

WHAT NEXT???

Gov. Jim Martin's chief of staff, Phillip J. Kirk, Jr., issued an interim report on the activities of the Robeson County Task Force. If you remember, the task force was formed by the governor in response to the Feb. 1 takeover of *The Robesonian*, a newspaper located in Lumberton.

Mr. Kirk, chairman of the task force, "apparently felt some report was needed since the task force did not seem to be making a great deal of progress. Of course, Mr. Kirk did not miss an opportunity to credit all the positive steps to Gov. Martin while overlooking inaction on these issues over the past four years. Even so, there is one section of the report that merits special attention. Apparently, as part of the agreement with Hatcher and Jacobs, the governor agreed to "to review all the allegations and evidence... and see that it is investigated fully, and turn it over to the U.S. Attorney for appropriate action". Please note the words we have underlined. From this agreement it would seem that the governor's task force has had the authority all along to investigate even allegations but apparently they have decided not to live up to that part of the agreement. That is what is troubling about the report. While Kirk paints a pretty picture, in reality, the task force has failed in its responsibility.

The Rev. E. B. Turner, a Lumberton city councilman, announced he has formed a group called the Lumberton Political Association. Rev. Turner stated the group was being formed to work for the betterment of Robeson County and would work "within the system". To our knowledge, all citizen's group in Robeson County work "within the system" so there is really no distinction here. But, apparently Rev. Turner feels several other citizen's groups exist primarily for the leadership of that group and these groups do not provide the right atmosphere for change in Robeson County.

Denying our common sense, we will take the reverend at his word and hope the LPA is not merely a political tool for "E.B." and friends. It will not take long to assess the purpose and meaning of LPA. We sincerely hope it will become a means of involving and not manipulating "the people" in the political process. Time will tell!

We are preparing to celebrate our country's independence once again and in doing so, we should reflect on the history of our nation. With the many problems we face, thank God we face them in America! While we often take elected officials, citizen's groups, and representatives to task, we recognize and appreciate that we can do this because of the freedom guaranteed by our great country. The people must question and remain vigilant to safeguard these freedoms since power can be addictive. The spirit of our country lives. Freedom lives. Never forget the struggle it took to win these freedoms and the struggle that must go on to insure all Americans enjoy these freedoms to their fullest extent.

We also celebrate Lumbee Homecoming. Many family and friends will meet once again and enjoy the reunion. Since the last homecoming, many things have happened in Robeson County. We ask all Indians to take a few seconds from their schedules to remember Mr. John L. Godwin and Mr. Julian T. Pierce. We can never repay these modest men except to insure their names and deeds are never forgotten. The true spirit of these two men need no great monuments of stone or awards to be given for their memory to live. Just whisper their names to your children. They would have liked that!

HOUSING AUTHORITY ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

The North Carolina State Indian Housing Authority is now accepting applications for its Hawkeye Sands Housing Project. Hawkeye Sands is located approximately five (5) miles south of Raeford on NC Hwy. 211.

Applications for the Hawkeye Sands Project will be taken Monday-Friday, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm., in apartment A-23 Sands Hill Road, at the Hawkeye Sands Project.

All applicants must meet income eligibility standards set forth by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Indian Programs.

Applicants should bring official birth certificates, income verification information such as check stubs, township residency verification information and Certified Criminal Records Check for each North Carolina county or state lived in within the past 10 years for each family member, to the interview. For further information, call (919) 875-6149.

EDITORIAL EXPRESSION

You read the headlines whereby Joe Freeman Britt will become the senior superior court judge in Robeson County as the result of a "compromise".

What is a compromise? According to Webster, "a compromise is a settlement in which each side gives up some demands or makes concessions; something midway between different things". Given this definition, let's examine this "compromise".

Joe Freeman Britt was defeated in the May primary by Julian T. Pierce but because of Julian's murder prior to the election, the election law allowed Britt to claim the seat regardless of the vote of the people of Robeson County.

As a result of the flawed election law, Britt naturally claimed the judgeship. He has never failed to press an advantage when he had one. This was an easy grab for power. As a result, the voters of Robeson County attempted to rectify the situation by discussing the possibility of amending the law in the short session of the legislature so that someone would be allowed to run against Joe Freeman Britt. Of course, this made Joe Freeman Britt hot! He began quietly lobbying to insure his advantage was safe and secure. Evidently he found a couple of friends, Sen. David Parnell and Rep. Daniel DeVane. It seems both made commitments to Britt.

Because of the situation and to also press for political advantage, enter Lt. Gov. Bob Jordan. He quietly slipped into Robeson County, met with the local legislative delegation and a few community leaders and drafted a "compromise" (there is that word again) in which a second superior court judgeship would be created. Jordan insured a minority would be appointed to this position by having Gov. Martin endorse the compromise and pledge to appoint a minority to the second judgeship.

