

BILLY ROWE'S Note Book

SOUL CITY, N.C. - "The groundbreaking for Soul City is probably a once in a lifetime thing for North Carolina, and perhaps in this part of the country. Its a historic occasion. It represents an idea and a dream that a lot of people have worked hard to make a reality, and its obvious that it's becoming a reality. It represents more than just the concept of a new city, starting from scratch, although that in itself is exciting. But the fact that its being put together by a basically black corporation, and yet a city that's open to all people, is a concept that shows just how far this country has come in human relations, and in the spirit of goodwill. Through the use of federal funds and private dollars, the cooperation of governmental and private sectors have made this thing happen. And, frankly, the spirit that has been around the Soul City project from the very beginning has been very much like the pioneer spirits of Christopher Columbus, Daniel Boone, the people who put us on the moon, and all the rest."

Those were the words of an exclusive interview with North Carolina's Gov. James Holshouser, Jr. during a reception at his mansion for those who co-chaired the groundbreaking ceremony. They captured the mood and this moment in history which Floyd McKissick has wrought. Other good words came from a variety of government and private citizens like Lawrence Toal, veepee Chase Manhattan Bank; T.M. Alexander Jr., regional adm HUD; Arthur Reid, OEO; Sam Jackson; Stanley Scott, special asst to the pres; Bob Brown, who held that position when Soul City was just an idea; Hon. Clarence Lightner, newly elected black Mayor of Raleigh; Mayors Howard N. Lee, Chapel Hill, N.C., and Johnny Ford of Tuskegee, Ala, more than 500 others representing 36 states within the nation listened and applauded this partial awakening of a dream. Soul City is the first free-standing new town to be developed in a rural area by a minority-owned enterprise. It is a new hope for Warren County, which is about 2/3 black and one of the poorest in this state.

History will record this time as the moment when Floyd McKissick and the young said yes to let the future in. Unfortunately, few of us oldsters will be about to glory in the final deposit of the necessary huddle of human habitation which gives life and breath to a city. The groundbreaking ceremony was the culmination of plans that had been five years in the making. The groundbreaking ceremony is scheduled to start the first industrial facility, Soultech I, that will employ over 300 persons. Housing, shopping areas, and additional industries have been projected for the first three year phase. Private capital is now being sought under a \$14 million federal loan guarantee. Perhaps there was some "in-grave" turning since in days gone by the 3,000 acre plot that is eventually geared to house 44,000 people, over the next three decades, was once a slave plantation.

PEN ON THE RUN - The late W.C. Handy was memorialized in various cities to mark the 100 anny of his birth. In Memphis Diane Crump, grand-daughter of "Boss Crump" who was bad news to blacks, took part in a tribute to him to pinpoint the change in Black life style in the south. N' York will do its Handy thing Nov-end... The bedimpled Virginia Brooker has been elevated to customer's relations for Bonwit Teller's W'chester store... Sidney Poitier's next will be a United Artist flick, "The Wilby Conspiracy" - "Hell Up in Harlem," the "Black Caesar" sequel with Fred Williamson in the lead role, is set for a Xmas release... The Trident Group, has James Brown set for John VanMeans III pen-work, "Come to the Table," the "God-father of Soul" will play the lead role and provide the musical score... Sen. Ed Brooke has been re-elected chairman of the Opera Company of Boston... John Johnson, exec dir W'chester's Urban League, said we were a bit overzealous reporting that the League was down-payment-ready to buy a new building. "Thems the plans," but more loot is needed before such becomes a fact... STAY LOOSE.

Jackie Jackson Speaks



After receiving so many letters from fans inquiring what would the Jackson 5 have done if they hadn't become the incredible superstars they enjoy as a singing group, we decided to do a little prying regarding Jackie, the eldest member of the group.

Come to think of it, perhaps right now fans would be cheering him as a member of some basketball team, because in all probability that's where he would have ended up - and would have probably enjoyed the same kind of success in that game that Willie Mays has enjoyed in baseball for so many years.

"Yes," agreed Jackie, when we cornered him during one of his visits to the Motown offices recently. "Basketball is certainly one of the big loves and favorite pastimes in my life - apart from the group that is! In fact, I was even offered a scholarship to go to college and play basketball if that is any criteria of how dedicated I've been to the sport."

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Stevie Wins Award

Bovema, Holland, Nov. 12 - Stevie Wonder, multi-talented writer, producer, performer, composer and arranger, has been named the 1973 recipient of the Netherlands' prestigious Edison Award for his "Talking Book" album, it was announced this week by the Grand Gala du Disque Populaire.

Edison Awards are presented annually to members of the recording industry after a polling of independent jurors that includes record critics, radio and television producers, disc jockeys and record retail experts for 'excellence in recording and production.'

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