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Rev. Jack Hunt, Rev. C.C. Allen, Jr., And Rev. Stelford Smith Publicly Dismissed By Church Of God Officials

Accused of Sowing Discord

by Bruce Barton

Pembroke—Jesus said it best of all: "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother."

"But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."

"And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." Matthew 18:15-18.

But said Rev. C.C. Allen, Jr., Pastor of Eastside Church of God in Fayetteville, "They did it absolutely backwards to what the Bible instructs us to do. They came and read the letter to our congregation first."

Sunday, January 19, 1979, during church services, R.P. Fields, district overseer, with a coterie of 4 or 5 other men visited the Pembroke Church of God, Riverside Church of God in Lumberton (during morning worship) and Eastside Church of God in Fayetteville (during evening services) and dismissed the pastors of the respective churches by reading a public letter to the congregations of the 3 churches.

The letters, all three identical, said, in part, "It is sad, indeed, when a man will sink so low as to deliberately undermine and advocate insubordinate actions against the church that has supported him and given him a place to minister."

The letter listed the charges against

the ministers. They were accused of: (1) sowing discord; (2) insubordination; (3) and advocating against governmental policies of the Church of God.

Rev. Jack Hunt is pastor of the Pembroke Church of God; Rev. C. C. Allen, Jr. is pastor of Eastside Church of God; and Rev. Stelford Smith is pastor of Riverside Church of God in Lumberton. All three are Indian ministers, as are most of the pastors of what is locally known as the Pembroke Indian Church of God District.

SOME BACKGROUND

There were eleven churches in the Pembroke District until the district was recently split into two districts: the Hestertown District and the Saddletree District.

Interestingly enough, both pastors of these two churches are non-Indian. Rev. Jack Hunt said, in an interview, "Some of this contention certainly has to do with Indian rights."

The 11 churches in the district are: Hestertown Church of God in Lumberton, Rev. Jonathan Ramkissoon, pastor; Saddletree Church of God, Rev. Larry Poole, pastor; Riverside Church of God in Lumberton, Rev. Stelford Smith, pastor; Rowland Church of God, Rev. Mrs. Faye Demery, pastor; Fairmont Church of God, Rev. Rick Brackett, pastor; Eastside Church of God in Fayetteville, Rev. C.C. Allen, Jr., pastor; Smithtown Church of God, Rev. James Maynor, pastor; Hoke County Church of God, Rev. James W. Hunt, pastor; and Maxton Church of God, Rev. Earl Kirksey, pastor.

Until recently, an Indian, Rev. Millard Maynard, was district overseer.

He was promoted last year to the position of Southeastern Regional Director for American Indian Affairs.

Maynard was replaced as district overseer by Rev. R.P. Fields, who is also pastor of East Laurinburg Church of God.

Despite repeated calls to his residence in Laurinburg we were unable to contact Rev. Fields. His wife said that he was attending a Church of God Conference in Charlotte.

But this reporter did establish contact with Harold B. Thompson, North Carolina State Overseer for the Church of God, a national church. Thompson categorically denied any racial motives in replacing Maynard with Fields and splitting the Pembroke District into two separate districts. Said Thompson, "I split a number of districts state wide. We try to keep districts down to 5 or 6 churches."

Thompson also said that Revs. Hunt, Allen and Smith were part of "an element within the Pembroke District that was advocating the withholding of regular reports to the state and national offices. They were sowing discord so we had to do something about it."

Fields was the official who read the letter at each church. Thompson said, "He was operating with my approval and in response to my instructions to him as the local district overseer."

When faced with the fact that the two new district pastors were both non-Indian Thompson said, "We tried to pick the pastors of our most stable churches down there. Too, we also had to choose the ones best qualified to serve as district pastors."

Thompson said, categorically, "I deny any racial implications in this matter."

Although he was unable to confirm it, Thompson said, in response to who the new pastor would be at Pembroke, "Now, don't hold me to this but I think the new pastor will be Rev. Ronald Scott, a local Indian pastor." According to information we have been able to garner, Rev. David Carter has been asked to assume the pastoral reins at Eastside Church of God in Fayetteville.

A PERSONAL OBSERVATION FROM ONE WHO WAS THERE...

This story evolved, in part, because my mother, Mrs. Berna Barton, attends Pembroke Church of God. She was sitting in church last Sunday when the incident happened. She remembers, "I was shocked. I did not know what was going on. None of us knew what to do. Finally, the Rev. Jack Hunt told us to go to our classes. The man reading the letter (evidently Fields) tried to stop us by hollering, 'Stay Here! Stay Here!' We went to class anyway."

"I noticed Wilson Locklear, Jr., the Sunday School Superintendent. He was crying. He got up without saying a word and walked out of the sanctuary into the back where the classrooms are. I just felt like he was going back there to pray."

"I don't know what to do. I don't know if I will go back or not. It was just a terrible thing. The church seems like the last place in the world you would expect something like this to happen. We're all in just a state of shock."

