

## WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

**NOTE:** This is the tenth 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 1953. It is confined to discussions of matters of general interest and major importance.

At the end of ten and one-half weeks the 1953 General Assembly still has much left to be done. Afternoon or night sessions are not far off, for despite lengthy sessions, more bills are reaching the House calendar than can be considered on the floor.

After deciding to conduct open sessions in their consideration of the biennial appropriations bills, the joint sub-committee met this week to approve some minor requests and disapprove others, with a promise to begin work next week on the major budget items, including requests for the University of North Carolina, the public schools and mental hospitals. Although there has been no concrete pronouncement that some agreement may be in the offing. Final approval is expected this week for SB 334, making an emergency appropriation of \$341,155 for Memorial Hospital at UNC, in line with Governor Umstead's request on Monday.

### Local Government

One day after North Carolina cities had proposed a method for better enforcement of municipal parking regulations to the General Assembly, HB 884 was introduced to abolish parking meters. Persons owning cars found parked in violation of any traffic regulation would be deemed prima facie guilty of the violation if HB 880 were passed, but they would have the opportunity to prove their innocence. Legislative sentiment against parking meters as a regulatory device suggests that traffic congestion in cities may get worse before it gets better. A compromise proposal for helping small towns spend street funds more effectively was introduced on Friday. Towns under 5,000 could request the SH&PWC to construct and maintain their streets out of Powell Bill allocations, but once a town elected to contract with the highway department, it could withdraw only by special act of the General Assembly.

Meanwhile, the House became entangled in parliamentary procedure in its connection of HB 280, a substitute bill for delegating power to county commissioners to fix salaries for all county employees (provided that no increase or reduction exceeded 20 per cent in any one year). After members finally determined that the bill should apply to about 40 counties, the House sent the bill back to committee for a last-minute check on amendments. Efforts by realtors in behalf of SB 298, which would require a referendum before any public housing project could be constructed, met vigorous opposition from groups favoring public housing as a means of improving substandard housing. Committee action on the bill was postponed. Substantial amendment to the urban redevelopment law is proposed by HB 830. The principal change recommended would permit cities to condemn land for redevelopment purposes if as

much as two-thirds of the area concerned is blighted.

### Highways and Highway Safety

While the Highway Commission is not sponsoring any legislation this session, Commissioner Jordan has led the expected attack on HB 588, which would raise truck weight limits by almost a ton per axle. A public hearing on the proposal found the Commission frankly and flatly opposed to all efforts made by truckers present to obtain a favorable report for the bill. A committee decision should come next week. "Mail order licenses"—driver license renewals secured by mail without the necessity of reporting to an examiner—have been approved by the House but may be handled more roughly in the Senate. With the ratification of HB 522, driving instruction may now be given at night, and should HB 823 meet legislative approval, that instruction could lawfully be given two months prior to a learner's 16th birthday.

### Election Laws and Senatorial Districts

Proponents of Senate redistricting and House reapportionment argued without opposition in a public hearing before a House committee on Wednesday. Despite the constitutional mandate and gubernatorial support, advocates openly profess little hope for passage of the legislation.

After debate conclusively disclosed that HB 693, permitting the Governor to appoint a new State Board of Elections six months before the old board's term expires, was not an administration measure, the Senate passed the bill by a slim 25-23 margin. The measure had reached the Senate following only token opposition in the House. Three bills recommended by the State Board of Elections for improving election procedures and proposals for a presidential preferential primary and the vote for 18-year olds received unfavorable reports in the Senate on Wednesday. One measure granting further absentee voting privileges passed the Senate the following day, but a "time-out-to-vote" bill, drawn to aid employees, lost out in the House.

### Business Regulation

Identical bills introduced in the House and Senate would require a vitally different approach in the matter of setting reasonable rates for public utilities. At the present time, in assuring a fair return on investment, the Utilities Commission may consider the replacement cost of the utility's equipment (quite high in inflationary times), whereas under the bills' formula original cost of equip-

ment with an allowance for depreciation or obsolescence would be considered. Another measure introduced this week would permit the Commission, when a rate change is requested, to examine the utility's books to determine the reasonableness of the rate in question. Such an examination would be required on request made to the Commission by any party to the proceeding.

As was expected the bill to overcome the effect of the 1947 anti-closed shop law failed to clear its first committee hurdle. Familiar arguments were presented again this session at the first committee hearing on the administration-backed minimum wage proposal which would establish a 55c an hour or \$30 a week a minimum for employees with certain exceptions.

