

# The Warren Record

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## Restating Our Position

A misinterpretation of our position in The Warren Record last week concerning the dumping of PCBs as reflected in a couple of Letters to the Editor in this week's paper calls for some comment. While it is against our policy to answer such letters, we will again restate our position.

We don't know whether or not the Afton landfill is going to leak.

We don't know for a certainty that PCB's are harmless.

We are sorry that Warren County was chosen as a dump site, but are unwilling to impugn the motives of those making the choice.

We have never wanted more PCBs in the county.

We believe that after four years of protests, Concerned Citizens have made their point.

We believe that PCBs are going to be placed in the landfill at Afton.

We believe that efforts to prevent it are futile, as becomes more evident with each passing day.

We believe that any citizens group or individual has the right to protest, and have given freely of our newspaper for such peaceful protest, a great deal of which has been repetitious.

We believe that the bringing into Warren County civil rights activists was a grievous error, as a landfill is not a racial matter.

We believe that it was wrong to overstate the dangers of PCBs causing cancer in humans as a proven fact, which such is not a proven fact.

We believe that continued resistance to PCBs is not only futile, but costly, disruptive and bringing to our county a great deal of unfavorable publicity.

BIGNALL JONES,  
Editor

## Home Discipline The Key

In The Fayetteville Times  
"Parents who for a while couldn't say no to kids and just let them run are getting back to where they should have been."

—Principal George J. Horton  
A survey of conditions in public schools in Cumberland County comes to the conclusion that disciplinary problems that plagued the 1970s have faded.

Today's youngsters are more tractable, neater, less prone to racial antagonisms.

On the other hand, alcohol and drugs are still being used by people who are really too young to handle them. And, teachers find it difficult to compete against today's electronic ways of doing and thinking. "Pencil and paper writing is outmoded to kids accustomed to Pac Man," as one teacher put it.

The assessment seems to be mostly hopeful, at least from the disciplinary point of view.

And the key to the improvement is surely in the home. If discipline is the number one concern that American parents have about the public schools, then the home is where it begins. Principal George Horton of Cape Fear High School correctly points to where the blame or the

praise should be directed in the matter of school discipline.

The educationalists have their responsibilities, and part of it surely is to keep abreast of the "Pac Man" universe that children now live in, to make sure that teaching techniques are as successful in an electronic age as in the days when schooling consisted of "Mark Hopkins on one end of a log and a student on the other."

The way our children are brought up, however, is the responsibility of their parents. The public schools receive an awful lot of the blame for failures that should be laid at the hearthside, especially in the matters subsumed under the heading of discipline. Yet, this flight from responsibility by parents is much more of a national scandal than any of the alleged failures of the educational system.

If the children of the 1980s are indeed a somewhat different breed than those of an earlier decade in the matter of upbringing, then we can rejoice with the school folks who say that "young people today, generally speaking, are fine people." We can also say thanks to the unsung parents who must be given credit for making the assessment so.

## News Of 10, 25, 40 Years Ago

### Looking Back Into The Record

Sept. 25, 1942  
Parks Alexander of Charlotte, highway patrolman who has been stationed at Warrenton for the past six years, has been ordered to report to the Goldsboro district, effective October 1. It is believed the transfer is due to a decrease in the number of highway patrolmen due to war conditions.

Belford Wagner, who has been working in New York for some time, returned to Warrenton this week and accepted a position as band instructor at John Graham High School.

Dr. and Mrs. T. J. Holt and Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Poindexter spent several days last week in Maryland on a sight-seeing trip and also

visited relatives in Richmond, Va.

September 27, 1957  
Blessed with perfect weather, the Warren County Fair is progressing very satisfactorily, Bill Lanier, manager of the event sponsored by the Lions Club, said yesterday.

Earl Hyman, well-known in the theatrical world where he has distinguished himself as a Shakespearean actor, was a visitor to Warrenton last weekend. He will play a leading roll in a television showing of "Green Pastures" next month. He was here to visit his grandfather, Baker Plummer.

Sept. 28, 1972  
The Economic Development Corporation

of Eastern North Carolina in Warrenton has received a \$91,609 one-year Commerce Department contract to provide business assistance to minority group members in a seven-county area.

