

EDITORIAL AND OPINION PAGE

AS I SEE IT

by Bruce Barton



Enjoys Fund Raising Dinner

Dear Bruce:

Bill and I had the pleasure of attending the fund raising dinner for "Strike at the Wind!" while in Pembroke this past weekend. I can honestly say it was one of the most enjoyable evenings I've had lately. The entertainment by Willie Lowery, Brenda Hunt and Miriam Oxendine was superb—and hearing Brenda and Willie sing "O Perfect Love" gave me goose bumps. It was indeed beautiful and I can hardly wait to purchase the album. I thought Ty Boyd presented an outstanding message to the group—one that is certain to motivate those who were there to get out and drum up support for the Drama. I know I came away excited. It's unfortunate that there was such a small turnout for this important affair. I do hope more of our people will take more interest in this wonderful project—it is worthy of our support—it must have it to survive.

Sincerely,
Elaine Brayboy Haraway
Silver Springs, Md.

A Nice Note from A Reader

Dear Editor:

In your Editorial on Thursday, December 28, 1978 you mentioned several Award Winners of Robeson County in 1978. To me, you left out the most important one of all, you yourself. I will always remember you as The Most Outspoken Christian in Robeson County since you made a public announcement of your abiding faith in Jesus Christ.

I wait earnestly every week for my copy of The CIV, just to read the Editorial Page. I pray that you will never cease to speak out for what, and who, you believe in.

Some people are like balloons, full of air and ready to blow up, but you, my friend, remind me of a good watch—Open-faced, Pure Gold, Quietly busy, and full of good works.

You do not put yourself on a pedestal and that is as it should be. And underneath all of your wisdom, I see Jesus of Gallilee.

D.F. Locklear
Route 1,
Pembroke, NC

SPECIAL SINGING PLANNED

Josh Locklear, Hospital Chairman for Pembroke's DAV Chapter 47 and VFW Post 2843, wishes to thank the many singing groups who participated in the special singings held during 1978 for the patients at the VA Hospital in Fayetteville. He also announces that the next special singing will be held March 25, at 3 p.m. and will feature the Choirs of Deep Branch Baptist Church.

Said a caller "What you said about John Robinson last week was o.k. but it makes me mad that you didn't mention Mac Legerton, the guy who got things rolling in developing the proposal for the youth center activated by the Fayetteville Presbytery."

Hey, I agree with you. Mac Legerton is an o.k. guy. He did the lion's share of developing the proposal that culminated in the Pembroke Presbyterian Youth Center now operating in Pembroke.

Mac and his wife, the beautiful and erudite Donna Chavis, are now living in New York while Mac finishes up his seminary studies there.

Anyway, John Robinson, the irrepressible nuts and bolts director of the Pembroke Area Presbyterian Ministry is carrying forth a good work begun, in part, by Mac Legerton, who preceded him at his post as an intern.

Really! They're both good guys. I certainly did not mean to leave out Legerton. Maybe we'll say more about him in a future column. He's good copy, that's for sure.

FRIDAY DELAYS PSU CHANCELLOR PICK...

I wish he would go ahead and get it over with. Many of us are tired of waiting and our ulcers demand that Bill Friday, the University of North Carolina President, get on with it.

He announced recently that he is cancelling a March 16 meeting of the UNC Board of Governors originally on the PSU campus.

Said Friday, according to area news reports, "The next time I have a public statement to make I'll probably be announcing the chancellor for PSU."

We'll be waiting anxiously.

TY BOYD KICKS OFF STRIKE AT THE WIND! FUND RAISING SEASON

Ty Boyd, at the podium, delivers comments during "Strike at the Wind's!" fund raising kick off season last Saturday night at the Old Foundry Restaurant in Lumberton.

Shown to his immediate right is new general manager, Bill Thompson. Also shown is Mrs. Kenneth Maynor.

It's a shame only 80 or so people heard Boyd. He gave a remarkable talk laced with lots of good positive sayings.

Self styled as a positive thinker, Boyd is a TV personality who exudes enthusiasm.

He extolled the crowd to be excited. "Take chances," he said. "And do one thing at a time. This is the most important moment in the world right now, at this place, at this time. Give your all to what you are doing right now."

