

Robeson Co. Officials

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need guts to stand up and express their feelings as many of you are now."

Julian Pierce, a Pembroke attorney who has filed for Superior Court judge in the 16th district, said part of the county's problem is the lack of cooperation from its elected officials.

"When I look around and think about the events of the past several days, one question comes to mind. Where are our elected representatives?" he said. "... If they were concerned, where are they?"

Pierce said that of 13 elected Robeson County officials, two are black and the rest white. "Indians, you don't have anybody," he said. "How do we get respect when we're not sitting at the policy-making table. If we don't look at the situation and get out and vote, we'll never solve the problem and we'll never be able to

have trust in our judicial system."

Adolph Dial, who has filed for a seat in the North Carolina House, said he agrees there is a great need in Robeson County for cooperation.

"I'm not apologizing for anything that happened recently," Dial, a Lumbee Indian, said. "Sometimes people make great sacrifices. Sometimes people break the law for things to happen. There's a great need in this county for a lot of cooperation."

Connie Brayboy told the group a committee had been formed to organize defense efforts for Hatcher and Jacobs. She said the panel was calling on the government to drop charges against the men and was asking county blacks and Indians to unite against Joe Freeman Britt, a district attorney running for Superior Court judge, and Sheriff Hubert Stone.

Velma Clark, Hatcher's mother, said she is very proud of her son.

"I taught him one commandment, love, and he did what he did because he loved the people here," she said. "If he were here today, he'd say, 'Let's join together and get things right.'"

Jacobs' mother, Eleanor Jacobs, agreed the men were working for the county, not themselves. And she said their complaints about county officials were based in truth.

"We're not dumb in Robeson County," she said. "We can see what's going on. I think the big man is getting fat off the little man, but a lot of people are keeping their mouths shut because they don't want to get hurt."

"The town officials are not here. The sheriff is not here. The district attorney is not here," she said. "That shows guilt."

Hatcher

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There's all types of discrimination," he said. There's discrimination against blacks, Indians and poor people. I call it economic discrimination."

Hatcher is employed as an independent contract mechanic for Det. Wagen haus auto repair shop. He says that all the issues of his campaign are based on the needs and welfare of children.

"That's the root of the problem," he said. "I want to see better education and more in-school counselors. Sometimes a lot of problems develop in the home between step-parents and children. Teachers can't counsel and teach at the same time."

were taken for about fifteen minutes," said Hatcher. "The governor told me that the demands Eddie made were not unfair and that he'd honor every demand."

Hatcher said that during his conversation with the governor, he requested that his nephew be transferred from the facility at Butner, where he was originally incarcerated, to a facility in Fayetteville.

"Gov. Martin has been true to his word so far," said Hatcher. He said that Gov. Martin had promised him he would keep his word and investigate all the allegations of corruption and discrimination in the Robeson County Sheriff's Department.

Robeson County. She said that Joe Freeman Britt, the district attorney, "owned the courthouse."

"Although Indians make up only one-third of the population," said Brayboy, "of the arrests for drug abuse, 75.6 percent were Indians." Brayboy said that Britt has prosecuted 17 cases over the last four years, 13 of which were against Indians.

She said that Stone practiced nepotism; that his brother is a deputy and that two of Stone's sons work for the department. "One of his sons killed an Indian in cold blood," she said. She noted that the coroner's inquiry (which cleared the sheriff's son by finding the shot was fired accidentally or in self-defense) is operated at the discretion of the district attorney.

Hatcher said he would also focus on the need to stop child abuse. He said abused children often grow up and "get in trouble with the law." He pointed out that both his nephew, Eddie, and his cohort, Timothy Jacobs, were products of broken homes.

The 43-year-old Richmond County native has lived in Winston-Salem since 1966. He said that he has had a few dealings with the Forsyth County judicial system and that he had been "treated terribly" because he is an Indian.

He said he had spoken with his nephew about a week before the siege, but that he was given no indication of what was forthcoming. Hatcher says he believes the ordeal has already helped the cause of oppressed Afro-Americans and Indians in Robeson County. He said that an organization had been formed and that a petition drive was underway demanding that the two Indians be released on bail and that the charges be dropped.

"I talked with Gov. Martin personally on the day the hostages

Hatcher said he believes his nephew has information to link the drug trade in Robeson County to the Sheriff's Department. "Eddie is intelligent and he's smart. If he says he's got something, then he's got something," he said.

A group called the Robeson Justice Committee has been formed to "organize the defense efforts" of Hatcher and Jacobs. A release issued by the group stated (in part): "In addition to the demands to drop the charges against them, the Robeson Justice Committee is calling for a new unity in the Black and Indian communities of Robeson County and for political power based on that unity in order to: (1) defeat Joe Freeman Britt in his election bid for Superior Court Judge; (2) obtain the resignation of Sheriff Hubert Stone; (3) solve the unsolved murders in Robeson County; and (4) end corruption and injustice in Robeson County."

Connie Brayboy is chairwoman of the committee. She is also the editor of the Carolina Indian Voice, a weekly newspaper in

Jim Hatcher believes there is a way to stem corruption in law enforcement. "We have to stop electing judges and sheriffs," he said. "They should be appointed by merit. When they are elected, they can't be fired."

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