

Editorials & Comments

Jim Hunt: Power And Purpose

By Hoyle H. Martin Sr.
Post Executive Editor

In spite of four lackluster years as the state's first Republican governor in this century, and the difficulties of working with a legislature controlled by the opposition party, Jim Holshouser will leave office on January 8 with a record of some notable accomplishments.

Under his leadership, the state gained a public kindergarten program, the development of more park lands than any previous administration, a number of new health care programs, industrial development - that is - new jobs and industry - and expanded environmental protection.

On the other hand, governor-elect Jim Hunt, who has said frequently during the election campaign, "Let us get North Carolina moving again," may, in the words of one lawmaker, "crash" and be buried by a General Assembly controlled by his own party even before he begins to get things "moving again."

We refer here to the developing battle between Hunt and the Legislature over the power of the Office of the Governor. Hunt wants to change a historic pattern that would allow him and future governors to succeed themselves and to give the governor veto powers over actions of the Legislature. Given the historic fact that neither individuals nor organizations willingly relinquish their positions of power, Mr. Hunt may be pursuing a confrontation with his own party that could set the tone for his entire four-year term as governor.

Fully aware of the difficulties he faces, the new governor apparently plans to mount a strong campaign for the second-term idea and the legislative veto. Hunt's basic argument for the proposed changes are to end the "lame duck" nature of the governorship, which hinders effectiveness, and to have the authority of the veto to check-and-balance possible bad legislation by the lawmakers.

We support Hunt's view on these important proposals for at least four reasons. First, as already noted, the "lame duck" nature of the governorship makes it very difficult for the state's highest public official to offer strong assertive leadership and a meaningful set of policy and program directions for the state. Secondly, a single four year term allows for not more than three years of effective administration after allowing for 10 months or a year for adjustment. Thirdly, since the Lt. Governor-elect Jimmy Green comes from an entirely different school of political thought than that of Hunt, the governor's programs and budget proposals could be hampered by Green's power and influence in legislature committee assignments. Lastly, the meager patronage and appointment power that the gover-

nor has has been gradually taken away by the lawmakers themselves.

Such arguments have been offered before with virtually no success. Therefore, if any degree of headway is to be gained for these proposals - both of which would require a constitutional amendment and thus a vote by the electorate - Hunt will have to begin by playing the politically artistic game called "compromise" and "trade-off."

We believe the compromise should begin with Hunt changing his position to the extent of starting the two-term governorship with the next administration, not his own. There are two very practical reasons for this suggestion. One is to reduce the belief of some that he, Hunt, is seeking greater personal glory and power. The other is that some lawmakers who may desire to run for the governorship themselves in 1980 might oppose the two-term proposal for that reason. On the other hand, we believe Hunt should stand firm in his effort to gain the veto power.

On other matters of getting North Carolina "moving again," we commend the governor-elect for his efforts to-date in cabinet-level and other appointments with the possible exception of Lauch Faircloth (see story on page 1). We are especially pleased with the appointment of former Chapel Hill Mayor Howard Lee as secretary of Natural and Economic Resources and Dr. John R. Larkins as Special Assistant for Minority Affairs and special programs.

Finally, it is our hope that the General Assembly and the people of the state will set aside some of their partisan political views to help Hunt "get North Carolina moving again."

Where's Insurance?

Last November 15-year-old Lisa Haney, a 10th grader in a Yancey County school, was severely injured and possibly crippled for life as a result of an accident involving the school bus she rode on.

The accident left Lisa with a crushed spine, a punctured lung, and broken ribs and wrist. To add insult to these serious injuries, the state, the county, and the school system involved each claimed "sovereign immunity" from suits for damages under the N.C. Tort Claims Act.

The law says the state can only be sued with its own consent and then only within its own financial limitations. County school systems may purchase liability insurance covering injuries only during school activities. However, the law specifically excludes school bus accidents.

Strangely, this has happened in a state that requires privately owned motor vehicles to have liability insurance and in a state where private passenger automobile insurance companies had reported the highest profits in the nation. Clearly something is wrong.



Reading And The Intellect

Let us suppose athletes could not enter any of the Olympic competitions unless they were able to run 400 meters in less than one minute. The logic of using this standard would be that running is a basic form of physical movement, and that unless one could run well, one could not perform any other physical activity well. All those who could pass such a test would be considered superior athletes and would be qualified to display other forms of athletic ability, such as swimming, jumping, skating, etc., while those who could not pass the running test would be considered "inferior" and would be eliminated from the games.

Sounds ridiculous? But it is no more ridiculous than the idea of using reading as the standard for judging children's intellectual capabilities. In many schools, those who can read well are considered to be "superior" students, and those who cannot read well are considered "deficient" in their ability to learn.