Boyd recounted an interview he did with H.L. Hunt, the late oil billionaire. Said Boyd, "He didn't give me any money for the cause I was working for but he did tell me some of the secrets of life. Hunt said, "Decide what you want, decide what you will give up to get it, set priorities, and be about your work..."

Boyd suggested that "Strike at the Wind!" should apply the same rules. Boyd also said, of his wife and six kids, "You can count on us; we'll be there this season to see this exciting show..."

Earlier in the evening talent was presented by Willie Lowery, Miriam Oxendine and Brenda Hunt, a former Miss Lumbree and now the reigning Miss Pembroke State University.

Boyd extolled their talent. They sang songs from "Strike at the Wind!" and a number of songs featured on an album recently produced by LRDA's Indian Education Project showcasing their talents.

But the part of Boyd's talk I liked best was his reference to Roger Bannister, the first man to break the four minute barrier in the mile run. Until he did it, no one in the life of the universe had ever done it. It seemed impossible but when Bannister did it it became accomplishable. The gist of the anecdote seemed to be that our minds limit us more than anything else. We can achieve whatever our minds can conceive. That's a famous saying and one worthy of putting to memory. "Strike at the Wind!" or whatever venture, is as successful as we will it to be.

Yeah, Boyd was something special. I hope his services will be secured again for a larger audience. His optimistic, uplifting talk is what we need more of in racially mad Robeson County.

Special guests were Rep. and Mrs. Horace Locklear, Judy Barringer, director of NC's Theatre Arts, David Airail, the newly-named director of this season's production, the staff and board members of the drama and friends.

It was a nice evening out but "Strike at the Wind!" has got to get up and move about and kick apathy in the butt.

The outdoor drama is entering its fourth season. It deserves our support. It ain't perfect and like many of us has made a few mistakes but it's a pretty darn good effort by all the people of Robeson County-Indian, Black and White.

Bill Thompson, the new general manager, is working out the kinks and I believe he is going to be a good one.



RESPONSE OF THE ROBESON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION TO THE PETITION PRESENTED BY MR. TIM HERNDON

The Robeson County Board of Education upon the recommendation of its administrators and with the advice of counsel, hereby formally adopts this response to and position on the petition presented by one Tim Herndon at the February meeting of this body, hereinafter termed "Herndon Petition." The business of educating today's children for tomorrow's world is a serious matter; therefore members of this Board, individually and collectively, have given the issues presented by this petition long, careful and studious consideration. First and foremost in our minds have been duties and responsibilities owed by the Board to all children attending every school in the Robeson County School System. First and foremost understood that this Board was elected at-large to represent all of the residents of the Robeson County School District, and that the effects of this proposed annexation, if consummated, would have profound effects on the whole of this school district.

At the outset, we wish to define some of the terminology used in this response in order to prevent further misunderstanding as some of these terms have been used rather loosely in newspapers and by the petitioners. The term "merge" was the joining together of two co-equal legal entities so that after merger only one common entity remains; whereas, the term "annexation" implies the addition of territory from without a direct legal entity to such entity so that the addition becomes an integral part thereof. The term "consolidation" implies only the joining of two separate distinct schools within the same school system in a single new school.

We are concerned any time that the patrons of our schools or others are genuinely dissatisfied with conditions in our schools or by the policies of this Board; however, we are also concerned when these dissatisfactions are not routinely brought to the attention of school administrators for orderly resolution rather than, as was done here, totally ignoring such administrators and this Board by taking such concerns to the streets and to the newspapers in order to effectuate other long-standing goals of some of the leaders associated with the Herndon Petition Movement such as Mr. Herndon himself, have long advocated the removal of the Parkton High School Attendance Area from the county school system; it is unfortunate that such individuals are attempting to set the present misunderstanding concerning some of the current policies of this Board in order to accomplish their aims. If newspaper accounts are to be believed, the position of this Board has been consistently and grossly misstated by several of the principals in the Herndon Petition Movement; in fact, such misstatements have contributed in large measure to the unreliability of the Petition itself. It is evident that the signatures were collected by at least twenty different individuals; therefore, we have no way of knowing whether the same statements were made to all individuals and groups in order to induce signatures. More fundamentally, given the misstatements and uncertainty, we do not really know exactly what was represented to anyone who signed since the petition itself does not state the reasons therefore; such uncertainty is evidenced by the fact that many signatures appearing on the Herndon Petition also appeared on the petition presented in opposition by Mr. Angus Thompson, Esquire, hereinafter termed the Counter-Petition. Given the uncertainty, we are reminded that the most reliable evidence of the wishes of the people residing in Lumberton and Parkton townships was the overwhelming defeat in those areas of the school merger proposal in the 1972 referendum; interestingly, the merger was also soundly defeated by the voters of St. Pauls Township. By their negative votes on the merger, the voters announced that they were satisfied with the status quo.

