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A FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL EXPRESSION

"As We See It" concerning the Parnell-Herndon-Parkton-St. Pauls debacle or ...Did you know Sen. SAM NOBLE'S WIFE'S name is reportedly on the petition too?

Every once in a while an issue comes along that demands a choosing up of sides. One is either on that side or on this side. The new proposal to annex the Parkton-Oak Ridge School Attendance Areas to the St. Pauls City School System is that kind of issue. It's choosing up time.

Progressive minded people cannot afford to allow David Parnell and Bill Herndon to succeed in this effort. We simply cannot afford their shenanigans.

We want to tell it just like we see it. We hope our editorial view will afford some insight into a very devious and subtle plot that is not easily understood by many of us. Many folk in Robeson County have been playing racial games for many years. Some of us are just now becoming aware of racial politics and how to spot it when it rears its ugly head.

In this editorial we shall attempt to clarify the issues so that our citizens - Red, Black and White - can have some understanding of a very complicated matter that threatens the educational well being of all our children.

Some background...

The issue arose when a group of predominately white persons in and around the Town of Parkton - ostensibly led by Tim Herndon but in reality led by St. Pauls County Commissioner Bill Herndon, the father of Tim, and State Representative David Parnell, a Parkton resident - sought ways in which to have Parkton School annexed to the St. Pauls City School System.

Initially the effort did not receive much success since they were rebuffed by the St. Pauls Board; however, certain events and realizations have occurred recently until the St. Pauls Board is now actively championing such an annexation.

The support of the St. Pauls Board came with the realization that even with bond monies St. Pauls would not be able to build a new high school within their district given the present size of their school system. Furthermore, given the recent policy of the State Board of Education of requiring state approval of local building plans with a view towards how those new buildings would function in a merged county-wide system, the St. Pauls Board realized that the plans of the County School Board in the northern part of the county will forever doom their efforts to build a new high school at St. Pauls to failure; therefore, the St. Pauls Board figured that by annexing Parkton they could foil the county plan, thereby insuring

state approval of their new high school to be located within St. Pauls. Since this realization, the St. Pauls Board has become the ardent champion of the Herndon-Parnell effort; in fact, the attorney for the St. Pauls Board, Paul Canady, reportedly drafted the petition which was presented to the Robeson County Board.

Tim Herndon

Seemingly, the point man for the effort, before events forced the real leaders into the open, is Tim Herndon, the son of St. Pauls County Commissioner Bill Herndon; both father and son are residents of Parkton Township. It should be noted that Tim Herndon has long advocated the annexation, and in fact his children do not even attend the public schools, they being enrolled in what he termed the Robeson County "Country" Day School; the school is an almost totally white private school located in Red Springs. With the support of the white controlled St. Pauls Board and with the white Parkton opposition to consolidation with a predominately Indian school, Tim Herndon and company finally saw their chance to effectuate their annexation aims. (It was he who supervised the gathering of the signatures and who nervously presented the petition to the Robeson County Board.)

Bill Herndon

This man is the father of Tim Herndon and was appointed to fill the vacancy of the late Doug Wellington on the Robeson County Board of Commissioners to represent Parkton, St. Pauls, Saddletree and West Howellsville townships. Bill Herndon's role in the effort was to confuse the issue so as to gain the support of the Magnolia area for the annexation by telling them that if they lost their school that the community would in his words "dry up." In order to effectuate the Herndon-Parnell nefarious aims, Bill Herndon deviously and grossly misstated the position of the county board of education at a community meeting at Magnolia School recently. In fact, he has been going from door-to-door in the Indian community of Saddletree in order to sell his damaged goods. The scenario is like Hollywood at its worst: Here is a non-Indian telling Indians that if they lose their school, the Saddletree community will "dry up," meanwhile in his home community of Parkton, he is trying to do exactly what he is warning the Indians against by seeking to close the high school at Parkton via an annexation with St. Pauls! Apparently Mr. Herndon is not worried about his own community "drying up," and again maybe it does not matter as his grandchildren are attending a white private school. Mr. Herndon's active support of the annexation effort has put him at odds with most of the Black people in the Parkton area, including in particular David Green, a Black sitting on the county board of education.

