

WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

NOTE: This is the third of a series of weekly summaries of the work of the North Carolina General Assembly of 1953. It is confined to discussions of matters of general interest and major importance.

Tentative plans of the 1953 General Assembly to accept an invitation to visit Camp Lejeune sometime after the first of March indicate that this session of the legislature will not be of usually short duration. Although this third full week of legislative activity marked the first floor debate of the season and showed a sharp increase in the number of committee meetings held, the speed-up in the rate of bill introductions anticipated at the end of the second week has not yet materialized. The number of bills introduced so far this session is about 20 per cent less than the number of introductions for the same number of legislative days in 1951. Reports from Durham of Governor Umstead's condition continue to be encouraging.

Finance and Appropriations
The introduction of a 1953 Revenue Bill late this week gave the joint finance committee a framework around which to consider proposed amendments to the State's tax structure. The bill itself contains only a slight change in the inheritance tax law and provides for a short form income tax return for persons earning less than \$5,000 a year under which a standard 10 per cent deduction could be taken. The short form return was suggested to but not adopted by the 1951 legislature. The week also saw introduction of proposed amendments which would (1) give plumbing, heating and electrical contractors state-wide licenses, and (2) permit home-owners who sold one home and purchased another, either during the year prior to or subsequent to the sale, to report only the excess of the sale price over the purchase price as taxable income. The committee's days were taken up with explanations of the revenue schedules by staff members of the revenue department.

Meanwhile the joint appropriations committee continued hearings for state departments and agencies. Twenty-two departments and institutions ran requests for additional appropriations to more than \$20 million over recommendations of the Advisory Budget Commission. Two more weeks of hearings are scheduled before the committee can settle down to the task of formulating their recommendations. In accordance with the new Senate and House rules, of course, the Senate and House Committees may meet separately after the hearings are concluded.

Criminal Procedure and Civil Law
Among the "lawyers' bills" introduced during the week, only five are of wide-spread importance—even to lawyers. Three of these effect revisions in criminal procedure: (1) permitting convicted criminals to give bail pending appeal in all but capital cases; (2) permitting probationers and

persons under suspended sentence to give bond following arrest and pending court hearing; (3) eliminating provision authorizing juries to render verdicts of 2nd degree burglary when facts found are sufficient to constitute first degree burglary. The two remaining bills would, sooner or later, touch most N. C. citizens, alive or dead. The first permits creation of future interests in personality, making it easier for persons to control disposition of property other than land by deed. The second permits, for the first time in this state, recovery for accidental injury where the person injured was partially responsible for the injury, but limits such recovery by permitting juries to award damages based on relative responsibility.

Presidential Primary
A preferential primary election for presidential candidates, proposed in a Senate bill on Wednesday, recalled memories of last summer's presidential nominations. Although results would not be binding on delegates to national party conventions, provisions for filing of candidates by petition of any party member who can muster signatures of 5000 qualified voters, and for counting of write-in voters, guarantees that the choices of the majority of N. C. voters will be known, if not selected.

Education
After hearing and considering conflicting data on public schools, an exasperated Senate education committee on Wednesday morning passed a resolution requesting the State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction, Budget Bureau, and Division of Tax Research to reconcile their statistical data and assemble a single set of facts and figures in simple and clear terms. At the reported urging of Governor Umstead for an early consideration of school building needs, both House and Senate education committee chairman appointed subcommittees to study jointly the need for school building construction and all bills dealing with the problem. Although House committee members questioned the appropriations provisions of Rep. Collier's \$50,000,000 bill, the first to reach the subcommittee, there was growing realization that a bond issue for more than \$50 million might be necessary to meet current needs. Bills were introduced in the House during the week to: (1) provide for loans to medical and nursing students specializing in psychiatry in medical schools within the state, repayable in cash or through service in state mental hospitals; (2) appropriate \$35,000 annually for employment of 6 area music supervisors to train and organize leaders to promote music in schools, churches, and communities; and (3) admit students other than Indians to Pembroke College.

Highway Safety
Legislators' attention is still directed to highway safety. One bill would bring automatic license suspensions varying from 60 to 120 days for drivers convicted of exceeding

speed limits by more than 15 m.p.h., and 90 days to six months for such offenders also convicted of reckless driving. If a driver arrested for drunken driving requests scientific analysis of his blood, a second bill provides that he is: (1) presumed not drunk if analysis shows .05 per cent or less by weight of alcohol in his blood, and (2) presumed drunk if alcohol is .15 per cent or more by weight. These presumptions would be determinative of the driver's guilt if not outweighed by contradictory evidence.

