

Editorials & Comments

Dr. Robinson Makes Good Start

By Hoyle H. Martin Sr.
Post Executive Editor

The announcement of Dr. Jay Robinson's appointment as superintendent of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and through his first six weeks on the job there appeared to be an uneasy concern among many citizens both black and white.

Much of this uneasiness arose from Robinson's comparatively small - 9,800 - student Cabarrus County school system - administrative experience, and his presumed unassuming manner and county boy character.

However, after nine Mecklenburg County legislators, and twice as many news reporters listened to Robinson last week in outlining some of the problems faced by his new school system - the largest in the state, there appears to be little doubt about his capabilities and sense of awareness in the challenges he faces. One news reporter wrote, "If anybody was less than charmed with him (Robinson), it wasn't apparent." Senator Craig Lawing, head of the legislative group said, "Mr. Robinson...speaks our type of language." And Senator Fred Alexander commented "He's really our kind of folks."

The true essence of these praises for the new superintendent was probably best illustrated when Dr. Robinson said, "I don't want anything extra for Mecklenburg County. I just want us to be treated equal." The occasion for Robinson's remark was a luncheon and informal get-together to allow Robinson and some of his top aides to become better acquainted with the county's delegation in the state legislature.

Expressing Appreciation

After expressing appreciation to the lawmakers for helping to get needed pay raises in the retirement system, full-cost medical insurance, competency testing for graduation, a \$45 million reading program, and the community school act, Robinson did not hesitate to lay the ground work for his "to be treated equal" remark.

Specifically, Robinson emphasized heavily in his discussion of problems the plight of those children attending the Plaza Road School who must walk across dangerous inter-sections along a heavy traffic street because they live less than 1.5 miles from the school. He said, "In almost every county in North Carolina, most kids ride school buses. If they live in a hazardous area or under the 1.5 mile limit, a bus (already on the route) just lets the kids ride. We can't do that in the urban counties." He said further that if the law were enforced to prevent this practice, "then a new law would be passed" that might allow urban counties to do likewise.

What Dr. Robinson did in his first meeting with the legislative delegation was to say. (paraphrase), gentlemen thanks for a job well done, but I now challenge you on behalf of the children of all urban school systems to challenge the rural-dominated General Assembly to correct a long-overdue injustice.

While this was obviously not the only problem that Dr. Robinson discussed with the lawmakers, his concerns were frank and to the point while at the same time reflecting an awareness of the anti-urban and anti-Mecklenburg sentiment among most state lawmakers. Yet this awareness did not cause him to back away from saying to the Mecklenburg delegation face up to this new challenge.

We salute Dr. Robinson for his good beginning and showing the convictions of a man who knows what he's got to do and how to do it.

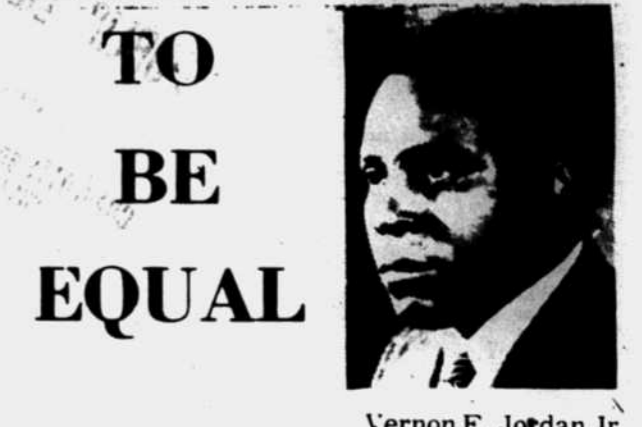
Carter's Leadership?

The Carter Administration has abandoned what has been called "the unwieldy executive committee that was the (core of) the administration's Economic Policy Group." Instead, the President has created a 6-man "steering committee" composed of the secretaries of Treasury and State, the budget director and three top president advisers. Cut out or excluded from this inner circle brain-trust are the secretaries of Commerce, Labor and HUD, plus a number of aides.

Recent reports out of Washington now indicate that the re-shuffle of the "Economic Policy Group" stems from President Carter's dissatisfaction with a number of his cabinet appointments. This apparent dissatisfaction has led Carter to use the unofficial inner circle - now official - to run foreign and economic policy.

Unconfirmed reports from "White House officials" claim that Carter's major disappointments are Commerce Secretary Juanita Kreps, HUD Secretary Patricia Harris and Transportation Secretary Brock Adams just to name a few. Specifically, these reports claim Adams is pre-occupied with running for a Senate seat in the state of Washington in 1980, Kreps is not aggressive in the least important cabinet post and Harris has failed to develop a housing policy.

The upshot of all this is that Carter appears to be over-reacting to criticisms of his administration as most of these officials have probably just reached the point of knowing what their jobs require and how to cope with the bureaucracy. Undoubtedly the President himself has not reached that point in his own job as President. Let's hope he does soon or what should have been a good four years may be a disaster.