David Parnell

David Parnell is white, a member of the House of Representatives, and a resident of Parkton Township. He supported the movement clandestinely until it appeared that the county school board would not act favorably on the group's petition; since that time he has been forced into the open. According to informed sources, Rep. Parnell has dusted off a bill which had already had drafted some time ago in preparation for such an eventuality and filed the legislation in the State House this past Friday. Apparently Mr. Parnell was genuinely surprised when Rep. Horace Locklear didn't support his bill to annex Parkton to St. Pauls since he figured that Herndon's efforts in Saddletree would force him to do so; however, Rep. Locklear, much to his credit, stated that his supporters in the county were opposed to any such annexation legislation. Apparently, Mr. Locklear realizes that his votes in the predominately white city precincts were few and far between in the last election.

White Flight

The issue here is quite clear: the white oriented Parkton group is seeking to escape the jurisdiction of the majority Indian-Black county board of education. In the words of Rep. David Parnell, they can "relate better" to the white-controlled St. Pauls Board of Education. Make no mistake about it; if the David Parnell-Bill Herndon effort is successful, then similar efforts will shortly follow in other areas such as Littlefield and Orrum. The end result will be the destruction of the hard-earned victory of double-voting as nothing will be left of the old county school system except a shell.

The Old Double Standard

Can any Indian forget the near violence which occurred around Prospect School in 1970 as a result of the hundreds of Indian school children trapped within the city school districts being forced to abandon their historic schools in favor of the white-controlled city schools? What relief was afforded these Indian people at that time? Meanwhile, white people to the north and west of the City of Lumberton petitioned the legislature successfully for inclusion within the Lumberton City Schools in order to keep their children from having to attend predominately Indian schools. Today, some nine years later, are we to allow the same scenario to be replayed? Given the elimination of double-voting and Indian-Black control of the county school board, are we to now allow such annexation to reoccur? If our legislators can afford relief to the white residents of Parkton, then can they not also afford relief to the Indian residents of Oxendine, Prospect, Rennett, Shannon, South St. Pauls, and Fairgrove? We all know that these Indian people would prefer being within the county

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"STRIKE AT THE WIND" TO HOLD AUDITIONS

Local auditions for the 1979 season of "Strike at the Wind!" have been set for 10 a.m. on March 24th and 2 p.m. on March 25 at the Lakeside Amphitheatre on the grounds of the Riverside Country Club near Pembroke. In case of rain, auditions will be held in Moore Hall on the Pembroke State University Campus.

Director David Ariail will be casting all roles and hopes that members of last year's cast and new aspirants will turn out. Dancers, singers, and actors are needed.

Some changes in the production are scheduled including the addition of more music by composer Willie Lowry.

Mr. Ariail is also seeking qualified technicians and other backstage personnel. Those wishing to apply for those jobs should send a resume to "Strike at the Wind!", P.O. Box 1059, Pembroke, NC 28372.

GRACE GOSPEL SINGERS TO PERFORM

The Grace Gospel Singers of the Grace Baptist Church of Gastonia, NC will be the featured singers on Sunday, March 18, at 2:30 p.m. at the Rock of Bethlehem Church. The pastor is Rev. J.W. Campbell and extends a cordial invitation to everyone to attend.

LIONS CLUB BANQUET PLANNED

The Pembroke Lions Club will hold their 17th Annual Charter Night-Ladies Night Banquet Monday, March 19, at the Town and Country Restaurant in Pembroke. The Lion of the Year will be chosen and ten year continuous membership ship pins will be presented.

The keynote speaker will be Sankey W. Robinson who is the past district governor, 31-F, of the Whiteville Lions Club. Jimmy Edmund who is the district governor, 31-F, of the Lumberton Lions Club will be present for the occasion.

PSU's Pinchbeck Maintenance Building Dedicated Today

Dedication ceremonies for the new Walter J. Pinchbeck Maintenance Building were held today on the PSU Campus.

