

READERS' FORUM

The Area Needs Cultural Center

To the Editor:

By observing this debate it has become painfully evident that the greedy desires of the few are overcoming the needs of the many concerning the Indian Cultural Center. I want to discuss two of the most important issues. What does this project mean to the area and me? Also, speculate as to why certain people are against it? What does this mean? One word can best answer this question, Jobs! Jobs that would benefit the area! Imagine, 500 full time workers and a 1000 of your sons and daughters with summer jobs! That's a lot of people who would spend money in the area's businesses. Not to mention the numerous tourists that would be attracted here during the summers! Just think of the impact Carowinds has made on Charlotte or the Pavillion to Myrtle Beach. What does this mean to Pembroke State University? The center will instantly enhance the credibility of its American Indian Studies program. Picture a program with an ongoing, thriving Indian Cultural Center just around the corner. No other program can match it! In addition, the center would provide invaluable summer and graduate employment opportunities. Lastly, by working so closely with a project of this magnitude, this program's graduates would be viewed with a new respect. How else will this program affect the university? Well, it will serve to maintain and increase its enrollment for years to come. This is particularly important in the face of higher education costs and financial aid cutbacks. Also, it will help to preserve the University that our grandfathers and fathers sacrificed so much to create. The center can provide employment opportunities and a source of entertainment for the school's students. An Indian Cultural Center can help this university far more than any name change ever could.

What does this mean to you, the citizens? If you're a student it can mean valuable summer jobs or much needed after graduation employment opportunities in the local area that are not currently available. Well, what if you already have a job or a business? It can mean future business in sales, restaurants, banks, etc. Also, it will mean increased tax revenues which can be used for public

education cost. This can offset the recent rise in property taxes felt throughout the county. Or, this additional revenue can be used to invest in new businesses, purchase homes and cars, as well as, to finance large scale projects. So you can see, any project this size would have a positive effect throughout the community; whites and blacks as well; not just Native Americans.

Now considering all of the above, some people would have you to believe that a golf course is more important to this area than the Cultural Center!

Why are people like Ken Johnson so adamantly opposed to this project which means so much to everyone? I can only speculate as to why Mr. Johnson, Daniel DeVane and others like them would fight to keep something of this magnitude away, especially when jobs are so desperately needed.

One would assume their goals is to keep the area's people unemployed or on the tennis courts while they utilize the golf course. Or maybe, they would have the good citizens of Robeson County employed as caddies or groundkeepers. Speaking of Mr. Johnson, by advocating such a position and putting his views in print he obviously has a blind eye to the peoples needs. I quote him from his article that first appeared on May 24, 1990: here he asserts his feelings on the current Pembroke area country club: "Meeting the needs of Indian people for a better quality of life, as it is." He doesn't care what this area needs, and by making such an obscene and ludicrous statement, he only proves it. Who do these people think they are trying to fool? The average person in this area doesn't even own a set of golf clubs or a tennis racket! Citizens, Helen Scheirbeck has all our best interests at heart and knows what ours and future generations need. She deserves and urgently requires our support. As for Mr. Johnson, I believe that with his recent attempts to determine what "meets the needs" of the area's people and his dismal failures as a sport analyst, I feel he should pursue a line of work that best suits him. He should run for Sheriff of Robeson County. We need an Indian Cultural Center. It is for the good of all!!!

David G. Lowry
Germany

Cherokee Indian Day Planned In Hoke County

To the Editor:

Well, it seems I can hear somebody say, what are we Indian folks to do now? The time bomb hidden inside the Lumbee Bill of 1956 has exploded in 1990 and legally, the Lumbee are now "terminated-forbidden by Federal Law from having a relationship with the U.S. government."

Folks, the only way the real Indians can defeat this miscarriage of justice is to get together and we invite you to come and join in this battle. It is time for all the Tuscarora and Cherokee to come together. Leave the crazy ideas that you are the only real tribe at home and let's come together as equals. Where do we real Indians come together? Call 919-875-6668.

July 28 has been proclaimed by the Hoke County Board of Commissioners as Cherokee Indian Day in Hoke County. We honor and celebrate this day to welcome and

honor all American Indians. Come and let us honor you. July 28 is on Saturday, so come bring your dancers, drummers and traders and every body come.