Housing Subsidies In Danger

The sharks are circling federal housing subsidy programs and unless citizens concerned with urban progress speak out, they may zero in for the kill.

The first sign that subsidy programs were in trouble came some weeks ago when the welfare reform proposals were being framed. At that time, there was talk in Washington about ending housing subsidies and putting the money into the welfare reform pot, adding to the total amount of funds available for distribution in a revised welfare program.

After that trial balloon was shot down there was more talk about a housing tax on the poor - reducing welfare payments by the amount of the subsidy, or a portion of it.

That argument rested on the fact that relatively few people eligible for welfare assistance receive housing subsidies. Thus, in the name of making welfare more equitable, such persons would be deprived of their housing aid.

Boiled down to its essentials, it means taking from some poor people to help other poor people.

Well, those battles were won. Both attempts to ditch the housing programs sank, but not without a trace. That trace is the continuing threat by the budget-balancers to try to chop off federal housing subsidies. Failure to get such a step into the welfare package only means further attempts, probably coming very soon since federal departments are now preparing next year's budgets.

The behind-the-scenes fight over the housing programs is of major importance. At stake is the federal effort to improve housing for the nation's poor and to help shape the social environment. Just leaving housing to market forces that have proven unable to provide decent shelter at prices poor and moderate income families can afford means dooming our chances for a constructive federal role in provision of liveable housing.

It is fashionable to attack federal housing programs for their past mistakes - the high rise public housing complexes and the scandal-ridden mortgage assistance programs. But it makes more sense to take those failures as lessons and to build on them by avoiding similar mistakes.

The government has yet to really try out smaller scale housing projects, mixed-income housing, renovation and similar programs that offer hope of housing the poor while stabilizing neighborhoods.

Distributing present value of housing subsidies to all the poor has an attractive ring to it, but it is certain not to improve housing opportunities. Each poor family would not receive enough extra cash to make it able to rent decent homes while exploitive landlords and real estate speculators would jack up rents and housing prices to soak up the extra dollars.

At the same time, the government would be deprived of the opportunity not only to directly house people, but also to influence local housing policies. It would be handcuffed in its efforts to rehabilitate decaying neighborhoods, to halt neighborhood decline and urban decay.

The government needs a wide array of tools with which to do the job and even though the tool kit is almost bare, that's no excuse to toss out the few remaining tools.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Statewide Survey Being Conducted

Dear Bill:
You're probably aware of a survey coming up called "North Carolina Tomorrow." This survey is part of my effort as Governor to involve as many North Carolinians as possible in state government decision-making.

"North Carolina Tomorrow" is being conducted by the newly-reactivated State Goals and Policy Board, of which I am chairman. The results of the survey will be used by the Board to advise the Governor on long-range policy for the state, on programs of the 1979 legislative session, and on spending priorities for the last biennium of my term.

We plan to use several methods of distributing our survey questionnaires, including civic groups, elected leaders and the parents of elementary school children. But even then we can't reach the great numbers of citizens we need in order to make this survey a success.

One of the best ways I know to reach most North Carolinians is through our newspapers. In the next several weeks you'll be receiving the survey in the form of a display ad, which I hope you'll run as a public service sometime from August 24 to September 20. If you can, you might let your readers know in advance when to look for the ad, since considerable TV and radio public service promotion will be broadcast during that time. The results of the survey may be tabulated by county and can be made available to you this fall, if you wish.

The State Goals and Policy Board will kick off the statewide survey at its August 16 meeting. You'll be hearing a lot about the survey, and about our efforts at widespread citizen participation, in the next few months. Your cooperation will be a real key in getting people involved in that process.

I'm enclosing a list of the State Goals and Policy Board members. Perhaps your news department would like to localize a story on your own community's problems, and discuss ways state government can help. The Board members would all be willing to speak to this topic on a local basis, both now and after the survey returns are in.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call the executive director of the Board, Dana Herring, at (919) 733-4131.

Thank you so much. I believe with your help we can get citizens involved who for too long have been left out of what goes on in Raleigh.

My warmest personal regards.
Sincerely,
Jim

Nationwide

Demonstration

August 19, 1977
The Editor
Charlotte Post
P.O. Box 97
Charlotte, N.C. 28236
To The Editor:
On September 17, the Na-

tional Alliance Against Racism and Political Repression will hold a nationwide demonstration to free the Rev. Benjamin Chavis and the Wilmington 10. The demonstration will take place in dozens of cities simultaneously at 12 noon in front of local Democratic Party headquarters. Here in North Carolina, the demonstration will be coordinated by the North Carolina Alliance, a chapter of the National Alliance. We will gather in front of the state Democratic Party headquarters at the Hilton Inn, 1707 Hillsborough Street, in Raleigh.

We have chosen the offices of the Democratic Party as the site for the demonstration because it is the party of President Jimmy Carter and of Governor James Hunt. We will ask the Democratic Party in each city and state to make it known to the President and the Governor that it too wants justice done and the Wilmington 10 set free to again take their places with their families and their communities.