Everything seemed fine. A compromise had been worked out which would insure fairness and equal representation for the voters of Robeson County. Britt was fortunate since he was permitted to become a judge without having to winning an

election. In retrospect, Britt probably even got the better of this compromise in that he would still become a superior court judge.

But, in examining the situation further, several small details began emerging. First, the appointed superior court judge would only serve a two year term. Britt would serve an eight year term. This seemed unfair! Both judges should serve equal terms for a true compromise to have been negotiated. Remember, neither of our superior court judges will have been elected! One will be appointed by Gov. Martin. The other was defeated in the May primary.

On the heels of this "discovery", the issue of the senior superior court judge for Robeson County came to the forefront. The senior judge has enormous power in that he controls the court calendar, appoints magistrates, sets bail bond policy, and appoints the public defender. As you might have guessed, Joe Freeman Britt had already done his homework and his friends were in place to insure he would become the senior superior court judge for Robeson County.

A bill was introduced in the N.C. House which would allow Gov. Martin to decide which judge would be senior in Robeson County. In the NC Senate, Sen. David Parnell introduced a bill to designate Joe Freeman Britt the senior resident judge. So, the stage was set for a struggle for the soul of Robeson County and once again the people of Robeson County suffered another "compromise".

Joe Freeman Britt will become the senior superior court judge. He keeps everything except the power to appoint the county's first public defender. Britt will appoint the magistrates. Britt will set bail bond policy. Britt will set the court calendar. Britt will serve until 1996! How was that for a "compromise"! Joe Freeman Britt was defeated by the voters in the May primary but saved by our legislative delegation!

What do the people of Robeson County get? We get to keep such men as Sen. Parnell and Rep. DeVane for a couple of more years, since they recently won the May

On February 1, 1988 I willfully surrendered in my search for the most sacred and sought-after treasure one could ever possess. I ceased in my search for Freedom.

The government which has pillaged our lands and our people says, "We have built a powerful country soe youc an be free. But it is not by other countries that we, as a people, have been destroyed.

The government says "We protect you from hostile countries." But the hostilities we face coem not from other countries. They come from those who claim to be our protectors.

My search is over. For this life has fallen in the dark hour of time. A time which my ancestors foretold would surely come. That time has surely come, and I will search no more.

Look up, gaze into the old stars, and I see times past. A time when my people knew freedom. But I cannot wind back through the hours of light to that time. That time has surely gone and I will search no more.

I can see a time when simplicity and freedom ruled. Not greed and hatred. But I am bound by the forward motion of Mother Earth and cannot return. That time is out of my realm, and I will search no more.

To the Spirits of our Great Leaders such as Tecumseh, Tu-eka-kas, Cheif Crazy Horse and Specked Snake: Hear me!

You foretold of a time in which I now exist. For freedom is life. Captivity is existence. When you gazed into the

fading stars, you saw me. And you cried. Burdened within your soul. Shouting upward, toward the heavens to release your sadness. For you saw today. And you saw that I will search no more.

You shouted into the four winds. Seeping into the trees; the rocks; the earth: "You must not fight among yourselves. For this will weaken you and you shall surely be destroyed."

But your shouts did not seep within our hearts. For the rocks are softer. But you saw this. And you saw that I will search no more.

For many, many years the echoes of your wisdom have cried out from the earth and the rocks and the trees. Yet, we forsook your teachings and your please to be allies, not enemies.

But you saw this. You saw today. And you saw that I will search no more. As your eyes saw today. Your Spirit sees today. You see that this hour knows not freedom. But you are not saddened. For you know that the timest rays of light can push the darkest dark from around me.

And only then when my Spirit, as yours, sails intot he stars will I surely know Freedom.

But you saw this. And you knew that I will have to search no more.

Washa-go-ga-tah  
Eddie Hatcher  
Tuscarora

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING OF TUSCARORA TRIBE OF N.C.

The Tuscarora Tribe of North Carolina, Inc. will hold its annual membership meeting for enrolled

members only on July 28, 1988 at 7:30 p.m. at the Old Foundry Restaurant in Lumberton. Enrollment identification required. For additional information, call (919) 521-3231.

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The Carolina Indian Voice

Newspaper is Published every Thursday afternoon by

The Carolina Indian Voice, Inc. P.O. Box 1075 Pembroke, N.C. 28372 Phone (919) 521-2826

Editor.....Connie Brayboy  
Office Manager.....Stephanie Locklear  
.....And a host of friends and volunteers.

Subscriptions

1 Year.....\$12(In State)  
1 Year.....\$15(Out of State)

Please inquire for advertising rates.

2nd Class Postage Paid at Pembroke Post Office.