

Editorial And Opinion Page



AS I SEE IT

Bruce Barton

Things change but they remain the same in a lot of ways....

What reminded me of this was seeing I. Murchison Biggs at a meeting of the Robeson Community College Board of Trustees Monday night. There was one of Robeson County's old political war horses legally pontificating just like in days of old when he used to be attorney for the Robeson County Board of Education. And just like me in the old days he never came right out and said it but you got the idea that minority view points and concerns were not necessarily what was motivating him in his frequent discourses during the evening.

It reminded me of another time in March 1977 when I attended a meeting of the Robeson County Board of Education and quietly exulted as that body summarily fired Biggs. It was an emerging new atmosphere back then: a time when progressive Indians, Blacks and whites began to flex their political muscles and insist that every one be represented at Robeson County's multi cultural political table. Yeah, things change but they remain the same in a lot of ways too. I would not be surprised or unduly upset if this 2000 political body did what that one did way back then in 1977.

RCC meeting reminds me of how far we have come and how far we still have to go....

I have seen a lot of changes in my 58 years. I remember when I began the Carolina Indian Voice in 1973; few Indians and Blacks filled political offices in Robeson County in those days. Today I see a lot of good and positive changes but I see a lot of apathy too. We need to be strong and vigilant. Attending the Robeson Community College Board of Trustees meeting Monday night reminded me of how fragile our newly won gains are. It seems to me that RCC is one of the last bastions of White Conservatism left in Robeson County. There needs to be some traumatic changes at RCC. The leadership (sic) clings to the old ways, the old notions and that just won't cut it any more. RCC needs to join the 21st Century and invite the Indians of Robeson County to their political table.

Yeah, the strange carryings on Monday night reminded me anew of how far we have come and yet how far we still have to go. See the focal point of my concerns in "Around Ol' Robeson" elsewhere on this editorial page.

Around Ol' Robeson



Johnny Hunt withdraws application for VP at meeting of RCC Board of Trustees

Johnny Hunt said it bluntly Monday night at the meeting of the Robeson Community College Board of Trustees. "I would not accept this job if it were offered to me because I have been treated unfairly by the chairman and the president of this institution." Those were strong words coming from the chairman of the Robeson County Board of Commissioners. Offending the chairman of the county commissioners, one of RCC's funding sources, seems utter foolishness to this newspaper. But old habits die hard.

Johnny Hunt, who is the Executive Director for Personnel for the Public Schools of Robeson County, had applied for the position of vice president for continuing education, one of three open VP positions at RCC. There are four such positions and none of them are filled by an Indian.

It seems that RCC President Fred Williams had come to the meeting Monday night prepared to name a white to the position. That notion changed after a reportedly hot and angry executive session. When the board came out, Hunt announced that he was no longer a candidate and someone else made a motion to re-advertise the position. The board also named a committee made up of trustees Thomas Jones, Harbert Moore, Shirley Pennington and John Staton to study how hiring are done at RCC, especially when they concern trustees like Hunt and Dr. Rona Leach, another PSRC employee, who also applied for the VP position. It will, as always, be interesting to see what happens. We prophecy that things are going to change drastically at RCC in the not too distant future. And change, as this newspaper sees it, is needed and will be welcome when it comes in due season.

Johnny Hunt believes that RCC Chairman George Regan and President Fred Williams acted in bad faith. In announcing that he was withdrawing his application, Hunt said, "I'm not withdrawing my name based on your perceived conflict of interest because your decision is not going to hold."

Biggs, the attorney, has told Hunt and Leach in a letter that they would have to resign as members of the board of trustees if they applied for the position, or at least recuse themselves from discussing the applications for the job. Hunt bitterly disputed the letter's assertions. Stay tuned: this political battle is still raging.

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"Folk, God don't like ugly..."

Rantin' and Ravin'



Garry Lewis Barton

Violent crime committed by young'uns is too pervasive in this country. And, too many parents act like it's a foregone conclusion about which they can do nothing.

The increased use of sex, violence and profanity in professional wrestling is one of the reasons for out-of-control young'uns.

Yet, no one seems concerned enough about the negative effect it has on young'uns to force promoters to clean up their act by refusing to let their young'uns watch it on TV. Unfortunately, a big reason for this is that the popularity of wrestling has increased since the promoters started using more sex, violence and profanity. And that's a sad commentary on our society.

I was blessed with a God-fearing Mama who raised her young'uns in a God-fearing home and environment. She raised us to know right from wrong. And my Mama, Berna, used a switch liberally to re-enforce the fact that there are dire consequences when one does wrong, or acts "ugly."

Some so-called experts on child-rearing say that whipping or spanking young'uns causes them to grow up with a propensity for violence. I say, hogwash!

Too often, it seems, these so-called experts on child-rearing never raised a child, or much of anything else besides a ruckus. More times than not, their experience was garnered from textbooks.

But I'm living proof that my Mama received hands-on experience raising young'uns. And in that hand, more times than not, was a much used switch that would make you think twice before becoming unruly or too big for your britches again.