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Lowrys Become 13th and 14th Members of PSU's Chancellor's Club



Shown above, left to right, are: Mrs. Reba Lowry, Dr. English E. Jones and Mr. Ira Pate Lowry. (Bill Hunt photo)

by Gene Warren

Pembroke—Ira Pate Lowry of Pembroke and his wife, Reba Millsaps Lowry, are new members of Pembroke State University's Chancellor's Club, meaning they are each contributing a minimum of \$1,000 a year to the PSU Foundation, Inc., for the next 10 years. Mrs. Lowry is the first lady member of the Club.

Lowry, 72, retired in 1971 after

working for the State of North Carolina for 40 years, 23 of which he spent at Pembroke State University as chairman of the Music Department and band director.

Mrs. Lowry retired in 1975 after serving Pembroke State University for 40 years as a foreign language professor, and is now professor emerita. She has the longest period of service of any PSU professor or administrator and was presented the PSU

Alumni Association's "Outstanding Service Award" in 1976. She has served the university in many, many areas.

The number of members in the Chancellor's Club now totals 14.

The Lowrys received a special framed certificate from Chancellor English E. Jones upon their inception into the select Club. He expressed his deep thanks for their loyalty to the university in every area.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Lowry said they are joining the Chancellor's Club "because we love what the University has done for our community."

Lowry, who graduated from Pembroke High School in 1929 and was in the first chapel program ever held in Old Main (first brick building on the PSU campus), made this comparison: "Twenty years ago, no one dreamed we'd put a man on the moon. Compared to then, the school's facilities today seemed that far out of reach."

Lowry said during World War II, Pembroke State's enrollment dropped to "only 64 students, and it looked as though the school might have to close. To help feed the students in the dining hall, Albert Hunt led in the formation of a cooperative—the students bringing eggs, ham, wheat and flour and sharing. Few paid their way. We used the money of the ones who could pay to buy sugar for the dining hall."

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Late Sports Item

Wingate—Despite 5 Braves in double figures the PSU roundballers fell in Wingate 88-84 last night. More, hopefully, next week.

Concerned Citizens Plan Rally Reference Indian-Highway Patrol Confrontations

Pembroke—The latest incident involving a member of the highway patrol and an Indian citizen has prompted a number of concerned citizens to petition the North Carolina Indian Commission "to do something to alleviate the matter."

The latest incident involved Tony Blue, an Indian male, who was hospitalized with head injuries received when he was stopped by E.G. Brown, a Black Highway Patrol Trooper stationed in Robeson County.

Officials of the Indian Commission charge that the trooper used "undue" force in making the arrest of young Blue, 27. "The man's actions did not warrant the injuries he received from the highway patrol officer," the commission report said following a Monday meeting with Herbert Hyde, the Secretary of the Department of Crime Control and Highway Safety, the department that the highway patrol is under.

Tony Blue received a fractured skull, broken fingers and other injuries early on the morning of January 14, when Brown stopped him and charged him with driving under the influence and resisting arrest.

Blue was initially taken to Southeastern General Hospital about an hour after his arrest, according to Jerry Berklehammer, a spokesman for the Indian Commission office in Raleigh and did not receive treatment at the time, according to a hospital spokesman because he refused treatment.

According to the report released by the Indian Commission, Blue remained in the Lumberton jail until 4 a.m. of the same morning when one of his brothers posted bond. The Indian Commission spokesman said his brother assumed he had received medical attention and took him home.

However, later in the morning, Blue began vomiting and spitting up blood and his brother took him to Southeastern General Hospital in Lumberton where he was examined and transferred to Cape Fear Valley Hospital in Fayetteville where he underwent surgery that same Sunday night. He remained in the intensive care unit for a number of days and is now seemingly recovering satisfactorily.

Bobby Chavis, the local representative for the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs, has taken an active role in the case and presented it before the Indian Commission officials in Raleigh.

The Raleigh office called for the meeting with Hyde which was held Monday morning. Hyde has called for an internal investigation although the Indian Commission contends that an internal investigation is not the best way to resolve the matter.

The case is the latest in a number of incidents involving Indians and members of the highway patrol. The series of incidents have caused complaints to be lodged in Raleigh by the Indian Commission.

Hyde said he was calling for the internal probe because of the sensitive nature of relations in Robeson County between the Indian citizenry and the highway patrol.

Chavis and other concerned Indian citizens, in a meeting Wednesday, made plans for a Public Rally to be held at one of the Pembroke schools Friday night, Feb. 2. The tentative date has been set to, hopefully, rally support to those like Blue who have seemingly felt the wrath of the patrol.

Hopefully, according to Chavis and other organizers of the rally, funds can be raised to hire an outside attorney to follow through on the complaints. Said Chavis, "We need to do something so that some of these grievances can be addressed. A pattern seems to exist and

PEOPLE AND LAND THINGS... C E S

SELECTION OF A PERMANENT COMMISSIONER

Assistant Secretary Gerard is continuing to review recommendations from tribal and organizational leaders made pursuant to his memo of November 27. He has conducted some interviews and expects to talk with additional candidates. Nothing is definite. He hopes that a name will be sent to the Hill in the early part of the 96th Congress.

