

Mayor Says

thing to do with his decision, that his feelings would be the same if every citizen had been in full accord on the site from the beginning.

"Nobody wants a modern, adequate hospital for Dunn more than I do and nobody worked harder to put the bond election across," said Blalock, "but I don't intend to become known as the architect of bankruptcy."

"My decision to support the hospital bond issue and to work day and night for its overwhelming approval -- and I was the only member of the city council who even dared to stick his neck out for the issue -- was based on the facts available to me at that time and I thought it was the right thing to do," said Blalock.

"But now that I have had an opportunity to study the matter more thoroughly and now that all the facts have been made available to me, I am honest enough to admit I made a mistake, but an honest and unintentional one," he continued.

"I believe the people of my town are fair-minded enough to forgive me for that. But I know they would never forgive me if I fail now to give them the benefit of the full facts to prevent them from making what could prove to be the most serious, most costly mistake in the town's history."

FACTS NOT GIVEN

He said the citizens would never have voted for the bonds had they been given all the facts "instead of a purely emotional appeal built around admitted need for more adequate medical facilities."

"Democracy and good government depends upon the integrity of those of us who hold office. My own conscience, my belief in dealing fairly and honestly with the people who entrusted me to office will not permit me to be a party to this project. I would rather give up the office of mayor at the end of my term, and would do so gladly, rather than be forced to go through with it."

Mayor Blalock proposed two alternatives:

First, and most preferable, to work for a county hospital so that the cost could be spread out over the county's total valuation of \$102 million instead of the town's \$17 million. He said for an added levy of only about 16 cents, which would

pay bonds and maintenance, the county could provide an adequate hospital of 200 rooms similar to that erected at Wilson by issuing \$1,600,000 in bonds; whereas a 51 cent increase for taxpayers in Dunn would provide only 115 beds, only 30 more than the 85 now provided by Betsy Johnson Hospital.

"That \$2,070,000 is a terribly high price to pay for just 30 more beds, or less, even though the town's share would be only \$550,000 plus the extra \$364,500 in interest. And that also does not take into consideration that we would be abandoning a hospital that is valued at close to a million dollars, half of which has been in use only about ten years."

ENLARGE BETSY JOHNSON

The second alternative suggested by the mayor is for the Betsy Johnson board to seek approval from the Medical Care Commission to proceed with plans for enlarging the present hospital, as originally planned. He said he feels the commission can be convinced with proper facts that this would be a wiser move and that Hill-Burton funds could be obtained in that manner. He commended the hospital board for its original idea.

The mayor said he has been told there "are at least 200 hospitals built with Hill-Burton funds which are standing today as white elephants because demands of the government required to receive this federal money proved so costly the hospitals can't make ends meet."

The mayor said he feels the hospital board is now honor-bound to make the County of Harnett the same proposition it made to the Town of Dunn now that it sees the town cannot wisely participate. Under this plan, the hospital agreed to turn over its building and assets and \$280,000 cash on hand toward the new hospital.

The mayor said that he had talked with Harnett County officials and out of town doctors in other areas of Harnett and that they agree that the hospital should be located in the Dunn-Erwin area, where it can be staffed.

He also said that Betsy Johnson will not be closed down despite its inadequateness. It will remain open until the hospital needs of this county and city are improved.

OTHER OFFICIALS AGREE

Mayor Blalock said that Commissioner Salye Whitehead, City

Manager Archie Uzzle and City Attorney Max McLeod are in full agreement with him that the town can't go through with the proposition.

Mr. McLeod said his reasons for opposing the project are the same as those outlined by Mayor Blalock today.

City Manager Uzzle has expressed the same view that operation of a hospital is not a proper municipal function, that the best brains in municipal government advise against it.

They also take the position that even if it was proper town function, the Town of Dunn is not large or strong enough financially to undertake such a proposal.

Mayor Blalock said he had reached his final conclusions and ultimate decision "with great personal emotions which I cannot permit to interfere or even influence the cold, hard facts of the matter."

Noting that at least 60 per cent of all his time has been devoted to the duties of mayor since taking office, Blalock said "at least half of that time has been spent on the hospital project."

"I have given it much thought, prayed about it and it has put grey hairs in my head and perhaps even shortened my life," said Mayor Blalock today, "and nobody can truthfully say that I have not given the matter my most sincere, dedicated and intense attention, to say nothing of the time involved."

"But neither personal popularity nor the office of mayor mean enough to me to cause me to lead the people of the town in which I was born and love so deeply into such a grave mistake as this."

He said he is now prepared to devote the same time and energy to explaining to the people why they should not go through with the project now that its objectionable features have been detected and revealed as he did in selling them on the original idea.

The mayor said he would be available for civic club speeches and to any other group to discuss the facts with them.

"I have great confidence in the people," he said. "I know that when it is explained to them and when they are told exactly what it's going to cost that they'll feel the same way as I do."