The situation with regard to clarity was not helped when Mr. Tim Herndon, the spokesman for the group, stated that he could not say what, if anything, the petitioners expected to receive from the St. Pauls Board of Education; furthermore, our sister board has refused to stake itself out publicly and formally as to its plans, if any, should this proposed annexation be consummated. In contrast to the St. Pauls Board, this Board has carefully studied the situation and can offer a tentative plan. The proposed annexation would place a school somewhere in the northern part of the county. Nevertheless, given the relative financial status of this Board vis-a-vis the St. Pauls Board, we submit this Board is in a better position to meet the educational needs of the children of the Parkton-Oak Ridge areas that the St. Pauls Board can ever be in; in fact, it is for this very reason that the policy of the chief school administrator of the State calls for the dismantling of the various small city boards of education in favor of larger more efficient county boards. For instance, the county's share of the proposed bond monies will be \$8,260,000.00 in contrast to only \$1,010,000.00 to be received by St. Pauls. With more monies available for expenditure, this Board is in a better position to offer a more comprehensive education to the children attending county schools. Although the consolidation of Oak Ridge and Parkton with St. Pauls would only produce a student body of roughly the same size as that produced by the consolidation of these same areas with Magnolia School, the students of the latter such consolidated school would have access to the burgeoning county vocational complex at Hilly Branch thereby assuring those students a more comprehensive curriculum; whereas without Oak Ridge, whose residents apparently do not want to be annexed to St. Pauls, the consolidation of Parkton alone with St. Pauls would produce an even less comprehensive school when contrasted with the proposed county option. Everything, and more, that the Herndon petitioning group and that the St. Pauls Board are apparently seeking to accomplish can be effectuated by the merger of the Robeson County School System with the St. Pauls City System; therefore, we hereby extend our collective hands to our sister board so that we may pool our resources in order to offer the best possible education to all of our children. Let us now put aside petty differences and regionalism in order to build a better county for us all; the legitimate interests of all groups can be protected in such a merger, for instance, by a ward system of electing the new merged board of education.

In any case, from what we have been able to determine, a majority of the residents of the Oak Ridge Attendance Area do not want to be removed from the Robeson County School System. We can not and will not approve such a transfer over the objections of the people of Oak Ridge so the Herndon Petition insofar as it pertains to Oak Ridge could be denied on this ground alone; however, several of the reasons discussed infra also justify such denial. Furthermore, the loss of Oak Ridge would not be in the best interests of the Rex-Rennett School Attendance Area in that the student body of Rex-Rennett school would be decimated by such a merger. Since the Oak Ridge Area is predominantly Black, such a transfer would cause the removal of a substantial portion of Rex-Rennett's Black students; so many in fact that we are advised that a violation of current federal judicial desegregation standards would occur. Rex-Rennett currently has enrolled 127 Black, 42 White and 203 Indian students at the school for a total enrollment of 372; if the proposed annexation is consummated, only 44 Black, 25 White and 155 Indian students would remain for a reduced total of only 224 students. From the petition presented by Mr. E. Knox Chavis, Esquire, hereinafter termed the Rex-Rennett Petition, it would appear that the residents of the Rex-Rennett Area do not want to see their school so damaged, and even though these petitioners do not reside within the areas encompassed by the Herndon Petition, by law, we must also consider their interests in acting on the Herndon Petition under consideration here.