The ravages of time and disease have left my Mama a mere shell of the great lady and mother she once was. But that's alright. Neither can touch her soul. And she did such a great job raising us that it's difficult today, as we join together taking care of her in her waning years, to say "no" to her even when we know we're doing so in her best interest. We've been conditioned to "mind" her. And out of love and respect for her, we still are so inclined.

When I see something today I think is detrimental to young'uns in general, I don't consult textbooks. I think, "What would Mama think?" And, folk, Mama would not have allowed the minds of her young'uns to be poisoned by the influx of sex, violence and profanity in pro wrestling today.

Of course, professional wrestling is just one example. Another is that the state and federal governments need to get out of the child-rearing business. The authority to raise their young'uns needs to be put back in the hands of parents where it belongs. Where God intended it.

If common sense were cotton, I doubt you could scrounge up enough in Washington to make a decent handkerchief for a grasshopper. It's all "burro"-crats in the Capitol can do to keep the White House in order. They need to keep their noses out of our houses.

I'm no expert, but I have enough common sense to know that the morals of this country began to decay when God was legislated out of our classrooms. If prayer were reinstated in our schools, along with a teacher's ability, if he wishes, to talk to students about God and His only Son, Jesus Christ, then we would see a significant decline in violent crime committed by young'uns. It's that simple, folk. It's a young'un's nature to misbehave. They have to be taught proper behavior. And if you leave them alone to their own devices like so many parents seem to do today, without proper guidance and discipline, chaos will result. Such as what we are seeing today.

I don't mean to preach, folk, but this country needs to return to its roots, as reflected in our Motto, "In God We Trust." If we all reverted back to letting the principles found in the Ten Commandments govern our behavior, the moral fiber barely holding this great country together would stop unraveling. The first step of any journey is the most important. And that would be a good start down the road to putting this country back on track.

Someone a lot wiser than me once said, "God don't like ugly." He don't. And we shouldn't tolerate it either. Neither in ourselves, our young'uns, or others. We'll talk again, folk.

Looking Back While Walking Forward

This was found on the Feb. 5, 1873 editorial page of the Robesonian.

"Under suspension of the rules, the resolution authorizing the State Treasurer to pay to Jas. McQueen, alias Donahoe, the reward (\$6,000) heretofore offered by the State for the killing of Boss Strong, passed its several readings in the Senate. We learn by telegram from Mr. T.A. McNeill that this resolution will promptly pass the house..." It did!

And in the same issue, this appeared in reference to Charles E. Barton, a

Justice of the Peace and antecedent of most Bartons in Robeson County:

"JAILED.--On Saturday last two colored loyalists from Burnt Swamp (Scuffletown) Township were brought to this place and committed to jail under a mittimus from Esquire Barton, one of the Justices of that township.

The names of these worthy members of the party of 'great moral ideas', and whose principles and practices are so fully 'in accord' with the government of the 'Nation'--as the loyal phrase hath it--are Jordan Shaw and Charles Wright, and the particular trouble that has brought them to sojourn at the loyal headquarters in this town (Lumberton) is--a dispute about geese. Captain Plummer, who is not a loyalist, charges that they stole the geese; and the Justice before whom the examination was had concluded that they were, in loyal phrase, 'guilty of the taking' if not of the 'carrying away'...

Charles E. Barton was indeed a "loyalist", or a Republican to his heart. Conservative and Democratic Robeson County in the Civil War era hated his guts. The comments above were meant to be mean spirited and sarcastic. Barton served as a Justice of the Peace for the brief time that Republicans were in charge in Robeson County after winning the war and putting Robeson County under military jurisdiction during Reconstruction.

Charles E. Barton married an Elizabeth Cumbo, an Indian lady from Prospect. The Barton line began with these two. There is some speculation too that Barton was married a second time to a Betsey Locklear. Barton became a champion for the Indian people. In the 1850 Census he is listed as a "White man from Maine." In the 1880 Census he has become a "Mulatto" which is what they called most Indians back then before we received our first legal and legislative name of "Croatan" in 1885.

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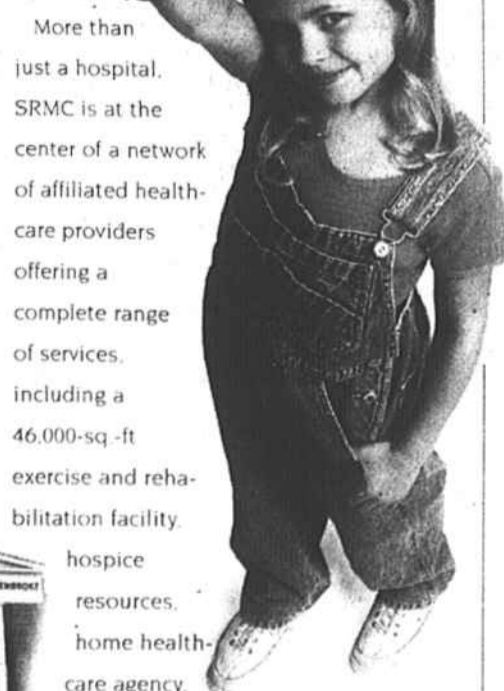
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