was almost done-but came one who saw thy wretched state and brought thee water that thou mightest live.

I see thee now in stunted growth and yet thy seed is strong-  
Thy roots go deep into the ground for only in the depths may sustenance be found.

The place ordained by cruel fate for thee to live thy life-  
Is one evil death and hate-of madness and sharpening its knife,  
Where keepers prow and rattle chains-and curse the ones they call insane-Came a timid and all trembling to see the marvel of a growing tree-  
And touched a leaf all green and new-for spring had come and held the earth in its warm embrace-  
And then another fearful one came to touch and see, shrinking back from passing shadow trembling at the sound of key braving hell itself to marvel at a tree  
I see thee now young sapling,  
Somehow thou hasn't survived,  
Even in this place of death  
Thy spirit is alive.  
Thou hasn't friends now who care  
And will bring thee water when they dare.

There is a prophesy which tells  
All this will pass away,  
All gone will be the bells  
And night shall turn to day,  
And once the earth is opened  
And sweetened by the sun,  
Then shall thy growth be sevenfold,  
And then thou shalt become a forest.

The first amongst thy kind  
To teach the trembling ones,  
Once more their Mother Earth  
For only she gives life.  
By Mrs. Jean E. Holmes

Letter written by Bert Chavis

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God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

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**Howard says:**  
Pembroke Drug Center, Odum and W. 3rd, Pembroke, NC, Dial 521-4905

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In the formula SHOES, "S" stands for smoking; "H" is for hypertension; "O" is for obesity; "E" for exercise, and "S" is for stress. So, watch your shoes and you'll be rewarded with better health and a longer more active life.

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Howard Brooks

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