

# Politics In Rural Orange County

## A Love For Lake, Disenchantment With Sanford

### Integration Is On The Minds Of All

By W. H. SCARBOROUGH  
And J. A. C. DUNN

Political polls and straw votes are much like a box of cigars in which a few exploders have been planted. They can burn even and true, and they can soot the face of the unwary pulse taker. A tour of Orange County this past week disclosed a smoldering discontent with the political state of things in North Carolina on the part of rural voters. If what you hear is true and at all indicative of general feeling, the Sanford administration is in serious trouble past the Town limits. So are more taxes, present taxes, the Governor's "quality education" program, his racial stand, and racial demonstrations in general.

By contrast the gubernatorial star of Dr. I. Beverly Lake has risen fast. He was the overwhelming preference of virtually every person who ventured an opinion. Any Republican, and particularly Rep. Charles R. Jonas, would run Lake a fair second.

The Weekly's survey, which covered the bulk of Orange County from the far north, near McDade, to the Southern border, turned up some strange patterns of opinion.

Some areas showed a clear preference and open side-taking. In others, people were extremely close-mouthed, especially in the far north. Some were vehement, some vague.

Within the bounds of certain rural neighborhoods, people have not picked their 1964 candidates yet. They seem to be waiting to see who will run. In others the choice is clear and the trenches dug.

Specific issues are few and far between, although integration is now first in the minds of everyone.

C. C. Beal at Beal and Tillman Grocery Store on the west edge of Carrboro had not really gathered his thoughts on the subject of the next gubernatorial election.

"Haven't thought that far ahead," he said. "I don't know. I want to wait until they announce. I voted for Lake first, and then I voted for Sanford in the run-off. I guess Sanford's

done all right. It hasn't been smooth sailing for him. A lot of folks don't like the sales tax, but then you have to have some kind of tax. A lot of folks don't pay any tax unless they pay sales tax.

"A Republican?" He laughed. "Where would you find a good one? Of course, to get a lot of folks satisfied you'd have to have a Republican candidate. But some folks have been talking about Bennett. I tell you, I wouldn't have Sanford's job if you forced me."

On the question of the Kennedy administration, which Mr. Beal brought up himself, he was more explicit. "This Negro question's been inching up, and Bobby hasn't done anything to slow it. I think Kennedy should have left his brother out of it. But I wouldn't have his job either, not for all the money in the world."

#### LAKE SUPPORT

Isaac Morgan, who runs a small general store-filling station about a mile west of Carrboro, said he didn't care about political parties, and hadn't begun to think about a new governor at all.

"I voted for Lake both times, and I'd vote for him again," he said. "We might get a good Republican candidate, but people around here seem to be talking about Lake. The Republicans have a better chance every year. We might get one."

He echoed Mr. Beal on taxes: "Everybody wants less taxes. I used to live on what I pay in taxes now."

"So many people are talking about Lake you wonder how Sanford got in — of course, he had money. I don't know about Jonas — of course, my vote wouldn't get him in, anyway. But as far as I'm concerned, it doesn't matter about the party. I vote for the man. A lot of folks vote the party, and it doesn't matter to them about the man. You could take a fella from Snow Camp or Butner and run him on the Democratic ticket and a lot of folks would vote for him just because he's a Democrat. But not me."

#### A REPUBLICAN SPEAKS

Antioch Baptist Church near White Cross the congregation was having a general spruce-up session. Men pushed mowers, women swept paths and pruned bushes. P. B. Lloyd and C. R. Whitfield were resting on a picnic table amid a thick cloud of sweat bees.

"I'm a Republican," said Mr. Lloyd, and laughed unexpectedly, tilting his straw hat back. "I didn't vote for Sanford or Lake either time. I voted for Gavin. I think we need a Republican governor. It's good to have a change. If we don't get a change we get too many dictators — that's what I call 'em, anyway. I don't vote the party, though. I vote for the man."

"That's right," said Mr. Whitfield. "Vote for the man."

"You know," said Mr. Lloyd, languidly brushing away sweat bees, "White Cross has gone Republican twice. It went Republican in the last election, and the time before that it went for Al Smith. People around here are changing. I know a fella 75 years old who's been a staunch Democrat all his life, and in the last election he voted Republican." "We need somebody who can beat Sanford," said Mr. Whit-

field dorkly. "I know he won't run again, but we need somebody who can rise above him. We need a change."

