

WHAT NEXT???

Gov. Jim Martin's chief of staff, Phil Kirk, issued a report last week which stated no evidence had been provided to the task force which would substantiate charges of corruption in Robeson County. Mr. Kirk stated the task force was disappointed in the lack of response but understands some people may fear reprisals if they come forward. He also acknowledged some people with information wish immunity before providing information.

Although the 18-page report has been issued, Mr. Kirk said the task force remains intact and ready to receive specifics of corruption and drug dealing. He does remind the public that the task force has no power to investigate but only to receive information and pass it along to the U.S. Attorney.

We have recently received a copy of this report and hope to share some of it with you next week.

"Immediate necessity makes many things convenient, which if continued would grow into oppressions. Expedience and right are different things."

THOMAS PAINE

In an attempt to expedient, Sen. David Parnell attempted to delete funds to create the second judgeship in Robeson County. Parnell is locked in a battle to insure Joe Freeman Britt is named the senior resident judge. Sen. Parnell has introduced a bill in the senate which would designate Joe Freeman Britt as the senior judge when and if he is elected in November. Rep. Dan Blue has introduced a bill in the house which would allow Gov. Jim Martin to decide who would be the senior judge. Gov. Martin has promised to appoint a minority to the second judgeship as a result of a compromise worked out by Lt. Gov. Bob Jordan, the legislative delegation representing Robeson County, and several concerned citizens.

The senior resident judge has considerable power and evidently Sen. Parnell wishes to insure the power is controlled by the 'good ol' boy network.' It is interesting to note that Sen. Parnell, Rep. Hasty and Rep. Devane, all white, support Joe Freeman Britt. While race might play some role in all of this, there is even more to the story.

Back when the superior court judgeship was created, Joe Freeman Britt expressed his opinion that the position was unnecessary. Even so, Britt decided to run for the judgeship when it appeared a minority might become judge. As we all know, Britt lost the election to Julian T. Pierce, but

because of Pierce's murder, Joe Freeman Britt became the Democratic nominee without opposition, that is if you ignore the will of the people of Robeson County. A compromise allowed for the creation of a second judgeship and Britt went on record as stating he thought it was, "a joke." And since the senior superior court judge will have a great deal of power Britt has been working behind the scenes to insure he gets to wield that power.

Both Sen. Parnell and Rep. DeVane have indicated they made a commitment to Joe Freeman Britt. We fail to see how a single individual merits such consideration. What about our representative's commitment to the people? Our representatives should do what is best for the people of Robeson County, not what is best for Joe Freeman Britt. To do otherwise is to insure their political demise.

Some local observers seem to feel Gov. Martin will shirk his responsibility in naming the senior superior court judge by allowing both individuals to be sworn in at the same time. This would allow current law to dictate who would be senior. Seniority would be decided by age with the older becoming the senior judge. We will give you three guesses who would become the senior judge under this scenario (Hint: His initials are JFB!)

We give Gov. Martin more credit than this. We feel he has made a commitment to the people of Robeson County and he will do what is best for the county by naming his appointee as the senior judge. We have observed Gov. Martin's actions in the past and have noted the courage and conviction to take decisive action. To use such a ploy as to allow age to dictate seniority would not only be uncharacteristic of Gov. Martin, it would be a disservice to the citizens of Robeson County!

"In the progress of politics, as in the common occurrences of life, we are not only apt to forget the ground we have travelled over, but frequently neglect to gather up experience as we go."

THOMAS PAINE

Several groups, individuals, and boards, claiming to represent the people, have made some interesting decisions and proclamations. A short review is in order.

***In response to the suggestion of a third party candidate against Joe Freeman Britt for superior court judge, Rev. Joy Johnson suggested, 'our people are not sophisticated enough to split their vote.' Seemingly, Rev. Johnson dismisses the possibility of a third party candidate because of a lack of confidence in the intelligence and power of

the people to make a decision without someone holding their hand. We reject Rev. Johnson's observation and the motive behind it. We believe in the ability of the people of Robeson County. Its the leaders we must watch and wonder about!