Dr. W. T. Ellington of Miami, Fla. spent Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday night here with his father, Alfred J. Ellington. Dr. Ellington was en route to Europe where he will spend 10 days in Germany, Italy and Sweden.

Melvin T. Abbott of Warrenton has been appointed to the Warren County Farmers Home Administration County Committee for a three-year term. Abbott succeeds Wilson Fleming whose term expired on July 1.

By BIGNALL JONES  
The population of the Town of Warrenton in 1870 was 941 of which seven were foreign, 407 were white and 534 were colored, according to a national population census of the United States covering populations of all states and subdivisions for 1850, 1860 and 1870, reaching our desk through the courtesy of R. C. Comer.

The population of Warrenton in 1850 was 612 white and 630 colored for a total of 1242 and by 1860 had grown to a total of 1520 with 719 whites and 801 colored, probably the largest population recorded for the county seat of Warren County.

The total population in Warren County in 1850, according to this old volume was not given, and neither was the 1860 census. In 1870 the population was given by townships, to which the population of Warrenton was added, for a total of 17,689, which is close to the population of the county in 1980.

Only ten townships were listed, compared to 12 to date. Missing were Roanoke Township, probably then a part of River, and Fork, probably then a part of Shocco. The populations of these townships in 1870, with 1870 spelling of townships, giving the total, the foreign, the white and colored in that order, follows:

- Fishing Creek, 1598, 0, 397, 1201.
- Hawtree, 1540, 3, 582, 958.
- Judkins, 1432, 11, 481, 951.
- Nutbush, 2430, 1, 651, 1779.
- River, 1500, 2, 511, 989.
- Sandy Creek, 2753, 1, 1107, 1646.
- Shocco, 1637, 1, 254, 1383.
- Sixpound, 930, 0, 257, 673.
- Smith Creek, 1062, 3, 258, 804.

The volume also shows that the population of the United States (not including non-taxed Indians) in 1870 was 38,115,641, an increase of 6,931,897, since 1860; the number of colored persons in 1860 in the United States had increased from 4,427,294 to 4,835,10 in 1870, a gain of 9.21 percent.

The population in North Carolina increased from 361,522 in 1860 to 391,650 in 1870, a gain of 8.33 percent.

Unfortunately I could not find reports of the U. S. Census for either North Carolina or Warren County for 1880, 1890, 1900, or other later censuses in the Warren County Memorial Library, but hope that I can find these figures elsewhere. When we came to Warrenton in 1909, I don't believe its population was over 800, and possibly not that high.

Warrenton was a growing and thriving town until the 1860s, in spite of it being off the railroad line, but economic conditions following the Civil War not only caused many citizens to leave Warrenton, but also Warrenton County.

Among those from Warren County was my Uncle Joe Jones, who went to Texas as hardly more than a boy. His leaving home must have brought a similar heartache as it has to thousands of other young people, black and white,

## Mostly Personal

### Studying Old Census

who were forced to leave home in the hope of improving their lots. My father told me of his brother's leaving home. He said he left his home in Sandy Creek Township with his trunk in the back of a wagon. As the wagon left the grove bound for Henderson and the railroad, he turned and took a long look at his home and said, "I will never see you again," and he never did. My father

never saw him again. Another brother, Uncle Will, also went to Texas, but returned to Warrenton and lived with us for some time before his death in 1918. He is buried in my father's square in Fairview Cemetery.

The young leaving home must be sustained by the hope of new adventures and the optimism of youth. My sympathy goes to the parents left behind.

## Letters To The Editor

### Writer Responds To Positions

To The Editor:

I am responding to several of the positions which you took in your September 22 editorials on the PCB dumping in Warren County. You are correct in pointing out that the PCB situation is not a racial issue. However, the PCB situation is a public health and environmental issue, and it is a moral issue.

As regards public health, you seem to imply that since PCB is already in our environment, then we should not object to a little bit more. My conclusion is just the opposite. If PCB is already in our food chain, then we are already in serious trouble. To risk further exposure is to risk our health, our safety and our future. By the way, there is a vast difference between touching PCB and ingesting PCB. To illustrate, simply consider the liquid detergents which everyone stores in the home; you can touch them all you want, but you cannot drink them without serious consequences to your health.

