

Elders and Traditionalist Corner

Wisdom from the Country

by W. D. "Wiz" Locklear

One of our politicians came in the store the other day, and he wanted to know ol Wiz's thoughts on one of them paid advertisements the LRDA boys took out in that Lumberton paper. Course, I told him that I thought they ought to be giving our Indian money they're holding to our Indian paper. He promised me that he would look into it and see what he could do about it. But, you know how politicians are, Miss Connee. When they git to smelling something, they likes to stir around it. So, we sat down and chewed the fat a spell.

Now, I reckon you know Miss Connee, most politicians can talk all day and when they're through, you ain't heard nothing that you ain't heard before. Most likely, if you ask them something, you ain't going going to git a straight answer; and if you ain't careful, they'll talk you out of a dollar or two. They say that's a smart politician, Miss Connee. So, Ol Wiz figured he would talk like one of them smart politicians and we must have set there an hour before he got up and said, "Now, Wiz, I've been setting her near an hour and you ain't told me a thing." Well, I said to him, "It's like this. The people here are going to take them a vote on their constitution and about all them boys at the LRDA can do is raise a big stink, but that's about all they can do." Now this here politician said he agreed, but he wanted to know if I'd be a go between with out delegates for them LRDA boys. According to him, the LRDA is looking for one. But, like I told him, Miss Connee, Ol Wiz is too old to be a running here and there, so about the only thing he can do is stand; and that's what Ol Wiz is a doing, Miss Connee, he's standing with the people.

But, I got to studying about it, Miss Connee, and the more I thought on it, the more I got to thinking on this go between job. I've been a wanting to git me a new suit, and I figure that this would be as a good a reason as any to git one. Well, when I told my wife about becoming a go between; she

told me that the only place I needed to be going was somewhere to git her washing machine fixed. She said our delegates weren't needing no go between and the LRDA weren't going to listen to a thing Ol Wiz had to say on anything. Well, I reckon she's right, Miss Connee, but for a short while there I had myself pictured as being a go between with a new suit.

But I heard the LRDA boys are still looking for a go between, Miss Connee, cause they're wanting to set up a meeting with our delegates. The only trouble is they want 4 or 5 of them to meet with 4 or 5 of our delegates. But I heard our delegates have voted to meet with them and anyone else providing it ain't no secret meeting, like the one they had up in Washington with Mr. Charlie Rose. And, I heard them delegates say it had to be open to all delegates and all the people. Now these ain't people, Miss Connee, that sound like they are needing a go between. But these LRDA boys are a needing one and I reckon if anyone out there is wanting the job, they can go see one of them LRDA boys. I reckon they might even git paid a little piece of money for their trouble.

If I could be a go between, Miss Connee, I would like to be one up there in Washington on this Whitewater thing with our President. Now, I reckon go betweens in that situation git paid some big money, if they can hold on to their jobs long enough. But down here in Robeson, our race of people don't cotton too much to go betweens. Our people tend to believe that our people generally know what they're wanting and what they ain't wanting. They also believe, Miss Connee, that any man who can't speak for himself and what he's wanting, ain't worth much as a man. So, I reckon anyone needing a go between betwixt themselves and the people is holding on a position that can't be defended. And if he can't defend his position, I reckon he shouldn't be expecting Ol Wiz to defend something he can't. But if

y'all know someone our there wanting a go between job, they need to git in touch with the LRDA.

Now I heard that if this go between person can't talk our delegates out of our constitution, they're going to need what Ol Wiz calls a holding up person to go in. Now this is the way it works, Miss Connee. First they send in this go between person, his job is to talk our delegates into putting aside our constitution. Now if that don't work, they send in this holding up person. His job, they way I understand it, is to talk our delegates into holding up on putting our constitution to the people for a vote. HE'll have a good sounding reason, but he won't be up to anything good for the people, Miss Connee.

Now, Ol Wiz ain't worried too much about that go between, but he worries about that holding up person. The way Ol Wiz looks at it, Miss Connee, this is the person that's got our country in the shape it is in today. When we know what needs to be done, someone comes along and says "Boys, we need to hold up and study this matter." Then by the time the people decide to do what should have been done ages ago, it's too late. But, I reckon if the LRDA is a needing the, a go between person, they're needing them a holding up person to go follow behind them. A smart man might could figure out how to git double pay there, Miss Connee, if he had a mind to.

