

Burlington's Bill Beerman On Foreign Textile Imports

Flood Is Over Top Of The Dam

By TOM MCINTYRE
Editor, Mirror-Herald

Burlington Industries has decided to speak out against the current textile import legislation.

This was the message advanced by Bill Beerman, director of public affairs for Burlington, during last Thursday's Kings Mountain Rotary luncheon.

Beerman, who is stationed at Burlington's Greensboro office, said, "Foreign textile imports are now taking a larger share of the American market than is fair or safe. For the last three years Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong have imported over half the textile goods into this country of all foreign producers."

Beerman said under international trade agreements the foreign firms are permitted to import six percent of the American market. The six percent figure was established as anticipated growth rate in this country. However, the rate has only been 2.9 percent over the past few years, which means imports are becoming excessive.

"The flood is now over the top of the dam," Beerman continued. "Americans are losing jobs and will lose even more if something isn't done to curtail foreign imports. America is a job-related economy, the only one like it in the world. Textiles and the garment industry, which is related, are in the top three industrial employers in this country. That means that one out of eight jobs in the U. S. is either

in a textile plant for sewing industry. So, we feel we have a story to tell and the government should listen."

Beerman said the average hourly wage for Korean textile employees is 25-50 cents, while in America the average hourly wage is about \$4.37. He said on top of that, American textile companies also provide benefits, profit sharing, retirement, insurance, plus all of the federally-regulated programs which are employer costs. The textile industry, according to Beerman, spends millions of dollars on machinery and equipment to conform to safety and pollution requirements, machines and equipment that have nothing to do with manufacturing a product.

"Foreign textile firms have no such overhead to eat up their profits," he said. "The foreign imports now take up 17 percent of the American market in textile products and apparel fabric. If the growth rate continues, by 1985 the foreign imports will take up 40 percent of the American market."

Beerman said if anyone thinks it can't happen, they can take a look at the show industry. "Fifty-five percent of the American show industry was wiped out by foreign imports. The foreign made items sell for less, until the competition is gone, then the price goes up."

Beerman said that in 1976 foreign textile and related firms imported to the United States over five billion, one hundred thousand square yards of