Regardless of how strong a case may be made for the promotion of reading skills, reading is but one form of mental activity. It is the ability to receive information through the use of alphabetic symbols. The ability to read fast or with a high degree of skill is no more an indication of intellectual ability than speed running is an indication of one's ability to swim, hurl

the discus, figure skate, or perform on the balance beam. We constantly see evidence of a highly efficient intellect at work when we see individuals organizing people into a tightly knit unit; arranging musical sounds into a pattern of beauty; conveying messages through the strokes of a paintbrush; swaying crowds of people with spoken words; or simply surviving under highly adverse circumstances.

Just as the Olympic games provide the impetus and the stimulation to athletes to develop their various physical skills, the schools should seek to nourish and develop intellectual talent in all its various forms. Yet, in the schools, there are numerous cases of children who have outstanding intellectual ability, especially in the creative arts, but who have been assigned to the "dummy" room because of their inability to read well.

Such a case was that of a young student whose intellect was highly developed in music. Without having had any formal training in music, he could compose, perform on various instruments, and play musical compositions after having heard them only once or twice. Yet this child was assigned to the "slow" group in school because he could not seem to learn the skill of decoding alphabetic symbols. By the time the child reached the 7th grade, he had become one of the school's worst be-

havior problems, and in a few more years, joined the ranks of the dropouts.

In another instance, a school was invited to bring 30 youngsters to see a very exceptional art exhibit. The students who were selected to go were not the ones who had the most talent or interest in art, but were the school's top readers. The explanation for this was that these students were the "brightest" and would therefore be able to appreciate the exhibit much more than the other students. Cases such as these are not the exception, but happen so frequently in the schools that few people think there is anything unusual, unjust, or illogical about it.

No one can deny that some degree of literacy is necessary in order to be able to function in this society, but surely great care must be taken not to stamp out real creative talent in the relentless pursuit of higher reading scores. It is not difficult to imagine the amount of frustration which would be caused to athletes if one physical skill were used as the measuring stick for all other skills, and one can also imagine how dull the Olympic games would be if all but the track stars were shunted aside. The range of capability of the human mind is infinitely more varied, complex, and brilliant than anything the human body could ever perform.

TO BE EQUAL



Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

Choices For The New Year

1977 will be a crucial year. It begins with the country in a seemingly intractable recession that's a major Depression for poor people and for black people, and with a new Administration entering office whose every move will be scrutinized for hints of how it will deal with the nation's problems.

President-elect Carter has said that even before his inauguration he will announce his plans for getting the economy back on the right track. The basic decision revolves around what sort of stimulus the economy needs.

Everyone, regardless of the ideological tag worn, believes some sort of stimulus is needed. Production is way below what it should be, unemployment is rising from an intolerably high base, and public and private needs are going unmet.

That's why many are advocating a hefty tax cut. The idea is that cutting taxes will put money in people's pockets and get them spending again, leading to higher production levels and more employment.

That's a tidy package. The only trouble with it is that it is wrong.

A tax cut would be a wrong decision for several reasons. First, experience shows that people don't spend their tax cuts, which often amount to only a few dollars a week anyway in the average paycheck. After the last tax cut, the savings rate rose sharply, and that doesn't lead to more production or more jobs.

Second, a tax cut would go to those who need it least. People who are jobless, who are poor or near-poor, would not benefit at all.

Third, whatever stimulus a tax cut brings to the economy takes a long, long time to show itself. The full economic impact of a tax cut is not seen for many months while sharply targeted direct government spending can boost the economy immediately.

Fourth, even from least, it would be unconscionable to cut taxes at a time when public needs are so great. How can taxes be cut when teachers are being laid off, city health facilities closed down, and public transportation systems deteriorating? In the face of unmet public needs and growing unemployment, it would be a tragic mistake to add to the enormous budget deficit by cutting taxes, thus reducing the very revenues the government needs to do its job properly.

The way to get the economy moving again is through a program of job-creation that avoids the tortured indirect, inefficient mechanism of a tax cut. Immediate federal spending on public works programs and public service employment should do the trick.

Last September Congress voted a \$2 billion public works program designed to create jobs. This month it was reported that applications for 25,000 projects from state and local governments amounting to \$24 billion had already been received by the agency in charge of disbursing those funds. And those applications are still pouring in!

That's just one indication of the huge demand for schools, libraries, stadiums, bridges, sewer systems, and other necessities. And those projects aren't ones dreamed up by Washington bureaucrats, they're projects being asked for by local governments on behalf of their citizens.

as i see it

Prayer In Public Schools

By Gerald O. Johnson

The newest beef in Charlotte is the federal court order to have school prayer stopped in a CMS school. The law was passed several years ago, so why the fuss?