There are strong pressures on both sides, and the committee vote, to be taken late next week, is expected to be quite close. An attempt by Clay County's representative to attract new industry to that area through a bill offering tax rebates and reduced valuations on industry property is not expected to go far in view of the bill's validity.

### Education

A report is expected next week from the House Education subcommittee studying the school consolidation problem. While the members sought to reconcile administrative responsibility and the human element in the communities where schools are consolidated, still another proposal (to reduce to 50 the average daily attendance below which a school could be consolidated) was introduced in the House. HB 914 would forbid college teachers, students, or employees from possessing, selling or giving away intoxicating beverages on college campuses.

### Miscellaneous

It all started as an attempt to tighten the state's narcotic laws. SB 86 added new offenses and stiffened penalties for the old ones, and the Senate Health Committee made the penalties even tougher. Senate Judiciary 2, which next received the bill, also favored a tough law but did not want more safeguards for the addict. In attempting to achieve this purpose, the committee inadvertently

removed penalties for all offenses except sale or possession for sale. Now the bill has gone to Judiciary 1 for a fresh look at the penalty provisions.

Senate lawyers have also taken the vexing problem of extra superior court judges back into committee. Obvious House demand for more judges without more solicitors persuaded senators to reconsider SB 283 (providing for eight new districts, solicitors, and judges) together with HB 163 (providing for six new judges only). Compromise was indicated by a substitute bill submitted to the committee which would eliminate the solicitors from SB 283. Final committee action was postponed to next Tuesday.

Meanwhile, the tobacco warehouses won a victory when a House committee killed HB 195, which would have reduced warehouse commissions from 2 1/2 per cent to 2 per cent.

### Rosalind Lucas Weds Sgt. Leonard Mitzke

The marriage of Rosalind C. Lucas and M-Sgt. Leonard Mitzke took place Saturday, March 7, at 6 o'clock at the home of the Rev. Martin Luther Ambrose in Creswell. The double ring ceremony was performed.

The bride is the daughter of Mrs.

### Kidney Slow-Down May Bring Restless Nights

When kidney function slows down, many folks complain of nagging backache, headache, dizziness and loss of pep and energy. Don't suffer restless nights with these discomforts if reduced kidney function is getting you down—due to such common causes as stress and strain, over-exertion or exposure to cold. Minor bladder irritations due to cold, dampness or wrong diet may cause getting up nights or frequent passages. Don't neglect your kidneys if these conditions bother you. Try Doan's Pills—a mild diuretic. Used successfully by millions for over 50 years. While often otherwise caused, it's amazing how many times Doan's give happy relief from these discomforts—help the 15 miles of kidney tubes and filters flush out waste. Get Doan's Pills today!

### DOAN'S PILLS

Narcissus Tarkington Williams and the late Clyde Tarkington of Creswell. The bridegroom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John Mitzke of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The bride wore a navy suit accented with a white collar and cuffs. She wore navy accessories and a corsage of baby white orchids.

Mrs. Ruth Chesson, sister of the bride, was matron of honor. She wore a powder blue dress with navy accessories and a corsage of red roses.

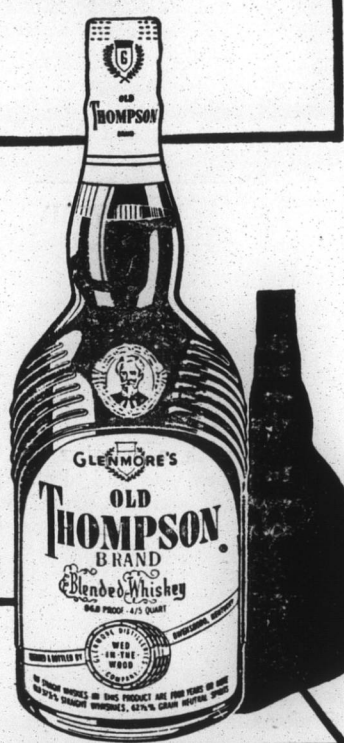
Hallett E. Chesson, brother-in-law

of the bride, was best man.

A reception was held after the wedding at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Chesson in Edenton. Immediately following the reception, the bridal couple left for their honeymoon in Wisconsin.

M-Sgt. and Mrs. Mitzke are making their home at 110 Morris Circle, Edenton.

Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us dare to do our duty as we understand it. —Abraham Lincoln.