Local Government
The most significant development concerning local government is still a gleam in some legislators' eyes. The suggestion is that county commissioners be given authority to fix the salaries and fees of all county officials and employees. This could reduce by several hundred the number of local bills enacted by the General Assembly each session, but such legislation would be permissive, not mandatory. One concrete proposal introduced this week would permit municipalities incorporated since the last federal census to make estimates of their population for use by state agencies in allocating state funds to local governmental units.

Miscellaneous
Resolutions adopted by the 1941 and 1949 General Assemblies, endorsing a world federal government and calling on Congress to call a convention to propose amendments to U. S. Constitution authorizing negotiation with other nations relating to a world government, would be repealed by SR 66 introduced on Friday. A similar bill sponsored by the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1951 did not receive committee approval. Fox hunters who hunt for the sport of the chase and without guns or other weapons will be interested in HB 104 which seeks to exempt such hunters from purchasing licenses.

Lunch Room Menu

The menu at the Edenton Elementary School for the week beginning Monday, February 9, will be as follows:

- Monday—Meat balls, Spanish rice, buttered carrots, prunes, hot rolls, butter, milk.
- Tuesday — Beef-vegetable soup, crackers, peanut butter sandwiches, block cake, bread, milk.
- Wednesday—Ham salad sandwiches, lima beans, cole slaw, bread, peach halves, butter, milk.
- Thursday—Creamed turkey on rice, peas and carrots, hot rolls, cranberry sauce, butter, milk.
- Friday—Corn beef hash, potatoes, green beans, hot rolls, toss salad, apple sauce, milk.

Hillary Leonidas Davis Dies After Long Illness

Hillary Leonidas Davis, 83, died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. M. Davis Watson on North Broad Street Saturday morning after a long illness. Deceased was a native of Currituck



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County, but had lived most of his life in Virginia until moving to Edenton 12 years ago.

He was a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church and the Ocean View Masonic Lodge.

Survivors are two sons, J. Leon Davis of Norfolk and Jackson C. Davis of Washington, D. C.; two daughters, Mrs. L. P. Williams and Mrs. M. Davis Watson, both of Edenton; one sister, Mrs. Agnes Hollowell of Norfolk, and two grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at the graveside in Elmwood Cemetery, Norfolk, Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock. The Rev. Gordon Bennett, rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, officiated.

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PRESBYTERIAN SERVICES

Services at the Presbyterian Church are announced as follows by the pastor, the Rev. James MacKenzie:

Sunday School Sunday morning at 10 o'clock with classes for all age groups. Any who desire to attend but do not have transportation are asked to contact the pastor. Morning worship service at 11 o'clock, when Mr. MacKenzie will preach on the subject "Excuses Are Not Reasons." Prayer meeting Wednesday night at 7:30 o'clock.

There is a ping pong room in the Presbyterian Church which is open to all local teen agers every day after school and on Saturdays. All who use the room are asked to enter the back door of the church.

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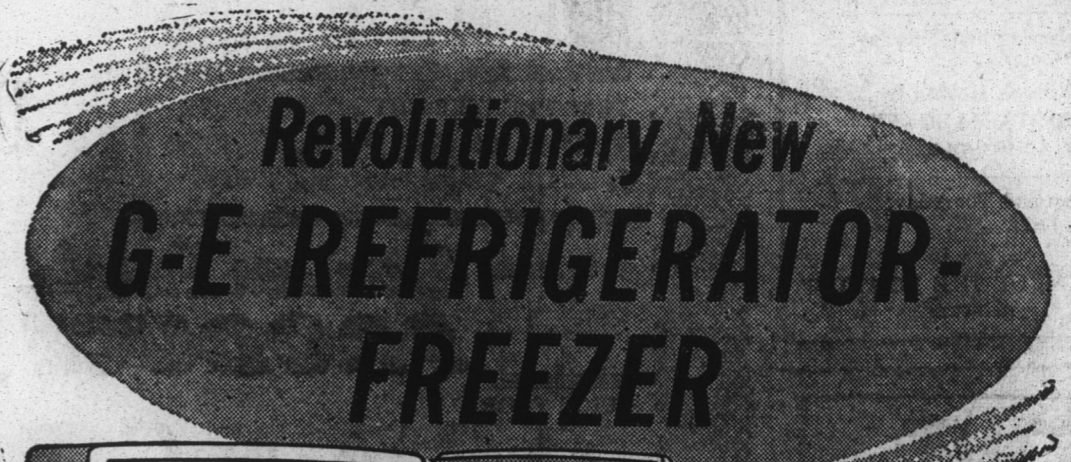
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