It is hard for those people who are self-acclaimed Christians to realize that everybody does not believe in Christianity. What is even more the case is everybody does not want to believe in Christianity. In fact Christianity is one of the youngest of popular religious beliefs.

Now, since the religion you believe is of your choice you worship wherever you like. But a public school is not the place to display a religious belief. The reason is obvious. Everybody that is in a class will not be of the same religious belief. Why then, if the teacher happens to be a Christian, must everybody be subjected to her beliefs. It is not fair and I think the Supreme Court was justified in doing what it did.

Moreover, a lot of people are unable to realize the conflicts that can occur when you try to interject religious beliefs into public institutions. One example will suffice to demonstrate this point.

In Philadelphia a Catholic school teacher was using her religious beliefs in conducting her class. The class was made up of Mormons, Catholics, Jews, and Protestants. During holiday seasons she insisted that religious programs be acted out and the Holiday be observed as a Catholic would observe them. All of the little kiddies did what their teacher told them and everything was fine. Everything was fine, that is, until the parents got wind of it. Then the whole thing went up in smoke. The poor kids of non-Catholic faith don't know if they should believe in their parents' faith or in their teachers' faith.

The same situation has cropped up all over the country since massive busing has integrated neighborhood



Gerald O. Johnson schools. Before busing neighborhoods were basically of the same religion as well as of the same race, and economic

standing. But now with busing the mixture of public schools is quite heterogeneous. Thereby it is a necessity that teachers refrain from using their religion in a classroom.

Once we begin to realize that the world and its ideologies are much larger than the

small circles we travel in, we can then appreciate the job the federal court system has to do. In most cases they are doing what is democratic for all people, be it against your own belief or not.

CIAA HOOPLA

It is that time of year when the mad rush starts for the basketball teams in the CIAA to make it to the CIAA Tournament.

The tournament will be held in Hampton, Virginia again this year. Get your tickets early because the coliseum in Hampton holds only 10,000 comfortably. You better believe it will be packed.

It will be hard for this year's tournament to be as exciting and as spectacular as the tournament last year. The games were incredibly exciting. Of course Norfolk won the tournament, as usual, in a thriller against Winston-Salem State College.

This year, however; the

race to get to the tournament should be exciting. Norfolk, Virginia State, and Elizabeth City should all make it from the North. The fourth Northern school isn't so easy to pick. But more than likely it will be Virginia Union.

The Southern Division four is even more difficult to pick. Winston-Salem is a shoo-in. Even without the over-rated guard, Tom Paulin, Winston-Salem will have no problem being number one in the Southern Division. Both St. Augustine's and Shaw have come of age and don't see anyone stopping either team from making the post season tournament. St. Augustine's did not dress their sensational guard Calvin Rand or their outstanding forward James Salvage when they played in Charlotte recently. Why, I do not know. But with these two young men St. Augustine's would give Winston-Salem a run for the number one spot. The fourth team is a toss up. JCSU, without Robert Lewis,

will have to participate from the stands this year as Fayetteville State will be the fourth Southern team to make it. So we have the following:

NORTHERN

- 1) Norfolk
- 2) Virginia St.
- 3) Elizabeth City
- 4) Virginia Union

SOUTHERN

- 1) Winston-Salem
- 2) St. Augustine's
- 3) Shaw
- 4) Fayetteville

Don't be surprised if the championship game pits Va. State against Winston-Salem this year. Regardless, Big-house and the battering Rams will bring the trophy back to the South this year.

It will be an outstanding affair so don't miss it. Some of the best talent in basketball and some of the worst coaching and officiating that you will ever see will be there. If that's not enough for you, I will be there.

THE CHARLOTTE POST
"THE PEOPLES NEWSPAPER"
Established 1918
Published Every Thursday
By The Charlotte Post Publishing Co., Inc.
2606-B West Blvd. - Charlotte, N.C. 28208
Telephones (704) 392-1306, 392-1307
Circulation 7,185

58 YEARS OF CONTINUOUS SERVICE

Bill Johnson..... Editor-Publisher
Albert Campbell..... Advertising Director
Rex Hovey..... Circulation Manager
Gerald O. Johnson..... Business Manager

Second Class Postage Paid at
Charlotte, N.C. under the Act of March 3, 1878

Member National Newspaper Publishers
Association

North Carolina Black Publishers Association

Deadline for all news copy and photos is 5 p.m.
Monday. The Post is not responsible for any
photos or news copies submitted for publication.

National Advertising Representative
Amalgamated Publishers, Inc.

45 W. 5th Suite 1403 2400 S. Michigan Ave.
New York, N.Y. 10036 Chicago, Ill. 60616
(212) 489-1220 Calumet 5-0200