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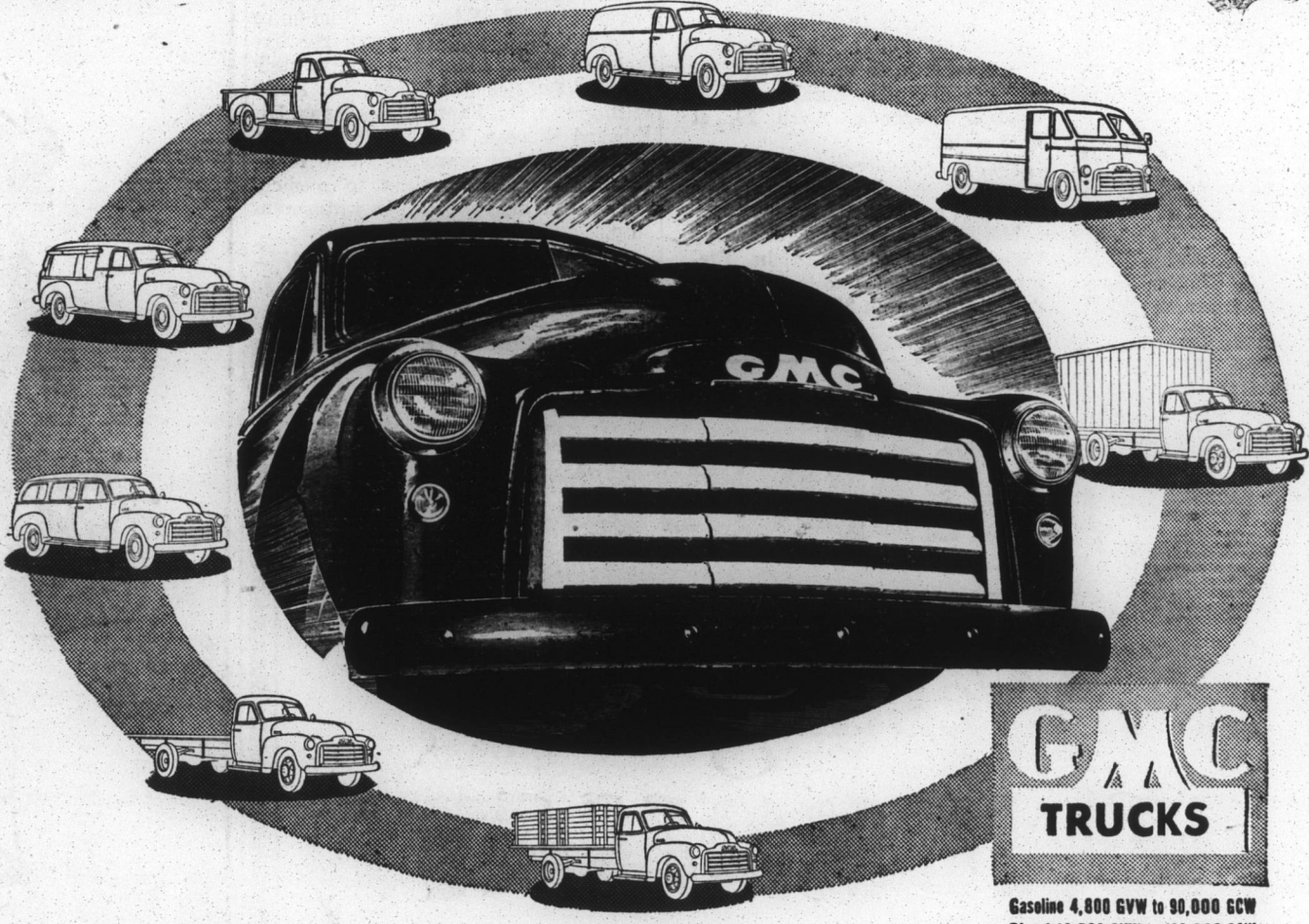
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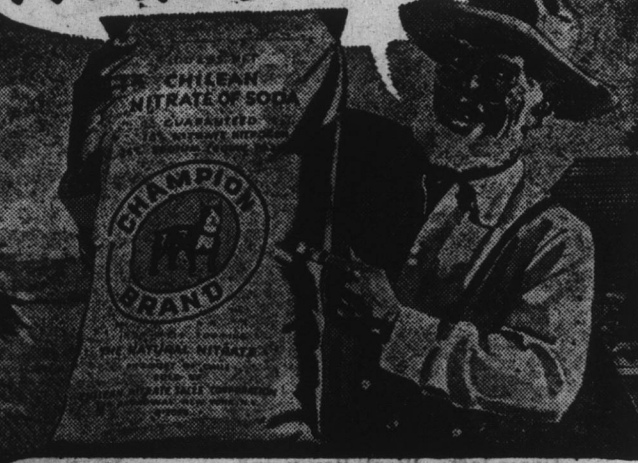
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