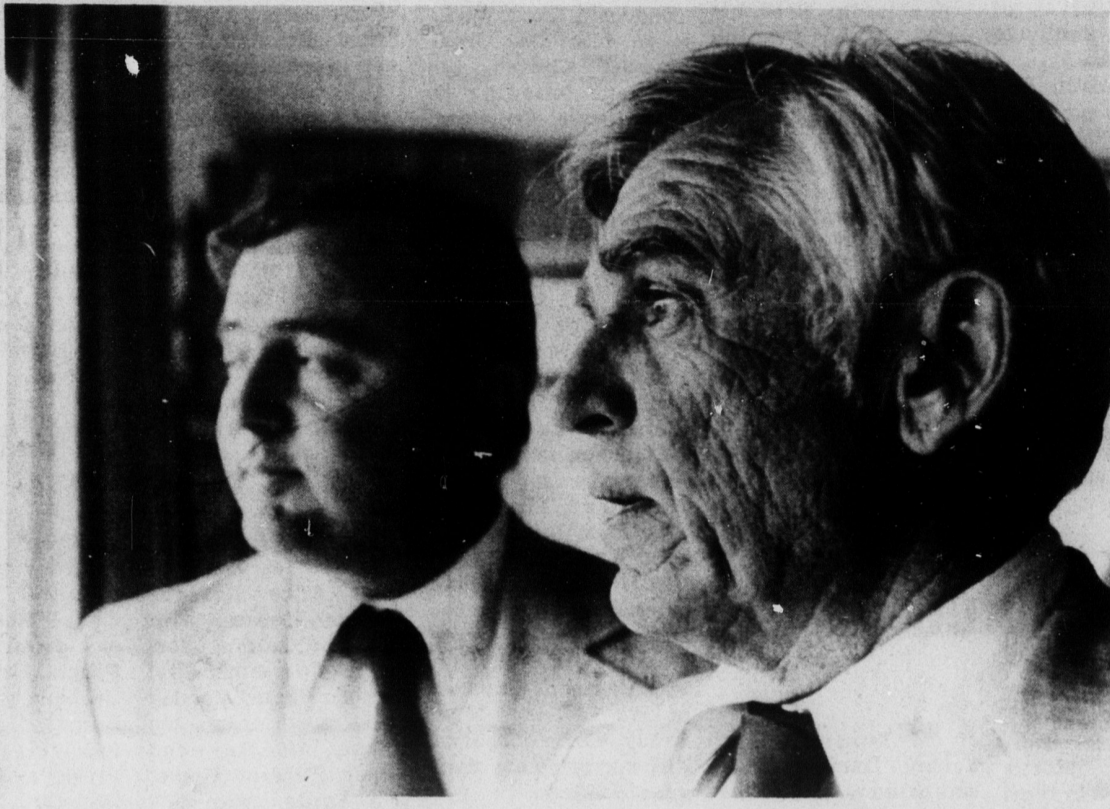


Photo By Tom McIntyre

BURLINGTON MEN — Bill Beerman, director of public affairs for Burlington Industries, was guest speaker at last Thursday's Kings Mountain Rotary luncheon. He spoke on the danger of excessive foreign textile imports and what his

company is doing to try to stem this tide. Shown here with Beerman is Neil Yeargin, KM's Phenix Plant manager for Burlington, who arranged the program.

material. "That's enough material to stretch from the earth to the moon and back 12 times," he said.

"Burlington is saying quite bluntly to the government that this is excessive," Beerman

said. "We are not against foreign imports. We are willing to share the American market growth rate, but if the foreign imports are allowed to continue flooding in faster than the growth rate, our textile and related industries

are going to be in trouble."

Burlington has begun a campaign within its plants to have plant managers arm themselves with the facts and to interest the public in the problem. Employees, on a

voluntary basis, are encouraged to contact Congressmen to find out what they think about the situation.

Another example of excessive foreign importing Beerman cited is "men's shirts in the low price category. These shirts sell cheaper and are of cheaper quality. You find these items in the large discount stores and bargain centers. Because of this 50 percent of all shirts in this low price category are now made abroad. One out of three 100 percent cotton shirts are made from abroad.

"We also now know that Red China has a tremendous textile industry," Beerman said. "We have no idea what kind of deals will be struck for political reasons with that country, which will take another share of the American market."

Beerman cited some staggering statistics concerning the textile industry in N. C. and Burlington's role in particular.

There are roughly 230,000 textile employees in this state. Burlington employs over 70,000 men and women in its 100 plants, 45 of which are located in North Carolina. In the state Burlington employs 35,000 men and women.

In the United States there are 2,300,000 men and women employed in the textile and related industries. Beerman said thousands and thousands of these people are in danger of losing their jobs if the foreign textile import flood isn't stopped and brought back into a fairer, safer perspective.

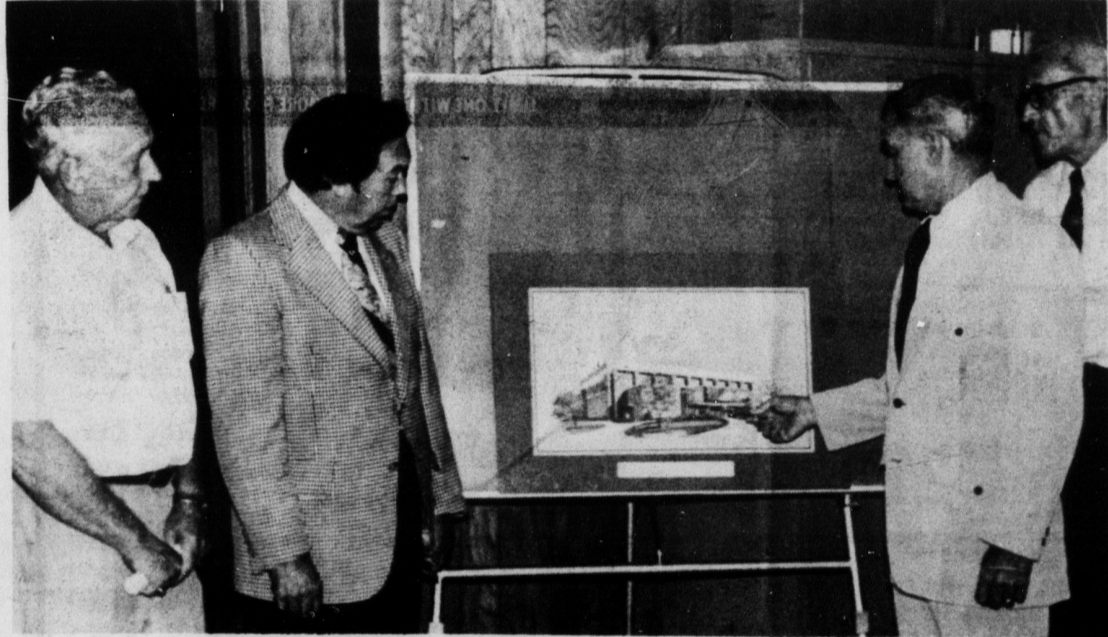


Photo By Lib Stewart

EXECUTE CONTRACT FOR CONSTRUCTION — The city commission signed construction contracts for a major addition to the Kings Mountain Community Center Thursday. Architect

Pete Baugham points to architect's drawing of the new building, as Commissioner Corbet Nicholson, left, Mayor John Moss, and Commissioner Humes Houston look on.