Mayor Blalock said he had spent many hours at the league of municipalities meeting talking with city managers, other city officials, experts on municipal financing and administration and others about the Dunn problem.

"Every single one of them advised against it," he declared.

"Only a fool," he said, "would fail to take the advice of those who have experience and know the best policy to pursue."

"Can the Town of Dunn do any less?" he asked.

At the last meeting of the county board of commissioners, a majority of Harnett doctors appeared in favor of a county hospital. The board agreed to call a meeting of the Dunn and Erwin hospital boards, the city council and others to discuss the matter.

Here's Problem

could cost from \$50,000 to \$100,000. Bonds would have to be floated and the town would start paying on the \$364,500 interest soon after construction is started. Not a dime of Federal money would become available until construction is one-fourth completed and then only 5% of that cost would be advanced.

Costly Test Period

The government requires a "test run" operation of the hospital for a period of at least a month, possibly longer, before the first patient could be admitted to assure the operation is running smoothly.

The Town of Dunn could have to pay all salaries and other expenses of the new hospital during this "test run" period. It could run into a staggering sum of money -- even more than the town could possibly hope to obtain from the extra 51 cents in taxes.

If the hospital is constructed more than two stories high, the town would be placed in a new rating bracket by the Insurance Commission and the town would be forced to purchase a hook and ladder truck at a cost estimated at from \$40,000 - \$60,000.

The 25 cents maintenance levy and the 26 cents levy to pay off bonds was based on an expected \$22 million total tax valuation. The total valuation turned out to be only \$17 million. Therefore, the 51 cents increase in taxes could be insufficient for either maintenance and to pay off the bonds. The mayor doesn't know where the town could possibly get the extra money for these two items, to say nothing of the money required to buy the land, utilities, for paving, landscaping, the test-run period, the new fire truck and any other unexpected expenses.

Would Bar Industry

With such an increase in tax rate, the town couldn't possibly hope to attract new industries. Furthermore, even if new industries wanted to locate here, the town would have no money to provide them with extended water, sewerage and other utilities.

With every available cent of town money going to maintain the hospital, the town could not hope to maintain a surplus or to provide funds for emergencies that come to every town.

Only one municipality in the State, North Wilkesboro, operates a hospital. It is subsidized by industry and private donations which would not be available to Dunn. Even cities like Charlotte, Greensboro and Winston-Salem won't undertake hospital operations. Many cities have tried and failed. There is no reason to believe that Dunn could succeed when towns and cities with far greater resources have failed.

Practically all hospitals are a losing proposition financially.

Taxpayers in a small town the size of Dunn cannot reasonably be expected to finance medical facilities for such a large four-county area as that served by the Dunn hospital.

The County of Harnett, with \$102 million in property valuation to draw from, could, with available Federal and State aid, operate a hospital without burdening any individual taxpayer.

The Town of Dunn could not possibly do so without inviting fiscal insolvency and eventual bankruptcy or perhaps being forced to close the hospital as a last resort.

Historian Groups

Reg. Commanded by Captain Joseph Atkinson and Co. B of the 8th Battalion, commanded by Captain Henry Barnes. It is the feeling of the committee that the County of Harnett should also erect a memorial to these and other soldiers of this county and that the dedicatory address be given by the governor of N. C.

Planned highlights of the re-enactment to be discussed will be a parade in Dunn of the participating troops -- about 600 or more of them, a costume ball of the period, a museum featuring memorabilia of the era and many other events.

Barry Replies

no conflict today with his scheduled campaign tour of West Chester, Upper Darby and Philadelphia Pa.

Goldwater planned to return to Washington tonight. He will go to New York Thursday for the

funeral of former President Herbert Hoover, then head west for more campaigning.

"We will be in disagreement with President Johnson on what has happened in Russia, said Goldwater.

"We will say we do not believe the new leaders will continue the Khrushchev line. We expect it to be a tougher line.

"We believe it means closer cooperation with the Chinese line. It means they are getting together."

Harnett Native Succumbs Today

Jesse Harper Jones, 76, died at his home on Route 4, Dunn, early this morning.

Funeral services will be held Thursday at 4 p. m. at Hatcher, Skinner & Drew chapel Rev. Wesley Noble assisted by Rev. C. W. Kirby will officiate and burial will be in Greenwood Cemetery.

Mr. Jones was a native of Har-

nett County, son of the late Jesse Martin and Sara Beasley Jones. He was a member of Black's Chapel Methodist Church near Godwin and was a grocery merchant until his retirement.

Surviving are his wife, Nona Edgerton Jones.

Things To Consider Before Retirement

There are many things to consider if you are about ready to retire, said C. V. Shelton, Harnett County Field Representative. Retirement is something we all look forward to, but when it comes, many of us aren't prepared for it. Some retired workers who have had a hobby for years, turn this hobby into a profit making small business when they retire.