***The Lumbee River Electric Membership Corporation (LREMC) will hold another election July 12. LREMC recently lost a case in court whereby LREMC violated its own rules in an attempt to prevent the election of a candidate it did not like. There is a struggle for power at LREMC and in this struggle, the consumers lose. The cost of the new election and the cost of litigation will in the long run, of course, be passed on to the consumer. Such irresponsibility should not be tolerated. Perhaps the board should consider adjusting its own compensation until it repays the consumers for its highhandedness.

***The Lumbee Regional Development Association (LRDA) recently announced its annual awards. While we understand the right of the board to choose whom it wishes, we fail to understand why Mr. John L. Godwin or Mr. Julian T. Pierce were not honored. We have seen a change in LRDA and its willingness to take decisive stands. Perhaps they need a name change, especially since they chose to ignore the works of Mr. Godwin and Mr. Pierce. Perhaps they no longer need "Lumbee" in front of their name. Perhaps LRDA has become a Regional Development Association!

***Many people were shocked by the actions of our county commissioners in the recent budget discussions. The county commissioners slashed the recreation budget in half and then fired the employees of the recreation department, (all but the maintenance employees) which just happened to include the county's only black department head.

The county commissioners seemed to enjoy their tantrum. Three of the commissioners who voted for these cuts were themselves cut by the voters. H.T. Taylor, Henry Douglas, and Carl Britt were all defeated so their votes were understandable. Sammy Cox also went along with the group to round out the foursome which can now be labeled "the gang of four." We will not argue with these men. We heed the words of Thomas Paine:

"To argue with a man who has renounced the use and authority of reason and whose philosophy consists in holding humanity in contempt, is like administering medicine to the dead or endeavoring to convert an atheist by scripture. Enjoy, sir, your insensibility of feeling and reflecting. It is the prerogative of animals."

WEST ROBESON FORUM CONSIDERED A SUCCESS

Dear Editor:

The forum which was held on June 11, 1988 at West Robeson High School was considered a success by many. But, when I read your critical editorial of the forum it caused me to review the program.

While your article was lengthy and to the point, there were several items that took place which were not mentioned in your article. These actions once mentioned, does promote democracy.

You failed to mention:

- 1. The flyer which was distributed to promote the forum did stress the issue to be discussed was the proposed new judgeship and public defender's office appointment. It also specifically said the key issue was "which judgeship should be the Senior Superior Court Judge."
2. This writer, Ken Freeman, stressed at the beginning of the forum that we were there to discuss that issue. I also stated that there were other important issues, however, we wanted to address this issue only.
3. When Rev. Jerry Lowry and Rev. Robert Mangum attempted to move to other specific items as mentioned in your article, the forum and panel were addressing questions and answers.
4. We later entertained a motion to study the write-in issue as moved by Rev. Mangum. The motion passed.
5. Each option that was submitted was handled individually. After I

proposed the options, the motion came from the floor, not me.

6. The proposed options were submitted only after the question and answer session which lasted approximately 1 1/2 hours. Most of the 1 1/2 hour session was to answer submitted questions, not presubmitted questions.

7. The three options which were suggested by the committee and approved by those present were:

A. No amendments to House Bill 2215 to make the elected position Senior Resident Judge.

B. If any amendment was made it should be to make the appointed position Senior Resident Judge.

C. Put the issue before the people. While it is the opinion of this writer that the forum was both informative and democratic, let this letter serve as an apology to those who felt it was not. The committee of which I referred at the forum was made up of representatives from most of the minority concerned organizations in the area. The forum was called for after four meetings on the matter. All people concerned felt the people should have the facts. The forum accomplished that purpose.

Sincerely, Ken Freeman, Pembroke, NC

P.S. The option was taken to Raleigh, NC on June 15, 1988. I submitted these options to Senator David Parnell myself.

Statement Made By Joy Johnson Draws Response

To the Editor,

In our local papers, Wednesday June one edition, there was a statement that made my blood boil, the statement was made by Rev. Joy Johnson, Chairman of Robeson County Concerned Citizen for Better Government. Johnson stated, most of our voters are not astute enough to split tickets, there would have to be a tremendous teaching process, for Robeson County people to learn how to vote third party. Well I got out my Webster Dictionary and looked up astute and I found this (astute

pronounced (a-stoot). It means to be cunning, shrewd, crafty, wise, subtle and keen. Well my beloved Native Americans in Robeson County this Rev. Joy Johnson is calling you stupid, Johnson is saying you are not cunning you are not shrewd, you are not crafty, you are not wise, you are not subtle, and you are not keen. And that you will have to be taught how to vote third party, at the countys expense. To this Rev. Joy Johnson, I say check up on yourself before