At 9 a.m.-10 a.m. we will have our parade from the A & P south parking lot through downtown Raeford to the Hoke County Courthouse.

11:40 a.m. is the Welcome and dedication of tribal grounds.

11 a.m. until 8 p.m. will be the pow wow, exhibits and exhibition dancing. (Dancing competition begins at 1 p.m.) At 4 p.m. there will be a worship service/ gospel sing.

Let's come out together. We already have a court case in U.S. District Court. What we need is to come together.

Rev. Douglas W. Maynor
Lumber Bridge, NC

Reflections By Alta Nye Oxendine

MY OWN IDEAS

As I tried to explain last week, the ideas expressed in this column are solely my own (unless I actually refer to someone else). Although they have developed after considerable research, comparison, and "reflecting", they represent my beliefs at the time of writing the column for the particular week.

They may not agree with the ideas of the staff of this paper-or anyone else. What I'm sharing are tentative conclusions which may change as I get a larger and/or clearer picture of the particular situation.

None of us has a corner on the truth. Only God, I believe, knows all about everything which goes on in this world. If you have some evidence which I seem to have overlooked, please let me know.

LEARNING FOR OURSELVES

Actually, I wish every American teen-ager and every American adult with a sound mind would do what I've been attempting (since 1987) to do--prayerfully study each situation for ourselves. That way all of us would be better prepared as to how to vote and to make other important decisions. And concerned people like me would feel freer to get on with making a living and enjoying the good things of daily life.

GORBACHEV AND MANDELA- OUR TWO LATEST HEROES

We are constantly hearing the expressions: "The Cold War is over" and "Communism is no longer a threat to the world." Many Americans have been celebrating with ordinary citizens of Eastern Europe and the U.S.S.R. who appear to be breaking the bonds of slavery to the Communist Party after decades of repression.

In the midst of such rejoicing it seems ironical to me that the two men who have most recently captured the hearts of Americans are both clinging --to some degree--and in some way--to the international Communist Party. Do we have split personalities?

MY RESPECT FOR BLACKS, RUSSIANS AND OTHERS

In no way would I want to put down Nelson Mandela (a fellow Methodist, I understand) because he happens to be Black, or Mikhail Gorbachev because he happens to be Russian.

Ever since starting to college in Missoula, Montana in 1945, I've had friends who were Black. Before that time I had lived in white communities where there was no

opportunity to get to know Indians or Blacks first hand. But, during and since my college days I have had a number of Black friends, and still do.

While at Scarritt College for Christian Workers in Nashville, Tennessee, in the early fifties, some of my classmates and I went to see the movie, "Cry the Beloved Country." I'll never forget how deeply I was moved--or how my friends and I felt as we took the bus back to the dorm and tried to decide whether to ride in the front "white people" section or the back section for the "colored race." That night the problems of "apartheid" had a tremendous personal impact upon me.

For most of my adult life I have been searching for ways to bring acceptance, respect, and equal opportunities to those who (though of Equal Worth in God's sight) who happened to be born as persons of color into a white-dominated society. I continue to care about African Blacks, African Americans, and all others who have been treated as second or third class citizens anywhere in this world. That is what I wanted to say in the poem, "The Mobile Homes We Live In."

However, I am concerned that Nelson Mandela, a talented, skillful leader with a tremendous following, apparently (according to his words and actions) sees no problem in supporting and continuing to receive support from Fidel Castro, of Communist Cuba, as well as Joe Slavo who, I've read, is not only General Secretary of the South African Communist Party but one of the leaders of Mandela's African National Congress.

I would like to say to Nelson Mandela and all the other Blacks in South Africa: "I believe there is a better way than to depend upon the Communist Party to rescue your people. Sooner or later you could find yourselves betrayed."

And Gorbachev? He, too, has been viewed by many westerners as a "Moses" leading his people out of "Egypt." But, during his five years as the top Soviet leader, Gorbachev has consistently reminded his listeners that he is reforming and streamlining Communism in order to make it work better!

Gorbachev, too, I'd like to say: "I believe there is a God. And I believe this wonderful, powerful, understanding God has a better plan for this world than Communism."

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