

## "To Be Or Not To Be, That Is The Question"

# HAZELWOOD SPEAKS

to

Hon. Grover C. Davis

REPRESENTATIVE FROM HAYWOOD

The People Of Waynesville

Waynesville became the County seat of Haywood in the 1808. Ninety-seven years later, in 1905, Hazelwood was incorporated. For forty-four years the people of the two Towns lived peaceably together. We, of Hazelwood, by the sweat of our brow, have built our homes, factories, churches and our children in ways of peace.

Now Mr. Davis (backed by a select group, whose names and purposes will be made known when they are definitely defined) purposes to disturb the long mutual and peaceful relationship of both Towns by enacting legislation for Waynesville to absorb Hazelwood. Mr. Davis was a candidate in the Democratic primary and in the general election and was elected as a Good Representative. He did not before the primary, before the election or since the election give any indication to the people of Waynesville and Hazelwood (unless it was to the select group) that he intended to attempt such legislation. The officials of Hazelwood learned the day before Mr. Davis was in Raleigh, in an indirect way, that he was contemplating such an action. The Mayor of Hazelwood called Mr. Davis and asked him to refrain from passing any act that would affect Hazelwood in this manner and Mr. Davis said that he had not refrained from discussing it with the officials of Hazelwood, but that he had not discussed it with the officials of Waynesville.

We appeal to you, Mr. Davis, and to the people of Waynesville for fair treatment. The method you are pursuing is not American policy, but a policy exercised by the Europeans and the big powers where the bigger takes over the smaller countries without their consent. Our sons have fought and some died fighting for this principle, and it is now the adopted policy of our State government to prevent this practice. Did they die in vain? We thought we were electing a Representative, our Representative, that would protect our interest in the General Assembly. We still feel that you will re-consider this matter and we hope the position of a Representative of all the people of Haywood County.

With charity toward all and malice toward none we want to clearly and definitely state our position. "Governments are instituted among men deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." If Mr. Davis secures the passage of an act incorporating Hazelwood into Waynesville, it will be in disregard of the rights of the two Towns and the people of Hazelwood. It will remove from office the duly elected officers of the two Towns and a governing body will be established in a manner that Mr. Davis may decide, and the officials would be appointed by his appointment. The people of Hazelwood feel that this is nothing less than legalistic invasion of Hazelwood,

taking from our people the rights they possess.

Mr. Davis is a Lawyer of long experience. He served as our District Solicitor for eight years and he knows that in all matters in Courts that no right or property can be taken from any person, except by due process of law. If a citizen of Hazelwood should bring an action to take a \$75.00 mule from Mr. Davis, the suit would have to be instituted and tried in Haywood and Mr. Davis would be allowed thirty days to file an answer with the further provision that this time could be extended by the Court. Mr. Davis, you did not give Hazelwood any notice of this action. You went to Raleigh, and if Hazelwood has any hearing, apparently it must be before Representatives of other Counties and not before you, our own Representative. We must go to Wake County, three hundred miles away, for a hearing, instead of in our own County of Haywood, and plead our cause before strangers.

If Waynesville and Hazelwood are to be joined in the holy bonds of matrimony, shouldn't you ask, Mr. Davis, if there are any objections; shouldn't you ask Miss Hazel Wood if she accepts Mr. Wayne Ville as her lawful husband, before you pronounce them husband and wife? We know that Miss Hazel Wood has been wronged, but isn't it up to her to ask for a redress? If it is to be a "shotgun wedding" are you the proper one to officiate?

In all seriousness, are we not entitled to be heard? To have time to study the advantages and disadvantages of the proposition? We hope that we have "government of the people, by the people and for the people." Would it not be the wiser course to let the people of Hazelwood and Waynesville and their duly elected officers sit down as equals at a Council table and study the problems of the two Towns, consider what could be gained and what would be lost, discuss the type and form of government that we would have in case of a consolidation, the question of taxation, utilities and other pertinent matters? And, we think, these discussions should be free, open and without duress so that our people would be familiar with what was going on, and so that they could freely express their views.

There are more things to be considered than economic advantages; the corporate life of Hazelwood is threatened. It should have a fair chance for a hearing in Haywood County. Only the execution should take place in Raleigh, if it has to be. The people of Hazelwood, if the Town is to die, will lose much that cannot be counted in dollars and cents. We will be losing our identity and more things that we hold dear. People like to keep a toy or a shoe in remembrance of a child or to retain the old homestead with its original name. These things mean much to us, and if Waynesville was being absorbed by some

other Town, it would feel the same way. The worst injuries that humanity suffers are those of the heart and the soul.

If this matter is concluded in the way and manner that it has been started, there will be disturbances among kindred, friends and business associates. This should never happen. Near the line between the two Towns is a marker designating that ridge to be the location of the last battle of the Civil War. It should ever be a reminder to all our people that that war was fought because a majority undertook to suppress a minority and that if the men responsible at the time had calmly and patiently considered the issues, they could have been settled without the bloodshed, the destruction of property and the resulting ill will between two great sections of our country. If Hazelwood should become a part of Waynesville, then it should be done in a sane and peaceable manner so that there will be no aftermath that would be injurious to the people of either Town, and should be done upon the basis of equality and justice.

We plead with Mr. Davis, and with the people of Waynesville, that no action be taken at this Legislature as contemplated, and that the matter be studied in the light of reason, with all persons represented, so that the matter may be properly determined, and whatever the result may be, that it will be for the best interest and happiness of all the citizens of both Towns.

The Legislature of 1947, realizing that many mistakes had been made by the enactment of laws enlarging corporate limits, (this act does not apply as to the consolidation of two towns) provided by section 160-445 to 453 for the matter to be handled locally by allowing the people residing in the area to be included in the incorporation to vote upon the question, and unless a majority of the people in such area exercising the right of vote, vote in favor of the proposition, that no annexation could be made. In passing this act the Legislature adopted as its policy that questions of this kind should be settled at home and not in Raleigh, and following the policy declared by the last General Assembly the people of Hazelwood, as a matter of right, should determine for themselves as to whether they give up their own Town and be absorbed in Waynesville, or keep that which they have made and earned for their own.

The people of Hazelwood as a whole have already expressed, in a meeting and in a petition, their opposition to become a part of Waynesville at this time—Hazelwood has spoken. We would be pleased to hear from Mr. Davis and the people in Waynesville.

All we ask is that you do unto us as you would have us do unto you.

## Respectfully HAZELWOOD

CLYDE L. FISHER  
MAYOR OF HAZELWOOD

G. R. SMITH  
ALDERMAN

CARL SWANGER  
ALDERMAN

R. L. PREVOST  
ALDERMAN