It would seem to this Board that a poor county such as Robeson can ill afford to continue to build schools without some over-all scheme of development. The vacant Oak Ridge School and the under-utilized Fairgrove School stand as stark reminders to this Board, and to the taxpayers of this county, of the wastefulness of building policies based upon petty differences and regionalism. This Board will not contribute to the gross waste of the taxpayer's monies; we will not condone any move that is not grounded upon sound fiscal and educational policies.

Without Oak Ridge, the annexation of Parkton alone to the paralytic White St. Pauls School System would violate federal desegregation standards since a majority of the students being transferred would also be White. Additionally, we are advised that such a transfer would also violate the Voting Rights Act of 1965 in that the voting power of the Black and Indian people already residing within the St. Pauls School System would be effected and diluted.

It should be noted that we are further advised the annexation of Parkton and Oak Ridge to St. Pauls would also violate the Voting

Rights Act in that the voting power of the Black people remaining in the county school system after such a transfer would be diluted to such an extent that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for Blacks to be elected to this Board. Such would also be the case with the remaining Whites, and though the Voting Rights Act was not enacted to protect the voting rights of Whites, given the recent Bakke decision of the United States Supreme Court, we are advised that a strong argument could be made to the effect that voting rights of Whites should also be protected.

This Board is also reminded that the annexations to the Lumberton City School System which occurred in the late sixties and early seventies were disapproved by the United States Department of Justice after finally being submitted to that agency in 1975. Given such objection by the United States Attorney General, we are concerned with the legal responsibility of this Board, if any, to the students residing in these Lumberton annexed areas. We do not propose to further confuse the situation by approving other such annexations when similar ones have been disapproved in the past.

A successful effort by the Herndon petitioners would also lead to similar requests from other identifiable areas within the county school system. It was only a very short time ago that a group sought the removal of the Littlefield School Attendance Area from the county system; we are informed and believe that a successful effort by the Herndon petitioners would lead to a renewal of this activity, together with similar new efforts in the Orrum Area. We are also informed and believe that such a successful effort would lead to counter-movements around Oxendine, Renner, Fairgrove, South St. Pauls and Shannon. We need only recall the unrest associated with Prospect School in 1970 and the recent requests for pupil reassignment presented to this Board to realize and appreciate the fact that many persons presently residing within the various city school systems would prefer that the communities be absorbed by the county school system. We do not believe that the overall school situation in Robeson County would be improved by granting to the Herndon petitioners the relief that they desire; in fact, such a move could only serve to aggravate and worsen an already bad situation. We cannot solve the pressing problems of this county by treating similarly situated groups of people differently. In the area of pupil assignment, this Board has honestly attempted to apply the same standards to all individuals and groups; therefore, we cannot in this instance prefer the wishes of some individuals at the expense of others. The problems associated with six school systems and their attendant district lines cannot be solved on a piecemeal basis; the time is long overdue for all six school systems within this county to begin to collectively work towards the resolution of common longstanding problems. The success of the Herndon effort would only serve to prevent and frustrate such a beneficial common effort.

This is the only tri-racial political body in Robeson with countywide jurisdiction; its members, individually and collectively, have earnestly sought to demonstrate that such a body can in fact treat all individuals fairly and equally. The removal of the areas encompassed in the Herndon petition from the jurisdiction of this Board would doom this effort to failure with resulting detrimental consequences for the whole county.

In conclusion, giving due consideration to the concerns expressed above, in our opinion it would not be in the educational best interests of the students of the Robeson County School System, including those residing in the Oak Ridge and Parkton areas, for this Board to approve the Herndon Petition; therefore, the same is hereby denied. With this denial, we renew our invitation to interested individuals and groups to petition this Board with their concerns in order to facilitate their orderly resolution. We further renew our invitation to our sister boards of education and other interested individuals for a common effort to resolve the longstanding problems which beset all of us.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

New Mormon Elder Arrives

Dear Sir:

My name is Elder Peterson and I am presently serving in the Pembroke area. I arrived in Pembroke on March 1st and represent the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (The Mormons).

I am serving with Elder Dudley and I am anxious to share a special message concerning the Restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I am from Wendell, Idaho

and have been called by a prophet of God to serve a two year mission to the people in North Carolina. I am one of about 200 missionaries now serving in North Carolina on our own time and expense.