#### MORE LAKE SUPPORT

Sam Huff, a Long Meadow Dairy supervisor, was riding a rural milk route breaking in a new delivery man.

"I think I'd vote for Lake," he said. "If not Lake, I think Jonas is a good man, I think I'd vote for him. I think they're both smart men, they've both got good records. I think the liberals will split the same way — if their man doesn't get nominated, they'll swing to someone else."

At the White Cross Service Station, proprietor A. B. Webster tilted back in a chair beside the front door. Mr. Webster has bright brown eyes, a deep tan, and an affection for I. Beverly Lake.

"Folks around here want a change. In the last election a fella 73 or 74 years old came in here, a few of the fellas were sittin' around, and he said, 'I just did something I never did before in my life.' Everybody wanted to know what it was. He said, 'I just voted a straight Republican ticket.'"

Mr. Webster claims he keeps his mouth shut and listens, doing little talking. But his opinion of Governor Sanford and the Kennedy administration is terse and unequivocal: "I think they bought and stole their way in. Kennedy hasn't done anything for the country. He takes orders from the Pope. The Pope's running the country."

"The Democrats are wasting too much money. But then, if we had a Republican administration, it would bust the country. Wall Street and the labor unions would tighten down on the money. We'd have another depression."

"But the folks around here want a change. They're Republican. We need a two-party system."

#### AND MORE FOR LAKE

On NC 54 west of White Cross there is a chain of three grocery store-filling stations all within a mile of one another: Kirby's, Crawford's, and Allen's. They form the nucleus of a little community ranged along the highway.

"I'll tell you right now what I think," said John Kirby, raising his voice for emphasis. "We're gonna have a change if I have anything to do with it. I voted for Lake and I'll vote for him again. Jonas? I don't know him. But I'll vote Republican."

A farmer sitting in a rocking chair in Mr. Kirby's store added, "We'll vote for any damn body, it doesn't make a damn what party. We vote for the man."

"Everybody I come in contact with, all the way down from Asheville," said Mr. Kirby, "they all want a change. I don't like any part of Sanford. I don't like anything he's doing. I don't want any part of him, and that's all I have to say." And it was.

#### ANTI-SANFORD

Down the road 100 yards, Frank Crawford put his feet up on the bench outside his store and said he didn't go in much for politics. "I'll tell you. I'm 50 years old and I only voted one time in my day. That was for Franklin Delano Roosevelt. If



### Small-Talk Gathering At Antioch Baptist Church

I had nothing to worry me but politics, I'd be all right."

When pressed, however, Mr. Crawford did admit to a certain amount of worry about the political situation.

"I think I'll vote next time. I don't know who. I don't think Sanford's done such a bad job. We've got to have taxes. But I don't want a man who's going to spend too much money."

Mr. Crawford's description of Governor Sanford's concept of the average man's ability to shell out money in unlimited quantities was graphic, but unprintable.

"What we need is a man who will strike a balance between spending too much and spending what's needed."

But his hope for getting such a man in office is slim. "People cuss this'n, and people cuss that'n, but whoever you get in, he's not going to make times any better. Times are getting worse all the time."

Lewis Allen, the third man in the chain, said he didn't know much about politics and hadn't thought much about it. But his opinion of the gubernatorial scene, while superficial, was succinct. "Sanford's supposed to be doing something for the schools and the roads, but in the last ten years I haven't seen so much mess in the schools and the roads. . . . I can't find anybody who voted for Sanford. Somebody must have, but they all must be ashamed of it."

#### A LEADER SPEAKS

Charles Stanford, patriarch of one of Orange County's leading political families, father of the chairman of the Board of County Commissioners and himself chairman of the County Board of Education, was cagey. A broad new road is being built past his farm in western Bingham Township, and Mr. Charley knows who he has to thank for the road: the Sanford administration. So Mr. Charley said he didn't know much about the gubernatorial election, though he did skirt the edge of an opinion: "I'd vote for Lake if it wasn't

for his followers. He'd be a good man if it wasn't for the people who are supporting him. I don't know about Bert Bennett. I think Jonas'll run, but a man'd be foolish to run for Governor on a Republican ticket if he's already a Congressman."