Remember you can earn \$100 and still receive all your Social Security benefits. After age 72 there is no limit on the earnings you may have.

Some retired people gain self-

satisfaction by doing volunteer work for churches, lodges or clubs. No organization ever seems to have enough help.

Another question that comes up for the retired person is: Where will I live? Many retired people have their own homes and are well settled in their home towns. Others may consider moving to one of the many retirement communities. A point to remember, stated Shelton, is that you inform Social Security of your new address if you are receiving a benefit check.

Whether Social Security benefits are the only cash money coming in or not, most people after retirement have to plan very carefully to make the money they have cover regular expenses. Retirement years are your golden years, so do enjoy yourself.

If you have any questions concerning Social Security please contact your local office at 150 Rowan Street, Fayetteville, N. C.

Good years for North Carolina



Good years to come



DAN MOORE will continue — and expand — the Democratic leadership that has brought economic advancement and an improved standard of living to every North Carolinian. Thousands of Tar Heels have expressed great enthusiasm for Dan Moore's program and for his positive approach to the challenges confronting North Carolina. Dan Moore's program for good, sound, progressive government is in the finest tradition of the Democratic principles, which have put North Carolina in the forefront of national affairs. His program is a realistic blueprint for achieving goals that are important to the Tar Heel State now and in the future.

PARTY PRINCIPLES: As a life-long, loyal Democrat, Dan Moore believes that the first consideration in any program is the welfare of the people. For more than 60 years, the Democratic Party has been the party of the people in North Carolina. And through conscientious, dynamic Democratic leadership, good government has become a habit in North Carolina.

ond to none. On the secondary and college levels, Dan Moore intends to work for the kind of educational system that will enable every young person in the state to take full advantage of his maximum potential. This emphasis on developing our most valuable human resource will extend far beyond the classroom and enrich North Carolina with an unlimited source of intelligent, educated men and women for the future.

JOB: Dan Moore has pledged himself to work for more jobs, better jobs, and better job opportunities. By encouraging industrial development in North Carolina, Dan Moore intends to broaden the economic base of our state and achieve a balance between agriculture and industry that will enable thousands of North Carolinians to increase their earnings and earning potential during the coming years.

ECONOMY: Dan Moore believes that waste in government should be eliminated. He will work to make sure that North Carolina gets full value for every tax dollar.

FARM PROGRAM: North Carolina farmers can depend on Dan Moore to work for a sensible and fair solution to their problems. He recognizes the importance of preserving the family farm and eliminating the cost-price squeeze that confronts every farmer in the state. Tobacco, the state's number one money crop, will receive special attention during the next four years.

TEAMWORK: On our Democratic team, North Carolina has a wealth of experience that combines youthful idealism with seasoned, practical know-how. Each member has demonstrated positive leadership and administrative abilities. During the next four years, they will play an important role in carrying out the goals of the Democratic Party.

ROADS: More roads and better roads are an important part of Dan Moore's progressive program for North Carolina. His goal is to improve the secondary road system and to build major highways that will serve as permanent arteries for the development of commerce and the convenience of the public.

EDUCATION: In Dan Moore's progressive program, education holds a place of top importance. His program for education is designed to provide North Carolina children with a school system sec-

Rites Held For Rev. J. D. Ray

An enormous crowd attended last rites for the Rev. John David Ray moderator of the Cape Fear "A" Annual Conference of the United Free Will Baptist Church held recently at the Harrington Chapel Church, Southern Pines.

Moderator Ray was born in Carthage, Nov. 9, 1913.

The family moved to Dunn in the late twenties where he married the former Atlene Lee.

He was called to the ministry in 1934 and served as pastor in Wilson, Linton, Pinehurst, Spring Lake, Southern Pines and Raleigh.

He was moderator of the Cape Fear Conference and Chairman of the General Executive Board.

Survivors include his wife; two daughters, Mrs. Dorothy Jean Hockaday and Mrs. Francis Lacklar of Southern Pines; three sons, Thomas and Albert of Southern Pines and John D. Ray of New York; two sisters, Mrs. Sarah Barrington of Dunn and Mrs. Jessie Mae Stack of Niagara Falls, N. Y.; Seven brothers, Curtis, of Norfolk, Va., Sgt. Kermit Ray of Va. Fredrick, Walter and Floyd Ray of Baltimore, Md., Wilbert of Philadelphia and James Ray of Niagara Falls, N. Y.

Interment was made in the Woodland Cemetery, Southern Pines.

CHRISTMAS WARNING

LONDON (UPI) — Scotland Yard has issued a warning that hijackers are expected to begin stocking their Christmas larders early this year.

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Filed for by Democratic Executive Committee, I. Melville Broughton, Jr. State Chairman, 400 Fayetteville Street, Raleigh.