Pinchbeck, one of Pembroke's most famous citizens, died in 1977 after a long and illustrious scouting career, and as a member of the PSU maintenance department (many years as superintendent)

for 28 years.

Members of the Pinchbeck family were present during the impressive ceremonies which included a presentation of a portrait of Pinchbeck on behalf of the family which will hang in the building in his honor.

More (including photos) next week.

Jaycee Efforts Successful

Lumberton-The Eagle Claw Jaycees report a successful car wash and raffle. The institutional chapter chose its name from the Eagle Claw Rod Reel donated by Jim Freeman of Freeman Sporting Goods in Pembroke for the raffle. Winner was the Prospect Jaycee Chapter. Their winning ticket was #448.

who donated the rod and reel. It was quite successful and we raised enough money to pay our membership dues."

And in spite of the vacuum cleaner going on the blink, the members reported a successful car wash last Saturday. At last count they washed and cleaned 17 cars.

The institutional chapter is composed of inmates of the Lumberton Correctional Center. They were sponsored by the Fairgrove Jaycees.



Shown left right are: William Mercer, secretary; Dallon Scott, president; Ms. Lumbas, the beautiful Mrs. Bullard; Robert Reynolds, vice president; and James Bumgardner, treasurer. (Bruce Barton photo)

BOARD DENIES HERNDON PETITION

Voters Approve School Bond Issue

PEOPLE AND THINGS... CELES

Mr. Willie McCormick, a citizen from the St. Pauls area, appeared before the Robeson County Board of Education on Tuesday. Said he, "I am here to address consolidation from the view point of St. Pauls... We desire consolidation too... We are not opposing consolidation... We desire a better school system and this is the only way we can get a better school system. (Referring to merging Parkton School attendance area with the St. Pauls City System).

McCormick continued to urge the board to vote to release Parkton. Said he "This is a Robeson County problem. You have an opportunity to settle it in Robeson..."

The board heard him out before Supt. Purnell Swett read lengthy statement of the board's position on the matter. (See that statement in its entirety on page 2 of this issue).

The board also adopted a form to be used for teacher aide evaluation. The form was presented by Mr. Donald A. Bonner, assistant superintendent.

They approved the superintendent's recommendation to include all the elementary schools in the fluoride mouthrinse program now existing in only 7 schools. They heard Mr. Fred Ellis discuss a problem with his son's school bus being revoked by the principal, Mr. Dewey Nye. No action was taken on the matter.

Mr. Woodrow Dial, Chairman of the Title IV Part A, Parent Committee,

made a recommendation concerning the IEA bus issue which had been studied by a committee. Dial stated the committee's recommendation that the bus be removed from impoundment immediately and be used by the entire county through the Indian Education Office. The board adopted his recommendation and the buses officially become a part of the centralized Indian Education Program.

Mrs. Shirley Britt reported on a Committee relative to the new East Robeson Primary School. The committee was composed of Mrs. Britt and a member of the advisory councils of both Smiths and Allenton Schools. Mrs. Britt reported that the committee did not approve of the name and wished the new school to be called Allenton-Smiths Elementary School. To this the superintendent replied, "I recommend that you take this under advisement... I have a problem with that name as both Smiths and Allenton campus still exist..."

And Chairman Ralph Hunt said: "It is the policy of this board when requests are presented to answer them at the next meeting." And they took no further action on the matter.

On motion by Mrs. Lillian Faye Locklear, seconded by Major David Green, the board unanimously renewed Supt. Swett's contract for four years. And Swett responded: "I really appreciate this... Any time you feel I'm not concerned for children, you let me know... I will continue to try and do a good job for you..."

Robeson County-Said a political wag, "Eighty-five percent of the voters in Robeson County don't care which way the wind blows because only fifteen percent of them came out to vote on a \$16 million school bond issue that might raise our taxes..."

Although Robeson County has more than 42,000 voters, few of them showed up to express an opinion on the proposed and now official \$16 million school bond issue. Elections chair person, Elizabeth Morton, estimated that 15 percent of the registered voters in the county actually exercised their right to vote on the matter.

Voting in favor of the matter were 3,504 voters; against were 2,310.