He turned back to the fence he was working on, and then added, "It's just pitiful if a man's born a Republican in Orange County and he wants to get anything done."

#### TOO EARLY TO TELL

At the extreme western edge of the County, people seem less sure of their political thinking than people in the White Cross region. They may be more concerned with a proposed new road in the area than with a proposed new governor.

Carson Lloyd, a dairy farmer who lives just south of Oaks Community, turned off the tractor with which he was towing a hay rake across a broad meadow.

What were his thoughts on the next gubernatorial race?

Mr. Carson chewed a straw thoughtfully. "I don't know," he said. "I guess Sanford hasn't done too bad a job. It's just too early to tell. If it could be Lake against Sanford again, I just couldn't say how I'd vote."

North of Oaks Community, right on the western boundary of Orange County, a Negro community is strung out along the Mebane-Oaks road.

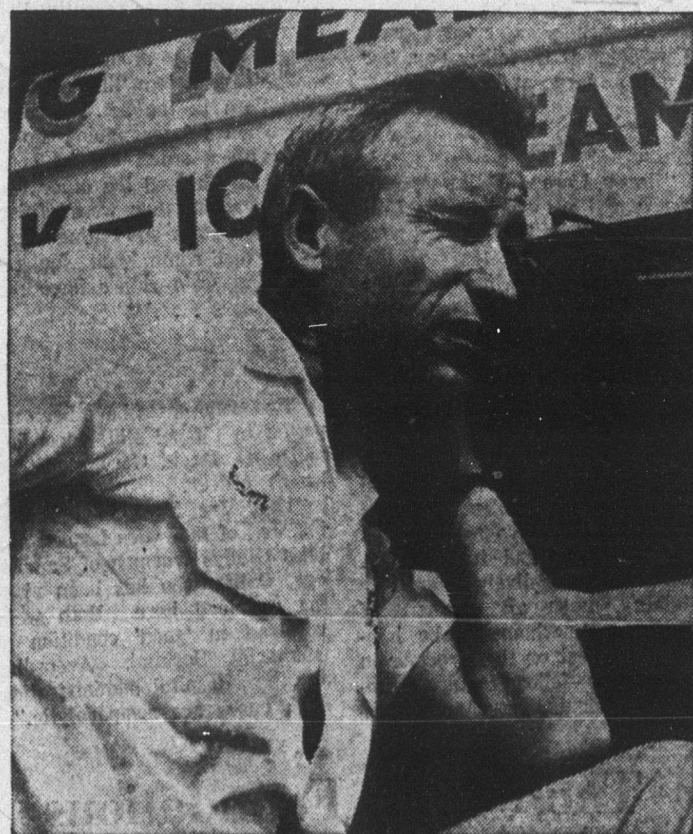
A. C. Wade, who runs a small grocery store-filling station, was highly circumspect. "I don't know. It's too early to tell."

Albert Morrow, a young Negro mill worker, drifted gently across the room and stood nearby, evidently wanting to be asked his opinion of the coming gubernatorial election. Given a chance, he said quietly, "I don't know who I'd vote for, but I know I wouldn't vote for Lake." He smiled, leaving implicit the Lake racial views that form the basis of his opinion. "We need a man who will give everybody justice, without favoritism."