WHITE HOUSE MESSAGE TO INDIANS GETS POLITE RESPONSE

When Presidential aide Anne Wexler spoke at the NCAI Executive Council meeting in Washington, D.C., Jan. 16-18, the reaction of Indian participants was not enthusiastic. Wexler said that President Carter "is sensitive and knowledgeable about Indian concerns," that he supports the policy of Indian self determination and is committed "to honor this country's legal and moral responsibilities to American Indians." She also said that the President's anti-inflation budget, to be presented to Congress Jan. 22, was indeed going to be a tight one. Wexler said she could not reveal details of the Indian portion of the budget prior to the President's budget statement, but she noted that inflation is most hurtful to the poor -- which would include the Indians. "By limiting Federal spending," she said, "we will help to reduce the inflation rate." NCAI President Veronica Murdock told Wexler that Indian leaders wanted to talk with President Carter "across the table" on water policy and other issues.

PRESCHOOL CLINIC PLANNED FOR UNION CHAPEL SCHOOL

A preschool clinic is planned at Union Chapel School, Thursday, February 1, 1979 from 8:30 a.m. until 12 noon. Parents of children who will enter kindergarten or the first grade for the first time are asked to attend and bring their child's birth certificate and immunization records. It is not necessary for the child to attend. Students in kindergarten and first grade will be attending school on this day. The principal is John E. Cummings.

PLATE SALE PLANNED

Union Civic Club will sponsor a barbecue plate sale on Saturday, January 27, 1979 at the Pembroke Town Park. The sale will begin at 10 a.m. and last until 5 p.m. Plates will be \$1.00 each. Sandwiches will also be on sale for the price of \$1.00. Proceeds will go to community improvement projects.

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS

Four County Community Services, Inc. has scheduled a series of forums for discussion of public issues in the areas served by the Red Springs Community Center.

These meetings will give citizens an opportunity to be involved in defining area problems and in helping plan project activities for programs conducted by Four County Community Services, Inc.

These meetings are scheduled as follows: 10:45 a.m. at St. James AME Jan. 31 Zion Church and on Feb. 2 at 11 a.m. at the Red Springs Community Center.

It is anticipated that the advisory board will meet on Feb. 22 at 1 p.m. in the Red Springs Community Center and at that time they will review the problems and list priorities.

For more information, please contact Madie Rae Locklear at 843-5092.

We want to know why Indians are the only ones having confrontations with the patrol.

More details are expected to be released in the next few days as plans for the rally are finalized.

PROSPECT OPEN HOUSE & PTA

Prospect School will have a combination PTA and Open House on Monday evening, January 29 from 7 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. Parents and teachers will assemble in the cafeteria for a short business session. Teachers will then go to their respective class rooms for parent-teacher conferences.

ATTENTION PSHS CLASS OF '59

A class reunion is being planned for the 1959 class of Pembroke High School. The occasion will mark the 20th anniversary of their graduation.

Organizers of the reunion are attempting to locate class members.

If you are a member of the class of '59, please call Mary Catherine Hunt at 521-2242, Merdis Graham Oxending at 521-2244 or write Bruce Barton, The Carolina Indian Voice, P.O. Box 1075, Pembroke, NC 28372.

LUMBERTON MAN ENTERS GUILTY PLEA

John Fuller Sealy, operator of a Lumberton service station, pleaded guilty in Robeson Superior Court Monday to seven counts of false pretense.

The charges were in connection with an investigation of fraud involving payments made by the Lumberton Housing Authority.

He was the last of six persons to be tried in connection with the investigation. With Sealy's plea, all six have either pleaded guilty or were found guilty of various charges. Among them was Gerald B. Hill, former executive director of the authority.

The judge had scheduled sentencing for all six defendants Friday. District Attorney Joe Freeman Britt had asked that sentencing be delayed until all were tried.

Sealy had been charged in connection with billings he submitted to the housing authority for repair work and parts on housing authority vehicles during an 8 month period.

GIRL SCOUT COOKIE SALE TO BEGIN

An annual American tradition—the Girl Scout cookie sale—will begin a Robeson County January 26. Girl Scouts will be taking orders through Feb. 12. The cookie sale is a major source of income to keep Girl Scouting on the move and growing. Proceeds are used for ongoing program and services, for purchase of equipment and for maintenance and development of Girl Scout property. Troops receive a bonus for each box sold to help finance their own programs and community projects. Through the cookie sale, girls are trained in salesmanship, planning and budgeting.

The first nationally franchised cookie sale was in 1936. Some 70 million boxes of cookies are expected to be sold nation wide this year. Last year Robeson County Girl Scouts sold 27,096 boxes.

If you are not contacted by a Girl Scout and wish to order cookies, please call Herbie Owsdale, Lumberton at 738-5241.

PSU Homecoming Game Scheduled

PSU's Homecoming Game Scheduled for Saturday, The Carolina Indian Voice