Please call 521-9862 and Elder Dudley and myself will be glad to stop by your home at your convenience to share a short message with your family.

Elder Peterson

You say you want to be free.

According to Scripture

Rev. Ted Brook

MESSAGE

And always night and day he was in the mountain and in the tombs, crying and cutting himself with stones. Mark 5:5.

This week the Baptist churches of this area have proclaimed this week as Bold Evangelism, meaning going out and witnessing for our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to now witness to all who are sinners and especially the young people. I want to share with you the power of God's deliverance. I want you to know him (Christ) as I know him. I want to share His wonderful grace as I found in Jesus: One song writer, John Newton, wrote a song and called it Amazing Grace that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind but now I see.

Here in the Book of Mark in the Sixth Chapter we read of a man whose dwelling was among the tombs and no man could blind him, no not with chains. Day and night his strange, weird cry could be heard as he roamed about on the mountain, cursing himself with stones and shrieking in his fearful agony. This is a pitiful sight. A man crying and roaming about with no one to seem to care.

Our young people today are about like this man, on a dead street, a dead high way, a dead corner, and they are crying out for help and yet there seems to be no help coming. What about it, Christian friends? Have you witnessed to these young people and told them the love of Christ?

Young people, I wish I could take every one of you in my arms and tell you of the sweet and tender mercies of our Lord and Savior. And tell you of a Savior who died for you. It is not the will of God for you to perish, but Jesus said I come that you might have life. Jn. 10:10. Young people, if you would right now stop reading this and go and get you a Bible and turn to the Book of Mark, the Sixth Chapter. Here we see a man bound by sins. No man could help him. All night it is said you could hear him crying, wanting to be free. I tell you, no man should live like that, and praise God, you don't have to. Jesus has made a way to escape. When this man say Jesus at a great distance he came running towards him and fell upon his face and cried, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou son of the most high God?" Do as this man, young boys and young girls, come to Jesus. Come and confess that he is Jesus. Confess that He is the Son of the living God. Confess that God has raised Him from the dead and thou shalt be saved. Romans 10:9-10.

This man did too and he was because he met the master of all masters, Jesus. Once so wild and fierce, he now became gentle and quite, covering his formerly naked body with clothing. He took his place in adoring love and gratitude at the feet of Jesus no longer man-but now he was made whole.

What did he do to earn this grace? Nothing. Mr. John Newton wrote that song, "Amazing Grace. In it it says, "Amazing Grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears releases." Nothing you can do. I know it is hard to believe. For years I myself wandered among the dead on a dead road-the dead corner and this Grace which is beyond me I could not see, but something within me cried, "Trust me." Praise God, March the 31st, 1974 around the hour of 11:45 a.m., Jesus saved me. He clothed me when I was freezing with sin on my way to a demon's hell. Yet, Jesus with his outstretched arm bid me to come and I did and I have never regretted the first time because he saved me. Bless his Holy name, He saved me from a Demon's Hell. I know if he had not reached down for me, I would have perished. Young man, young lady, do you want to be delivered from sin? Strugs? Liqueur? Whatever, he is sufficient to do so. There is nothing to bring. For once you can trust this. Salvation is free.

On the Cross beside Jesus were two thieves. One cried adn said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." This thief's hands were nailed. He could offer nothing. His feet were nailed. He could not walk. What can you do? The Bible said for us all to look upon Him and be saved at the end of the earth. "For I am God and there is none else." Isaiah 45:22. The only part you or I had in the cross was that our sins were there. Jesus alone bore the full weight of judgement. One writer said: "The burden of its message to the host of sinners is come for all things are now ready." The question of sin is not raised. Grace reigns thru righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. The table is spread. The house is filling fast. Yet there is room for more. Won't you now with your mouth say Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I want to be saved. I want peace. I want freedom. I want joy, happiness. Now, if you believe this message, claim it now in the name of Jesus.

Parent, it is time for you to stand up and claim this land and its fulness in the name of Jesus. Tell the Devil that he will not steal or rob you of your children. Tell Satan that your children are God's and to God they are going to return. Amen.

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