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John Kirby of NC 54



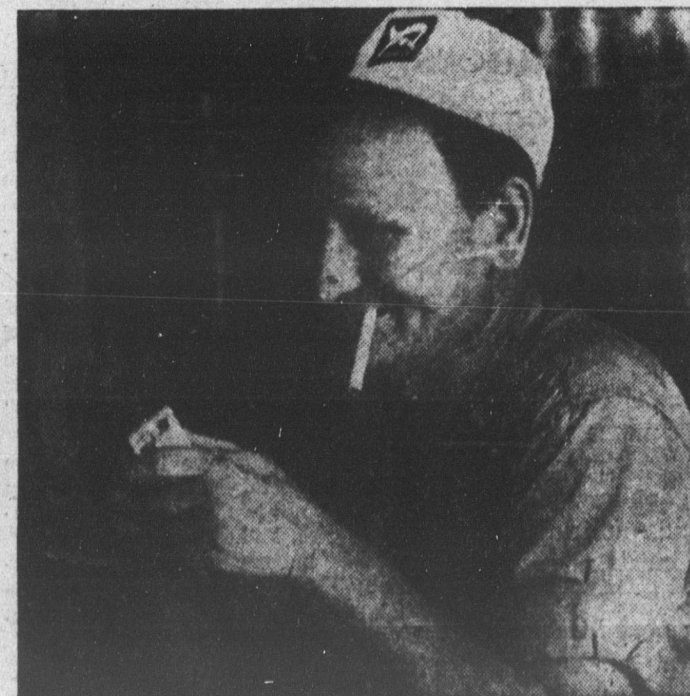
Sam Huff of Long Meadow



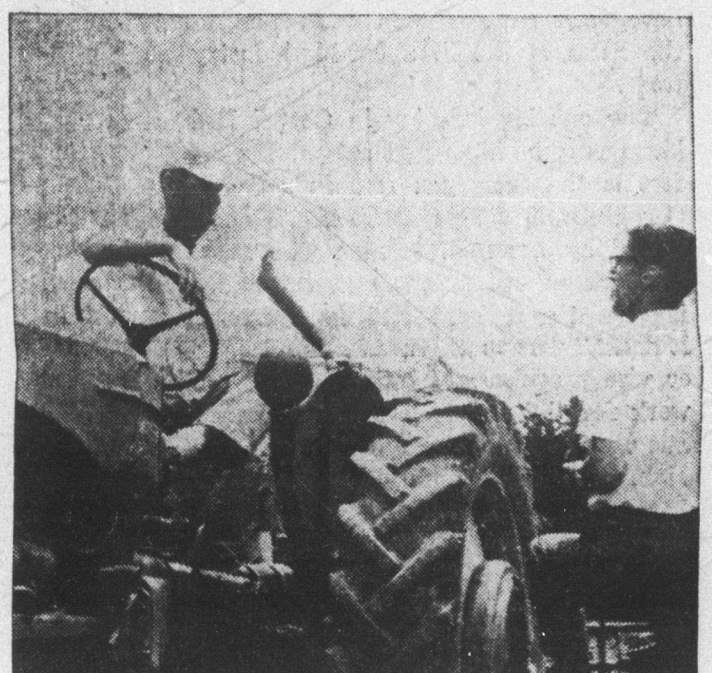
Madison Cates of Hillsboro



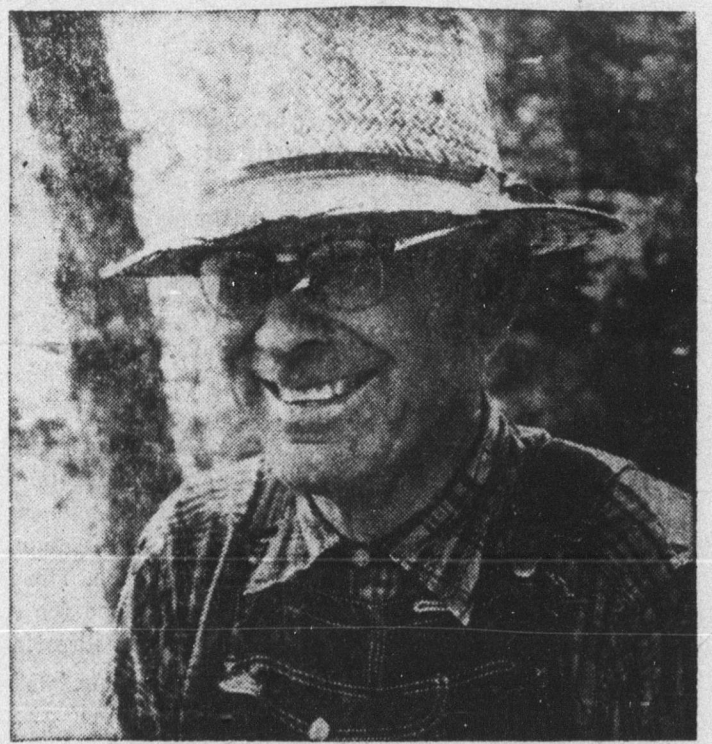
Charles Stanford of Bingham



Isaac Morgan of NC 54



Carson Lloyd and Reporter Dunn



P. B. Lloyd of Lake Road



Mr. and Mrs. Goetha Whitmore