The Alliance sees the September 17 mobilization as a major effort in which all supporters of justice from the churches, trade unions, political parties and community organizations should gather in the same kind of major demonstrations we have held in the past in Raleigh and in Washington, D.C.

We appeal to you to please join us. Add your strength to ours. For more information, please contact us: N.C. Alliance Against Racism & Political Repression, P.O. Box 14307, Raleigh, N.C. 27610 - 919-755-9196. Cordially,

Anne Mitchell
State Co-ordinator

as i see it

Crashing, Not Flying, Bothers Our Columnist

By Gerald O. Johnson
It is no secret that one of my favorite traveling modes is the automobile. Hence, it took no one by surprise when I acted like a fool about flying to Orlando, Florida for a conference recently.

But after all was said and done I ended up flying. Note that I only ended up flying after I was literally dragged to the plane by my traveling companions. Don't get me wrong though. I am not afraid of flying. Crashing is what bothers me.

However, I am an infrequent flyer. I think I have traveled by plane 20 times in my life. I might add that I am not anxious for my 21st flight. Each time that I fly, once I get above the clouds I start seeing angels. The host of angels gather around my window and start singing "Nearer My God To Thee." I've always wondered why I thought like this since the plane would be headed towards hell if it crashed.

But the funny thing is when you fly no one wants you to know that they are afraid. When you board the plane

everybody is so friendly. Even the bigots act friendly. Everybody is talking and having a good time. Then the plane taxis to the runway. The engines roar, the wings extend, and like a bat out of hell, zoom, you are airborne. If you look around you all the talking has ceased. Everybody is pretending to be asleep. As soon as the plane levels off and everything appears to be O.K. there is a mad rush to the bathroom. The reason for this is taking-off scares the...out of you.

Now everybody is gay again; laughing, joking having a good time. All of a sudden you hit an air pocket. The plane jerks, jumps, and then sputters. Silence enters the cabin again. A few people get up and go back to the "John." Then somebody lets out a sheepish grin and the fun starts up again.

I think I know how a pair of "fruit-of-the-loom" feels when it gets washed. Hitting an air pocket must be synonymous with that.

Anyway, everybody continues to have a good time until the plane is ready to land.



Gerald O. Johnson

Then everybody starts yawning and immediately falls off to sleep. Once on the ground everybody returns to his original character and starts pushing and shoving, ignoring and the works. It is like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

Your entire flight takes 30 minutes and now you have to wait an hour for your baggage.

The most disappointing aspect of the entire trip has to be the stewardesses. The commercials paint such a lovely

picture of the stewardess. A lovely, shapely creature who is there to make your trip more comfortable. Untrue on both accounts.

On my flights, the stewardesses were frightening. They looked like casualties of a plane crash. I mean looking at those young ladies was enough to make me want to go to the "John."

I asked one young lady if I had to change planes in Atlanta after the pilot had just announced that they would be continuing on to Los Angeles from Atlanta. She looked at me coldly for about a minute as if to imply "no fool you can stay on and go to L.A." And then she shook her head in the affirmative.

Seriously though folks, there is probably no safer and no more efficient mode of transportation than flying commercially. If you think about it for awhile you will soon realize like I did that the fears are based on limited exposure.

We know about automobiles because practically everyone owns and operates one. But

only a limited few get a chance to travel by plane. Consequently, our fears are

more lack of knowledge than fear.

For example, deaths caused by automobile accidents far exceeds those deaths caused by commercial airplane crashes.

Only well qualified people are licensed to fly airplanes, whereas any and every fool can and does operate automobiles.

Automobile mechanics are for the most part improperly trained. Most learn from experience with no formal training. Commercial airplane mechanics must go through formal training before they are allowed to work on airplanes.

Moreover, airplanes are usually checked out on a daily basis to ensure that the machine is operating properly. It is probably true that every automobile on the road has a mechanical flaw in them. Most people will not bother to have their cars checked yearly, let alone daily.

Furthermore, automobile engineering is not as a sophisticated discipline as aerial engineering. The reason is a lot of money has been poured into the aero-space program and the research findings are directly applicable to commercial flying. Hence, the most modern equipment is currently being used by airlines.

Last but not least is the density problem. There are many, many, many more cars on the road than there are planes in the air. Consequently, there is a much greater chance of accidents occurring on the ground than in the air.

So you see, if you can afford to fly - then fly. Your chances in the air are far better than your chances are on the road. Fear is not a rational excuse for not flying.

After all of this if you still aren't convinced that you should fly then I just hope I happen to be going your way when you crank up for your next trip.

Rock Easy!

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
Hoyle H. Martin Sr..... Executive Editor
Bernard Reeves..... General Manager
Ronnie Sadler..... Circulation Director
Albert Campbell..... Advertising Director

Second Class Postage No. 965500 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. All photos and copy submitted becomes
the property of the Post, and will not be returned.

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