For Center Additions

Contracts Are Signed

Construction is slated to begin immediately on a 10,000 square foot addition to Kings Mountain Community Center, which includes an auditorium.

The city commission Thursday night at a special meeting signed contracts for the \$291,969 project which will be funded under the Community Development Block Grant, \$286,000 approved by the Department of HUD, the city's fair share being \$5,000.

Marvin (Pete) Baugham of Holland-McGinnis Architects of Shelby said he was pleased to see the city go ahead with these bids since there may be some difficulty in delivery of items. The

project calls for completion in 140 days.

General contractor is Reynolds Construction Co. of Charlotte, the low bidder at \$222,878; plumbing contractor, Gastonia Plumbing and Heating, of Gastonia, the low bidder at \$19,425; heating and air-conditioning, Climate Conditioning of Charlotte, low bidder at \$35,221; and electrical, Shelby Electrical Contractors, low bidder at \$13,445.

The additions include one two-story structure on the east side of the building and a one-story addition to the west side of the building and featuring insulated, sun-reflected 46 foot wide glass.

Two floors on the front of the building will include offices, storage areas, a lobby, conference room, kitchenette and rest rooms. On the West side will be a lobby and ticket office for entrance into the auditorium on the second floor which will be large enough to handle certain programs for the public. Office and storage space, a concession area and lobby area are features of the building.

Commissioner William Grissom, chairman of the community center additions committee, made the motion the city accept the low bidders, seconded by Commissioner Corbet Nicholson.

Exhibition Is Planned

The Lincoln Museum of Art is sponsoring its sixth annual Statewide Art Exhibition Oct. 9-30.

The exhibition will be held in the Lincoln County Library, 306 W.

Main St., Lincolnton. Entries will be received Oct. 1-8. All works will be exhibited. Andy Cox of Limestone College will judge the entries this year.

Chaney Earns Promotion

The U. S. A Air Force has promoted Joey E. Chaney, son of Mr. and Mrs. Grady L. Chaney of 302 Phifer Rd., Kings Mountain, to the rank of master sergeant.

Chaney is serving at MacDill AFB, Fla., as an avionics communications technician.

The sergeant is a 1969 graduate of Kings Mountain High School.

Takes Part In Exercise

Navy Gunner's Mate Seaman Jimmy G. Carpenter, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy H. Carpenter of 510 Bridges Dr., Kings Mountain, participated in the U. S. Sixth Fleet operation "National Week XXIII."

Crewmember aboard the guided missile cruiser USS Albany, homeported in Gaeta, Italy.

A 1975 graduate of Kings Mountain Senior High School, Carpenter joined the Navy in September 1975.



FOUR HURT IN FRIDAY CRASH — Four people were hurt, one seriously, in a one-car crash on W. Mountain St. Friday. James R. Baitly, 36, of Kings Mountain, was hospitalized with serious injuries in a Gastonia hospital.

Photo By Gary Stewart

One-Car Crash Injures KMers

Four people were injured, one seriously, in a one-car crash on wet streets, according to Kings Mountain Police reports.

James R. Baitly, 36, of Castlewood Traller Park, was admitted to Gaston Memorial Hospital for injuries and treated and released at Kings Mountain Hospital were Willie Lee Ross, 21; Ernest Michael Wilson, 20; and

Ricky Wilson, 17, all of Rt. 4.

According to KMPD, a car operated by Robert Lee Wilson, 23, of Rt. 4, was traveling at a high rate of speed on wet pavement on W. Mountain St. Friday at 9:25 a. m. when it started to slide and left the roadway. The car hit a tree before coming to a stop off the roadway, said police. Wilson was charged with making an unsafe movement.

Motorists Injured

(From Page 3) Smith of 1404 Groves St. and a 1969 Plymouth operated by Dorothy Sue Young. Mr. Smith was stopped in a travel lane collecting garbage, according to Ptl. R.E.

Grindstaff, when the 1969 Plymouth operated by Ms. Young failed to move left enough to pass and hit the truck in the rear. Damages to the car were estimated at \$200.