What disturbs me even more is the unfounded confidence you place in landfill technology. Just because something is legal does not mean that it is safe. Our government has a notorious history of declaring things to be "safe," only later to discover their harmful effects. For instance, residents of a Nevada community were assured 20 years ago that nuclear testing in their community was completely "safe." Now that community has one of the highest cancer rates in the world. Expectant mothers, who were given a drug known as DES, were assured that it was "safe," and of course, the drug was perfectly legal. The deformities in their children are now beginning to surface. A landfill built adjacent to a Louisiana farm in 1968 was supposed to be "safe." Now the EPA calls it "a carcinogenic stew," and they fear it could threaten the water supply of the 300,000 residents of Baton Rouge. More recently, four EPA-approved landfills built in New Jersey, using exactly the same technology which is being used in Afton, were supposed to be "safe." Now they are already leaking, and the State of New Jersey has outlawed future hazardous waste dumps within that state. The State of North Carolina should do the same, because the fact is that hazardous waste dumps throughout the country have proven to be miserable failures. We simply cannot depend on the safety of current landfill technology, even if landfills are approved by the EPA.

The only sane, sensible, and moral alternative to hazardous waste dumps is detoxification. Although EPA has not yet approved roadside detoxification of PCB, it is monitoring the progress of on-site detoxification of PCB-contaminated soil in South Carolina. The preliminary results have been very successful. Governor Hunt could very easily call an immediate halt to the dumping in Afton long enough to allow the EPA to get the full data. If the project continues to be successful, the EPA could approve roadside detoxification within a matter of months. The EPA has indicated its willingness to wait. It is Governor Hunt, not the EPA, who is pushing so hard for the rapid completion of the Afton landfill. This makes Hunt's motives very questionable. It seems to me that everyone involved could afford to wait a little while longer, especially if the risk to the environment and the risk to human life could be avoided. To my mind, it is extremely shortsighted, it is morally inexcusable, and it should be criminal to continue to bury poison in the ground without even attempting to detoxify it, especially when detoxification methods do exist. At the very least, Governor Hunt should consider detoxification of the soil after it is brought to the Afton site. His failure to consider even this alternative speaks very poorly for his concern for the citizens of Warren County and the state.

As an environmental, a public health, and a moral issue, the current PCB situation is much larger than Warren County, because the problem of disposing of hazardous wastes affects the whole state and nation. It is an issue on which there are no such things as "outsiders." I am encouraged that people all over the state and nation care about the future of their land and water, and that they care about public health and the safety of their families. I am honored that a man of Dr. Joseph Lowery's character would come to Warren County to express his concern for my health, my safety, my family and my future. From past knowledge of Dr. Lowery, I know him to be a highly-respected man with a keen sense of justice and compassion for all people. I have taken the time to talk with several of the so-called "outsiders," and I have yet to discover their self-seeking motives for being here.

Let me single out Lois Gibbs, as you did in quoting The News and Observer. True, the Afton site is not a Love Canal, at least not yet. But Mrs. Gibbs was far closer to the truth than you care to admit. To get at what I mean, consider the two things that Heman Clark's "Open Letter to the Citizens of Warren County" did not ask and did not answer:

1) Can the State of North Carolina guarantee the safety of the Afton landfill? In fact, the letter barely mentioned public safety, which is the one thing which is foremost in peoples' minds. Why this

glaring omission? Because Governor Hunt and Secretary Clark know full well that they cannot guarantee that the landfill will be safe for the environment and for human health.