But, it's like my Pa said many years ago, Miss Connee. He said, "Son, if you're wanting to see the sun rise, don't don't look west." Now them LRDA boys will be sending in their go betweens and their holding up people to point our people to the west, when we need to be looking to the East for a new day. But, I thank the Lord for our delegates coming from our churches. They are fortified with the truth, Miss Connee, and a man and a woman with the truth cannot be fooled by slick talk and fancy words. And, when they're standing for the people with the truth on their side, ain't nothing Ol Wiz can do but back

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WHAT PATH WILL THE LUMBEE-CHERAW TRIBAL MEMBERS FOLLOW AFTER THE UNITY CONFERENCE?

I was in attendance at part of the Unity Conference this past week and heard some encouraging remarks from people from all sides of the current issues facing the LUMBEE-CHERAW people. The comment that I heard most was that now is the time for all of us to work together for the greater good of our people. This statement sounds really good when we hear it, but the real test will be in the implementation of this concept. We as knowledgeable people should have figured this out a long time ago. We all are aware of the old adage that "United we stand and divided we fall", so I hope we will now begin to work together for the betterment of our people. Now that the Unity Conference is over, we should work with one another for action not rhetoric.

How can we accomplish this desired state where all of us are working for the good of the LUMBEE-CHERAW people. In my opinion, this can be

accomplished by all of us forgetting our own personal agendas and working for the betterment of the tribe. All members of the tribe have talents which would be helpful in our effort to establish a tribal constitution and to secure Federal Recognition regardless of our affiliation with other NATIVE AMERICAN organizations. The one requirement that needs to be present in our personal point of view is a commitment to promote other NATIVE AMERICANS when they are qualified as business owners, political candidates, professionals and in the spiritual realm. Those of us who are afraid of losing our power or control need to understand that the real power lies in the collective wisdom of the LUMBEE-CHERAW people. As long as we have the peoples concerns at heart, we will have the support of most of the people.

So, I welcome this new era of cooperation between all factions of the LUMBEE-CHERAW people because it is through the spirit of working together that we can make great progress.

Loca' E Essiki'kv (Painted Turtle)

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A Few Comments on Things Happening to us here in "Indian Country"

by Wild Turkey

Angel Wings For Sale

I wonder how many will read this simply because of the headline? Surely this must seem sacrilegious to many. How many would buy the feathers plucked from wings after the angel was murdered? How many would buy the "Chalice" that Christ served the water he had turned into wine? How many would buy the various oils, herbs, and objects that the Creator has put on the earth to cure the afflictions that more has wrought on our great "Mother Earth"?

To me this is what is happening to the traditional religion of the Native Americans. It seems to me that it is becoming the current fad, a money maker to further divide our people.

From the current fad of Circus Pow Wows, flea markets, discount outlets, etc., people are flocking to them in hopes of buying a Taiwanese rubber Eagle or head dress or ceremonial pipe. Just knowing they will get a blessing or it will fill an empty hole in their decor. To these people their money was wasted. Blessings are not bought they are requested from the Creator and with enough faith and doing the proper lifestyle. All things good take time. To many think that "Indian medicine" and Blessings happen right now. They don't. Even though the majority of the medicines cannot be overdosed more is not always better.

In recent travels many things were offered to me, all for money and I felt a hard job to my heart. It seems to me that if these sacrilegious actions were taken by me toward a Christian, Jew, Moslem or any of the other recognized religions, I would be incarcerated, burned at the stake or some other life

taking action all in the name of their "god".

It seems to me that I wish to hard for an "idealistic society". One where the word RESPECT would take the place of the Bible, Koran, Torah or any other book or set of laws that confuse the peoples ideas of the way the Creator means for us to live and survive on Mother Earth. The only rule should be All Respect No Greed. Every one could live with this, there would be no need for churches, banks, grocery stores, judges, police or any of the many things that greed has placed on us.

Let me close this by saying I understand that many of our brothers and sisters make a living from manufacturing Indian artifacts, to them folks the responsibility not to sell spirituality at any price. Indian artifacts profits should profit Indian people. Not some oppressed family on a far off island that is contributing to the greed of some power brokers.

We have to stop buying ceremonial pipe, Eagle feathers, spray cans of blessings anointing oils and artifacts that are not contributing to the well being of Indian families. Buy articles that you know are Indian made, Indian sold. He has them for sale and he is selling you a part of himself. Frankly I prize the smallest part of me that the Creator gave to me to much to sell out for something that is just going to line some greedy persons pocket.