Some random samplings show some interesting votes. For instance, Maxton voted overwhelmingly in favor of the measure. 172 voted "yes" and only 2 voted against the measure. The measure also received heavy votes in Lumberton's Precinct #1 and in Pembroke. Said a political observer, "It's probably the first and last time in history that Lumberton #1 and Pembroke will be for the same thing." Lumberton #1 voted 508 in favor and 164 against. Pembroke voted 347 "Yes" votes and 109 against.

Elections were in and tallied by 9:00 p.m.

Since they might be affected by the vote it is interesting that Parkton only voted 43 "yes" and 98 "no." Saddletree of which Magnolia School is a part also voted in an interesting pattern. They voted 59 in favor and 93 against.

Said Robeson County School Superintendent Purnell Swett, "It's a good day for education in Robeson County. It shows that those who take the time to vote on matters of interest to our children are considerate in their deliberations."

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO MEET TONIGHT

The Pembroke Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture will meet tonight, March 15th at 7:30 in the Town Hall. This will be an important meeting as we were have a report of the Nominating Committee and proceed to elect officers for the coming year.

The attendance lately has been very good and they hope everyone not only make a special effort to be at this meeting, but also bring along a prospective member. The Chamber can only be as strong as we make it by increasing our membership and participating in the projects of the chamber.

Submitted by J.T. Paul

ROBESON NATIVES MAKE ALL STAR TEAM

Annie Graham, a junior at Rowland High School, and Regina Miller, a junior at Parkton High School, were named yesterday as members of the Raleigh News and Observer's 1979 Class 1-A All-East Girls Basketball Team. Joining Graham and Miller on the squad were Sheila Ford (Clarkton), Martha Gibbs (Belhaven) and Lynda Nelson (Belhaven).

WEEKEND REVIVAL PLANNED

A weekend revival is planned for Eastside Church of God in Fayetteville beginning tonight, March 15, at 7:30 p.m. The pastor, Rev. C.C. Allen, Jr. cordially invites the public to attend. Guest speaker tonight (Thursday) will be the Rev. Stelford Leo Smith of the Riverside Church of God in Lumberton. Guest speaker on Friday night will be the Rev. Jack Hunt, pastor of the Pembroke Church of God. On Saturday night the speaker will be Rev. C.C. Allen.

IN THE ARMED FORCES

Master Sgt. Andrew L. Hammonds whose wife, Annie, lives at 1106 Eastern Ave. NE Washington, DC recently was presented his second award of the Army Commendation Medal at Fort Campbell, Ky.

The medal was awarded for meritorious service. Such service can be over an extended period of time or for outstanding achievement in a single situation. In either case, the recipient must have demonstrated skills and dedication for above average

Hammonds received the award while assigned as an operations sergeant with the 501st Signal Battalion at Fort Campbell, Ky. He entered the Army in February 1953. He is a 1951 graduate of J.H. Hayswood, Lumberton, NC. His father, Jake Hammonds, lives on Route 7, Lumberton.

ART CONTEST FOR AMERICAN INDIANS PART OF CONFERENCE

To celebrate North Carolina Native American art, the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs will sponsor an art contest for American Indians of all ages as part of the Fourth Annual Indian Unity Conference to be held March 29-31 in Fayetteville.

Entries may include drawings, paintings or etchings in five different categories: ages 6-12, 13-17, 18-21, over 21 (non-professionals), and over 21 (professionals). Judging will take place on March 30. Winning entries will receive a cash prize and will be placed on exhibit by the Commission of Indian Affairs. For more information contact Danny Bell, NC Commission of Indian Affairs, 919-723-2995.

PSU vs VIRGINIA BASEBALL RAINED OUT YESTERDAY RESCHEDULED AS DOUBLEHEADER SUNDAY ON PSU DIAMOND

Deep Branch School will sponsor a pageant on Friday, March 16, 1979 at 7:30 p.m. in the school auditorium. Contestants are between grades 4-7. The theme will be "Spring is Awakening." Price will be \$2 for adults and \$1 for children.

DEEP BRANCH PAGEANT PLANNED