

WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

NOTE: This is the ninth of a series of weekly summaries prepared by the legislative staff of the Institute of Government on the work of the North Carolina General Assembly of 1957. It is confined to discussions of matters of general interest and major importance.

Like a race horse with the smell of roses in his nostrils, the General Assembly rounded the turn and came thundering down the stretch this week. Bill introductions passed the halfway point of the 1955 total, and the pace of calendar action stepped up until the House passed 93 bills in one day, Thursday.

The reason for the excitement (and the high point of the week's activity) was Governor Hodges' appearance before a joint session Tuesday to outline a plan by which teachers could be given pay raises averaging 15 per cent and state employees 11 per cent. Despite a storm of protest against the manner of distribution of the state employees' raise, legislators generally appeared to feel a knotty problem was largely solved and the end of the session in sight, and they hastened to get their legislative proposals introduced and cleared ahead of adjournment.

Governor Hodges gave notice that he will not go along with any larger increases (citing the risk in financing \$34½ million of the raises out of non-recurring revenues); that he will stand behind the Personnel Department's plan for distributing increases to state employees; that he will support continuation of the present differential in pay of vocational education teachers (pending study by the State Board of Education); and that he still favors a study by an interim commission of methods of financing the school system, including the ability to pay of each county. Against this background, the joint Appropriations Committees prepared to turn the budget-consideration task over to a subcommittee.

State Government
The Governor's reorganization program appeared to have hit its first roadblock Friday, when the Senate's State Government Committee voted 5-3 to give the prison separation bill an unfavorable report. The bill had easily cleared the House earlier in the week, after the Governor made clear in his pay-raise statement that Prison Department expenses will continue to be borne by the Highway Fund during the next biennium. Efforts will almost certainly be made to bring the measure to a floor vote next week. The prisoner work-release bill passed without trouble. Meanwhile, the major proposal of the State Reorganization Commission was adopted, as the bill creating a Department of Administration reached ratification. Other Commission bills made progress: the bill to eliminate duplication among water resources agencies passed the House, and the two building regulation bills were approved by the Senate, after minor modifications.

The anticipated reapportionment battle was pushed offstage for another week, as the Senate agreed to postpone consideration until Wednesday. Senator Whitmire's proposed substitute for the Weather Commission proposals cropped

up in a separate bill submitted in the House by Representative Holmes.

Representative Snapp sent in a bill at week's end to make it a misdemeanor for state employees (other than constitutional officers, part-time members of boards and commissions, or persons with written directions from the Governor or legislature) to appear before Congress or its committees in connection with proposed legislation. Violators would also lose state job rights for five years.

Motor Vehicles
Highway racing deaths in Franklin and Wake counties during the week spotlighted the several racing bills which have been introduced. The legislators from Franklin reacted with a bill containing much sharper teeth than earlier measures. In addition to defining two classes of misdemeanor racing, the bill would permit seizure and sale of a vehicle used in a prearranged race, and would authorize the Highway Patrol to use unmarked cars and wear civilian clothes in investigating races.

The driver-training bill introduced by Representatives White and Whitehurst (providing for courses in the schools, financed by an extra \$1 tax on vehicles) survived heavy attacks in the House and is now in the Senate Finance Committee.

The committee considering the compulsory insurance and unsatisfied judgment fund bills may merely raise the requirements of the existing Financial Responsibility Law. A bill offered this week would require \$10-20-5 thousand in insurance, instead of \$5-10-5 thousand, and would increase security deposit requirements from \$11,000 to \$25,000 for those not having insurance.

Schools
School personnel had other matters than the Governor's speech to hold their attention on Raleigh. Republican Representative Simpson

made another effort to carry out his party's platform of letting local voters (rather than the General Assembly) choose members of county boards of education. His bill would provide for nomination and election in the same manner as other county officers (but present members would serve out their terms). Another House measure would reward student school bus drivers with up to 10 annual scholarships of \$400 each, based on savings effected, scholarship, and general aptitude; the scholarships would be financed through savings in bus operational costs, and none would be awarded in the absence of such savings. A Senate bill would make any person who has ever served a full term as county superintendent of schools eligible to hold that post again, irrespective of whether he holds a superintendent's certificate; present law grants this exemption only to persons serving as superintendent at the time the revised school law went into effect in 1955. The measure providing for education of trainable mentally retarded children received a thorough overhaul in the House Education Committee and was re-referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

Miscellaneous
HB 667 would give municipalities in dry counties the option of voting for on and off-premises sales of beer and wine, off-premises sales only, or a mixture of the two plans. . . . SB 301 would require that JP's be appointed (and their salaries fixed), by resident superior court judges, and that the fee system be eliminated. . . . Two bills of interest to doctors would (a) require that they register biennially and (b) create a Board of Examiners in Psychology. . . . SB 294 would require most of the gasoline price signs in the state to be repainted; it provides that no digit in an outdoor price sign can be less than ¼ the height of other

price digits on the same sign. . . . Electrically recorded duck calls would be outlawed by SB 298. . . . After years of playing second fiddle to "The Old North State," "Here's to the land of the Long Leaf Pine" will receive comparable status as the official toast of the state if SB 350 is adopted.