CONTINUE ON PAGE 6

PEMBROKE KIWANIS

BY KEN JOHNSON

Director of Athletics, Dr. Raymond Pennington was the weekly speaker at club's meeting held at the Town and Country Restaurant, Tuesday evening. He was presented by Kiwanian and President of the Braves Club Reggie Strickland. Dr. Pennington expressed thanks to Kiwanis for their financial support for the fine new addition of the new Field House at the baseball field.

Where are we? We are members of Division II of the NCAA and are also members of the NAIA. We try to do our best. We do provide scholarships, we do abide by all the rules of all of the National Collegiate bodies. We sponsor thirteen sports, eight for men and five for women. Some sports are more important because they are spectator sports as others not. Basketball has seven scholarships, baseball has three, golf-one, tennis-one, etc. My biggest job is the over-seeing the financial part of the program. We don't get any aid from the state. We have a budget of \$162,000, not a lot of money for transportation, meals, high referee fees-it costs 120 for just volleyball game, \$200 for one baseball game, \$300 for basketball game. The Braves Club provided \$10,000 for scholarships last year. We are

competitive, recruiting is our most difficult job and by January we need to raise \$62,000 and I am looking forward to working with Reggie Strickland, next year's Braves Club President and all of our coaches are available to speak to groups. A real

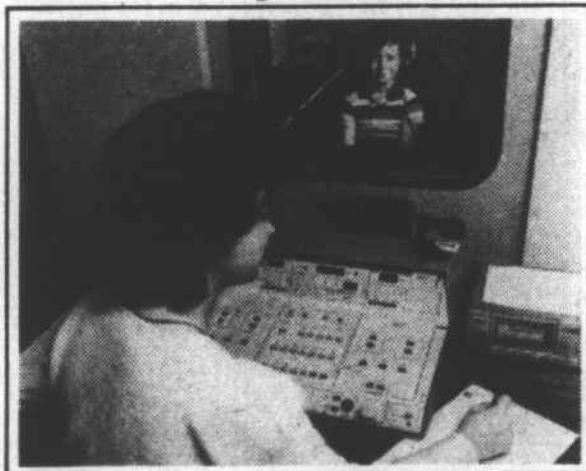
interesting insight into the complexities of athletics and thanks, Dr. Pennington.

Presiding-Garth Locklear; Invocation-Marshall Locklear; Song Leader-Ray Lowry; Program- Reggie Strickland; Reporter- Ken Johnson.

NEWS BRIEF

A plate sale will be held on Saturday, June 25, at the Land Base Building (Tuscarora) in the Prospect Community. Fish and chicken plates will be available for \$3.00 each beginning at 10 a.m. and lasting until. The sale is being sponsored by Kever Locklear. The public is invited to attend.

We're Breaking The Sound Barrier Five Days A Week



HEARING EVALUATION

Even the slightest hearing impairment can be a tremendous barrier...to learning, understanding, and basic day-to-day communication. This problem bridges the generation gap, from high-risk newborns to children with learning difficulties, plant employees who work in constant noise, to senior citizens. And at Southeastern General Hospital, our Audiology Department is staffed and equipped to evaluate and treat difficulties at any stage of loss.

Our professional audiologist has six years of training, plus state-of-the-art testing equipment resulting in fast and accurate diagnoses. This includes a sound-proof booth for evaluation, an auditory nerve testing facility, and inner/middle ear assessment equipment. We can determine if you're a good candidate for a hearing aid, and even fit you for an order the same day. What's more, thorough testing can sometimes indicate a serious underlying problem which, once detected, can be further diagnosed and treated.

So if you suspect a hearing loss in yourself or someone you love, call Southeastern General Hospital's Audiology Department. We make appointments, with or without physician referral, five days a week, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and we just wouldn't hear of you going any place else.



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Community Health & Human Services Fair. Saturday, June 25, 1988. 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Town Park, Pembroke. Free health screening and community services information. For more information, contact Bobby Chavis with the N.C. Commission of Indian Affairs 738-6272 in Lumberton.