Along the same line I have been looking long and HARD at the Lumbee Constitution committee. I have made meetings, met some very fine people and I hope I have left them with the idea that the traditionalist needs a place here too. From the many

conversations with the delegates I have come to the conclusion that we can live with what they have done. I particularly like the peoples protection clauses, recall and term limits. If you can't or won't do the job, more over I am sure at least for the first hundred years there will be a line of people who are willing and able to represent the people. Term limits also serve the same purpose. There will be a lot of able people wanting to make a contribution and they should have a chance to without having to compete with an entrenched money bagger who owes to many favors to do the job properly. The only part, from a traditionalist view, that I would like to have seen was spending limits and serve without salary, just per diem!!! Serve the people with pride not for a inflated salary.

Lastly, We of the "Intertribal Council of Elders invite all to visit us at the "Indian Cultural Center" for our 1st Gathering in many, many years. It will definitely not be a carnival, there will be no rubber eagles or spirituality for sale. Actually nothing will be for sale. So for some Spiritual, fraternal and social times come visit the many tribal displays, demonstrations, lessons in all sorts of "Indian Things." Talk with Elders and leaders from all Indian groups, bands, clans, tribes, etc., from all over the Carolinas.

Til the next time, It was not meant to hurt any one by this article. At least no more than it hurts me to see the wrong doings going on.

Wild Turkey
Intertribal Council of Elders

Say you read it in the Carolina Indian Voice

The Way I See It

by Dr. Dean Chivers, President
Native American Scholarship Fund
Albuquerque, NM



Go in off from Robeson County was almost like a theme in the 1950's, when I was growing up in Pembroke. There were colonies of Lumbees in Detroit and Baltimore, and later there were colonies in Greensboro and Charlotte.

My cousin told me the other year that Lumbees in these times who work way off, even in other states, will not move there. They will commute to South Carolina, to Greensboro, to Raleigh, every day, to work, and come home at night.

My old bones ache just thinking about the 200 or 300 mile commute. I would move.

But then I have a different perspective. When I asked my cousin Theresa 35 years ago if she was going to leave home, she said "No, Lord. I couldn't leave my momma."

I have often thought about that, and I'll bet she has forgotten it. But I have often thought Theresa may have been wiser than I.

I couldn't wait to leave. I always wanted to get out into the world, and see the things that Mark Twain, Herman Melville, and others wrote about. I never wanted to be a sailor, or

be in the Navy, but I wanted to do about everything else.

Three stories, or jokes, come to mind about going off. Johnny Chavis told me the first one. It seems this girl was walking up and down Main Street of Pembroke one Saturday afternoon, talking proper. Other people would call it putting on airs, but we called it talking proper.

Finally, someone asked her if she had been up North. "Yes, I have," she said. "Where you been?" they asked.

"I been up to Fayetteville," she replied. It is funnier if you tell it out loud, and say Fet-Ville instead of Fed-Vul.

Another one Ken Maynor told several years ago. It seems one of the local boys had been off to Detroit for awhile, and hadn't been home for a couple of years.

When he finally came home, some asked him why he hadn't been home in so long. He didn't give a good answer, I guess, because his questioner then accused him of trying to pass for white.

"That's a lie," he retorted. "I been trying like hell to pass for

Indian."

The third one involves another person, who will remain nameless, who also went to Detroit. He had been to school a couple of years, but didn't start school until he was about 12.

He never learned to read. About all he did in school was try to get some of the girls to go behind the school with him to the woods.

On his first night in Detroit, he went to a restaurant with some people he was living with until he could get a job. The waitress put a menu in front of him, and he pretended to read it.

When she finally came to his table to take his order, he was all frustrated. He had no idea of what was on that menu.

Everyone else ordered. When she asked him what he wanted for dinner, he just blurted out, "Bring me a Pepsi and a Nab."

There was a reason we had to go off--lack of work. Imagine my surprise when I read in an education study of the Lumbees that half the Lumbee people were tenant farmers. I had thought most of us owned our own land. All the time it was the Pates, the Britts, and the McNairs who owned it.

The Intertribal Council of Elders

is looking for members from all Carolina tribes, groups, and bands to aid in Traditional Heritage, Cultural, Spiritual Gatherings.

For More information call Spotted Turtle at (910) 521-4178, Painted Turtle at (910) 521-0020 or Wild Turkey at (910) 521-2826. Or write in care of the Carolina Indian Voice, P.O. Box 1075, Pembroke, NC 28372. Fax (910) 521-1975.

