

# AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PEOPLE OF HAYWOOD COUNTY

1. The position of the Asheville Chamber of Commerce and the Asheville Citizen-Times concerning the Pigeon River Road is now completely and unmistakably clear. There is every evidence that they are definitely and undeniably **AGAINST** the construction of a road down the Pigeon River. If you should doubt this statement just refer to the Asheville Citizen-Times of Sunday, September 18th. There can no longer be any question about their opposition to this road.
2. Now, let's go back 34 years - to 1921 - when legislation was passed authorizing the construction of a road to connect Haywood County with its neighbor to the north. A promise was made that every county bordering on another state would have its county seat connected with the county seat of its neighbor across the state line by a paved road. That was 34 years ago and Haywood is the only border-line county in the state of North Carolina that doesn't have such a road today. We have been patient, too patient perhaps, but in recent years our hopes have been kept alive by a number of appropriations . . . appropriations totaling \$1,950,000.00 of which approximately \$1,400,000.00 has already been spent in building 6 miles of the Pigeon River road. And just recently, on August 1st. of this year, after exhaustive studies and surveys, our state Highway Commission recommended that this road be included in the Federal Interstate Highway system connecting Knoxville, Tenn., and Asheville. Both routes, the Pigeon and the French Broad, have been surveyed and our engineers have selected the Pigeon River route because they feel that it is the best location for the interstate route between Knoxville and Asheville and can be constructed far more economically than could a similar road down the French Broad. And now, some interests in Asheville, posing as authorities on road building and trying to dictate to the North Carolina State Highway Commission, are trying desperately to block the construction of the Pigeon River road.
3. Your Chamber of Commerce and numerous civic-minded leaders are doing everything possible to support the decisions of the Highway Commission and the recommendations of the highway engineers. We have been working quietly, without fanfare, trying to avoid an open clash with our neighbors in Buncombe and Madison Counties. We haven't gone behind anybody's back . . . we have openly presented only the facts in our argument for the location of the road down the Pigeon River gorge. And, in the final analysis, we firmly believe that right will prevail, and that the road will be located according to the recommendations of the State Highway Commissions of both North Carolina and Tennessee and their engineers.
4. During the weeks and months that this matter has been delayed by the intervention of organized opposition from Buncombe and Madison Counties some of you may have become discouraged and impatient, thinking that perhaps your Chamber of Commerce had not been taking a sufficiently strong stand in this fight. We have at all times kept in close contact with the situation and have given our full support to our highway engineers in their decision. However, the time has now come when the Chamber of Commerce must bring its fight out in the open, and we call upon each of you to lend your full support to your Board of Directors. Express your feelings publicly . . . to civic groups, in letters to the editor of the Waynesville Mountaineer and the Asheville Citizen, in letters to your representatives in government, in private conversation, and in any other manner that will lend support to the program. Above all, let your Highway Commission know that you are with them in their decision . . . And last, but by no means least, spend your dollars with the business firms of Haywood County who are supporting your Chamber of Commerce in the fight for this road.

*Richard L. Bradley, President*

WAYNESVILLE, HAZELWOOD, LAKE JUNALUSKA  
**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**