Agriculture
Recent difficulties with plant pests in some parts of the state led to the introduction of a comprehensive bill authorizing the Board of Agriculture to adopt rules for their control and eradication; the department could (1) make inspections of premises or vehicles suspected of carrying pests, (2) order owners to eradicate pests, and (3) where the owner did not act, take action at the owner's expense.

Other bills are designed to protect the farmer against harm from roadbuilders. In 1945 the use of Bermuda grass to hold highway shoulders in cultivated farm areas was restricted. HB 658 would flatly prohibit planting of this or other noxious grasses and make the State Highway Commission liable in damages for violations, while HB 635 would require the Commission to submit all seeds to the Department

of Agriculture for testing (to detect seeds of noxious weeds) before they could be planted. HB 680 would make the Commission liable for damages from obstructing the natural flow of water.

The House killed the proposal to ask a Congressional investigation of reconstituted tobacco. However, HB 236, which establishes a Tobacco Seed Committee and makes unlawful the sale of any flue-cured tobacco variety that has not been recorded with the Commission of Agriculture, has been ratified—along with the bill which authorizes cotton producers to levy assessments upon themselves for cotton promotion.

GUM POND CLUB MEETS
The Gum Pond Home Demonstration Club met Wednesday night, April 3, with Mrs. Z. T. Evans and Miss Beulah Evans. Ten members were present. A very interesting demonstration on "Selection of Colors and Fabrics For a Room" was given by Miss Mairied Morris, home agent. She pointed out that the fabrics used in a room and floor coverings should be related in texture as in color and form for your room to be in agreement. "Floor coverings being the first

thing to go in a room you should work with the color of that and the walls in furnishing the rest of the room," said Miss Morris. Colors work wonders in a room. A pleasing color scheme can hold together the most inexpensive furnishings of a room, and make it pleasant. Take a look around your room for small things a picture, a piece of fabric or a vase, it may clash with the color scheme of the room if so it is a misfit in that room."

The club women teamed up in pairs and selected floor coverings, walls and fabrics for a room with comments being given by the other members and Miss Morris as to the improvement to be made. Material for the cancer drive was

turned over to the community service leader, Mrs. Marvin Smith. The meeting being adjourned, the club was glad to have Mrs. John Saunders and Mrs. Leon By-

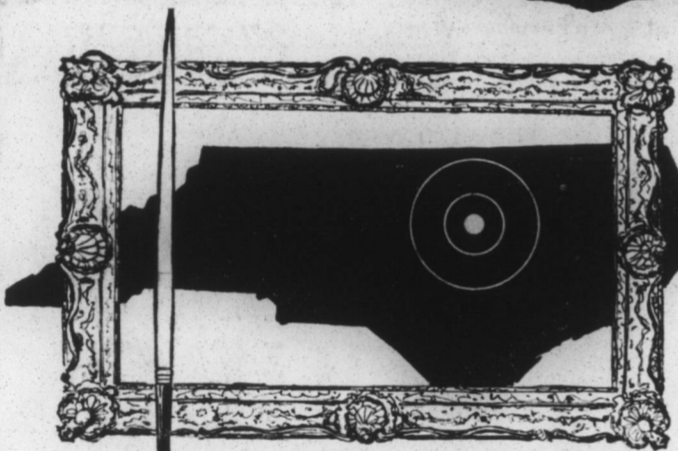
rum as visitors for this meeting. The meeting being adjourned, the hosts served delicious refreshments.

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Did you know this fact about... NORTH CAROLINA



The new State Museum of Art in Raleigh represents another North Carolina first. No other state has expended public funds to acquire a public art collection; which also becomes the South's first art museum of consequence below Richmond and east of the Pacific. (Editorial Art News, April 1956)

Thus, another example of the new vitality of North Carolina in its enlightened development, which is typical also of those areas which subscribe to the "legal control" system for the sale of malt beverages.

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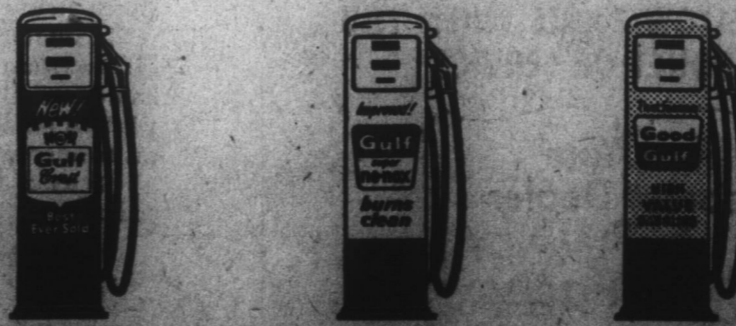
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