2) Can the State of North Carolina guarantee that Warren County will not become a dumping ground for more hazardous waste? In fact, Clark was honest enough to admit that, "It would be impossible for me to guarantee that private enterprise would never look for areas in Warren County, or any other county, to locate waste management facilities." Afton is not yet a Love Canal, but the point is that it could become a Love Canal, if the State of North Carolina or private industry continue to bury poison without even trying to detoxify it. As EPA official William Sanjour pointed out when he spoke in Warrenton on September 26, Governor Hunt has big plans for Warren County. The fact is that Governor Hunt is encouraging microelectronics industries, which produce large amounts of hazardous wastes, to leave California and to relocate in North Carolina, because California is in the process of outlawing hazardous waste dumps. Governor Hunt has promised those industries cheap dump sites for the poisons they produce. The bad news is that Warren County is at the top of Hunt's list of dump sites. The results will be disastrous and far-reaching for the future of Warren County, unless something or someone changes Hunt's intentions. I am deeply concerned. I am going to try my best to change the current situation, and I respectfully encourage you to reconsider the broader implications and the long-range consequences of what is currently happening in Warren County.

THE REV. J. CLINT McCANN, JR.  
Pastor, Warrenton Presbyterian Church

## Feelings Are Regretted

To The Editor:

I, along with hundreds of other citizens of Warren County, regret the feelings D. L. Paxton expressed toward us in the September 22 issue of The Warren Record.

I realize he does not understand how it feels to have someone tell you that no matter what your feelings, or attempts you may make to stop it, a PCB landfill will be put in your county. All evidence (from EPA and many others) shows that within 15-20 years at the most, the very water we drink will be laced with PCBs.

Now we have found that young women, like myself, will no longer have the choice of whether or not we shall breast feed our babies due to PCB being found in the milk of some women in the 14 counties affected. Paxton, as a man, cannot understand how it feels to hear another woman describe her anguish for her son because she found out too late her milk contained PCB, and there is no one who can tell her what effects this may have on her son in future years.

I understand that Paxton knows very little about it. Maybe it is time Paxton and people like him came to one of our meetings and became a little more educated, just as we have.

We are not radicals, communists, or trouble-makers. We are people just like Paxton who have tried every way legally to block this landfill in our county. Each and every one failed. Now we are forced to take to the streets and try a different approach.

Most of the people on television each night are not camera hogs. We are a county of frightened people, fighting for our land and our piece of the "American dream" which we are entitled to. We are frightened for our families, as well as for ourselves. I will admit that there are some here for the publicity, but I assure everyone that they are very few in number.

I ask Paxton, in the neighboring town of Gaston, to think about any facts he may take time to learn on PCB or other toxic wastes, because his county may be next in Governor Hunt's grand plan.

MRS. PEGGY R. SHEARIN  
Warrenton

## Warren Native Writes Of PCB

To The Editor:

I grew up in Warren County. My mother lives in Warren County and many close friends reside there and raise their children there. Because of my close ties with the people of Warren County, I feel that I must take issue with your "casual" treatment of the dumping of dangerous PCB's. I am immediately concerned for the health of the soil, the crops, and the people surrounding the disposal site. Furthermore, I fear that the use of Warren County as a dump site will set a precedent for the disposal of other wastes — wastes not produced in Warren County — there in future years.

PCB's are dangerous, potentially carcinogenic chemicals; that fact has been established and publicized. However, the extent to which these chemicals may damage animals, crops, and human beings has not been established, especially over the long term. I do not believe it is fair to bring chemicals from fourteen counties to Warren County and make the residents there "guinea pigs" to gauge the dangers of such waste products for the coming years.

It has been much publicized that Governor Hunt has courted the electronics industries in an effort to bring them to North Carolina. While we all would welcome new jobs for our state, we must face the fact that turning North Carolina into an eastern "Silicon Valley" will bring the problems of disposing of vast amounts of dangerous chemical wastes. Is increased revenue worth the risk to us and to our children? I do not think it is; and I, along with many others, fear that Warren County will become the "chemical sewer" of North Carolina. I fear that if the precedent is set, if resistance is not demonstrated, this disaster will occur. All of us will suffer.

All of us, whether actively or passively, bear the responsibility of maintaining our state as a safe place to live.

Just because a decision has been made to dump PCB's in Warren County is no reason to worship that decision as final. New decisions can be made; viable alternatives still exist. The dumping of PCB's into North Carolina earth will be a dead issue only we who must live, breathe, and eat are dead.

R. WAYNE MOSELEY  
Raleigh