

Fern Shubert's

Raleigh Report



October 18, 2004

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The Press is the Problem- Support Alternative Sources

Clearly Mike Easley made a major misstatement of fact in the debate Friday night, but I sure haven't read anything about it in the papers. This is hardly a surprise. Most of the major papers in this state are owned by out-of-state media conglomerates and tend to reflect decidedly skewed political views.

In fact, when I challenged one paper that strongly suggested I was a racist, one of its editors explained that they were perfectly justified in calling me a racist because anyone who opposes giving drivers licenses to illegal immigrants must be a racist.

Fortunately he explained his logic or I might never have understood their viewpoint. You see, they believe that if you oppose licensing illegals, you must be anti-immigrant even if you support legal immigration. If you are anti-immigrant, you must be anti-Hispanic since most immigrants to NC are Hispanic. And if you're anti-Hispanic, you're obviously a racist. Q.E.D.

In their opinion, there is no need to report what I say, since they know in their superior wisdom what they want me to say and they report that instead of my actual comments. After all, they wouldn't want the public to be able to form an opinion based on the facts, because it might not be the opinion they want to create, so they just leave out facts

Thanks to the internet, there are a lot more ways than the morning paper for people to learn about what's happening in Raleigh.

For example, my web site, www.ForFern.com is still up and still has the documentation that demonstrates the dishonesty of Easley's claim to have stopped issuing licenses to people who lack a social security number.

Also, some of the people who helped in my campaign have started an organization called Americans for Legal Immigration (www.alipac.us) to provide a source of information for those interested in this issue as well as a means of supporting candidates at the federal level who are working to address the security problems pointed out in the 9-11 Commission Report. I strongly encourage you to check them out and to share the link with your friends.

How Many Times Can the Governor Get Away With...

*How many times must the cannonballs fly,
Before they're forever banned? And
How many times can the Governor lie,
Before the press takes a stand?*

My apologies to the original authors, but this ditty has been stuck in my mind ever since listening to the debate Friday night.

BALLANTINE (REFERRING TO NC GIVING DRIVERS LICENSES TO ILLEGAL ALIENS): "THEY DON'T NEED TO SHOW A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER AND THEY AREN'T."

>> GOV. MIKE EASLEY (D): "THEY DO. THEY DO AND THE LAW GIVES ME THE ABILITY TO DO IT BY EXECUTIVE ORDER. I DID IT BY EXECUTIVE ORDER."

WELL, HOWEVER YOU WANT TO THEY HAVE TO HAVE THE SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER."

Facts:

1. The Governor has never issued an executive order requiring applicants for a license to provide an SSN. (You can verify this at www.governor.state.nc.us)
2. People without an SSN are still being issued drivers licenses and offered an opportunity to register to vote.
3. Wayne Hurder, the Governor's appointee as head of the DMV license division has confirmed in writing that NC law permits granting licenses to illegal aliens.

Both the IRS and the 9-11 Commission Report warn that using taxpayer ID numbers to issue drivers licenses poses a security threat, yet Mike Easley and his friends have resisted every effort to change the law to require proof of legal residence for license issuance.

The lack of concern for public safety is bad enough, but the arrogant dishonesty of contradicting Patrick Ballantine when he is clearly telling the truth is unreal.

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Live In Union County? You've Been Robbed. Call the robber back; he didn't get it all!

Of course, most people having been robbed wouldn't call the robber back and ask him to take more. But when it comes to roads, it seems some county leaders want to give the robbers more.

Union County should have had a bypass years ago, and if Aaron Plyler had really supported the bypass, I think we would have had one. Instead, during the period from 1990-2002, when Senator Plyler was at the peak of his power, Union County was dead last in NC in per capita funding for transportation, receiving only \$132 per person while the state average was \$239. Seven of the top ten counties in spending, all receiving over \$500 per person, were in Marc Basnight's Dare County highway district. (Dare was getting \$1,005 per person.)

And if that's not bad enough, when Frank Johnson was kicked off the DOT Board for telling the truth in public, (the truth being that Larry Helms, the "Republican" representative on the DOT board, had raised roughly \$100,000 for Mike Easley's reelection and Frank needed to raise some too) he sent out the TIP numbers that prompted him to call the "equity" formula inequitable. The TIP 7 year spending plan he released shows that Marc Basnight's Dare County highway district was projected to receive \$2,483.78 per person while the Mecklenburg district, which includes Union County, will only receive \$596.46. (Johnson's Iredell County district was only expected to receive \$605.79, so this area of the state had pretty much been shafted.)

Frankly, anyone in Union County who supports Aaron Plyler or any of his team members, including Max Melton, Pryor Gibson and Larry Helms, is supporting rotten roads and being asked to pay twice with a toll road. We don't need a toll road; we need fairness.

After a great deal of pushing, we're finally getting progress towards funding roads based on needs rather than backroom string pulling. When that happens, Union County's bypass will pop to the top of the list. Those who have opposed the bypass don't want that to happen, which is why, in my opinion, there is a sudden push for a toll road. If they can't stop the bypass, they can at least make it less useful by making it a toll road. But why should the people of Union County volunteer to pay twice for their roads?

Pryor Gibson is Afraid Of Lower Gas Prices So He's Trying to Limit Competition

One of my favorite political sayings is "He who robs Peter to pay Paul will not only get Paul's vote but a nice contribution from Paul (made with what was Peter's money.)" To Paul, the contribution is a business expense. He hands over part of Peter's money so he'll keep getting special treatment and more of Peter's money. And so long as Peter has no idea what is happening, Paul and his political friends will do quite well.

Since the press reports very little of what happens in Raleigh, those looking for favors are able to exert a lot of pressure on legislators without any offsetting pressure coming from the public. A classic example of inside the beltline politics which has yet to hit the public radar is the Pryor Gibson bill, House Bill 1203, fondly known as "drain'em dry" because it permits any fuel dealer who dislikes competition from someone willing to sell at a lower price to "drain'em dry."

Pryor Gibson wants to discourage people who sell fuel from setting prices too low by permitting their competitors to buy all of the fuel they have whenever they sell enough lower than the competitor to make that worthwhile.

Supposedly this is an "anti-Wal-Mart" bill, but it would be more reasonable to say it targets consumers for the benefit of oil companies who dislike competition. Clark Howard on his pro-consumer radio show has talked at length about the unfairness of such legislation, and the Retail Merchants Association has come out in opposition. They realize that laws limiting competition in one area are likely to spread to others, hurting consumers and eventually even hurting the very businesses that started the trend.

I wonder how the voters in Gibson's district would feel about his attempt to protect them from low gas prices? I also wonder if he plans to file a bill closing the Wadesboro Wal-Mart to protect his voters from other low prices? Maybe not. The public would know who to blame.

If you have questions or comments, please feel free to contact me. My e-mail address is ferns@ncleg.net. My phone number here in Union County is 704-624-2720 and in Raleigh it is 919-733-7659. My website is www.forfern.com. My term in the Senate ends December 31, so requests for legislation should be directed to incoming legislators.