

WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

This is the fifth 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 1955. It is confined to discussions of matters of general interest and major importance.

Pre-session fears that the 1955 General Assembly would be a long one, somewhat allayed in the quiet weeks of January and early February, have reassured themselves. Tax proposals of the Governor and Advisory Budget Commission, embodied in the Revenue Bill, continue to be the subject of hearings before the Joint Finance Committee. Opponents of these proposals take turns in describing the undesirable results they foresee should the new taxes be adopted. Only three proposals for taxes in addition to (or possibly in substitution of) those in the Revenue Bill were introduced: one would impose a 3% levy on hotel and tourist room rental receipts; one would impose a 1% on the transfer of real property; and one would raise the court process tax from \$2 to \$3 and extend its application to cases in all courts. Additional revenue to be anticipated from these three taxes combined would not exceed \$5 million. The most frequently mentioned major alternative to the tax proposals in the Revenue Bill is a sales tax with few or no exemptions. No bill embodying this idea has been introduced. Should it be presented, hearings before the Joint Finance Committee would have to be extended, for each group losing its exemption would want to be heard. This would be true for every new tax proposal, all of which could extend hearings (and the 1955 session) quite a long time.

Reorganization of the State Government

The 1953 General Assembly authorized appointment of a study commission on the state government, with a report to be made to the 1955 General Assembly. The commission was appointed in the fall of 1953, with Rep. Wm. B. Rodman, Jr., of Beaufort, as chairman. By last December the commission had submitted its recommendations in seven separate reports: (1) on finance and fiscal control; (2) on personnel management; (3) on cultural and historical development; (4) on agriculture, industrial safety activities, and building regulation and inspection; (5) on the prison system; (6) on welfare and mental health; and (7) on the office of the Governor. This week twelve commission bills were introduced. One would transfer, in large part, prison administrative authority from the Highway Commission to the Director of Prisons. Coupled with this was a resolution directing that cost studies be made to furnish data on which conclusions as to the feasibility of complete separation of the prisons from the Highway Commission might be based. Other reorganization bills would transfer pre-audit functions from the State Auditor to the Director of the Budget (Governor) and exclude the Auditor and Treasurer from budget control by the Director; transfer authority for administration of industrial safety activities from the Industrial Commission to the Department of Labor; combine the State Library and Library Commission under one board of trustees; make the State Board of Health responsible for development and supervision of community men-

tal health clinics; and abolish a number of inactive agricultural agencies. Other measures embodying recommendations of this commission can be anticipated soon.

Public Education and Educational Institutions

Bills prepared by two other study commissions created by the 1953 General Assembly also reached the legislature this week. North Carolina's public school law, a set of statutes that has grown in haphazard fashion through the years, is subjected to complete revision in the bill proposed by the commission headed by Mr. Fred Folger of Mt. Airy. While primarily concerned with trimming out obsolete and conflicting provisions, the revision also contains some substantive proposals. While retaining in the State Board of Education general control and administration of the school system, this bill would strengthen local control over local administrative units. (It will be recalled that bills introduced early in the session would make it plain that responsibility for allocation of pupils among schools rests in local boards of education.)

A bill embodying the recommendations of the commission on higher education (headed by Mr. Victor Bryant of Durham) reached the General Assembly just as the president of the state's educational institutions were concluding their statements of needs to the Joint Appropriations Committee. As noted by Governor Hodges in his biennial message, the commission found growing evidence of overlapping functions among state-supported colleges and the university as student bodies mushroom. To bring this problem under control, this commission's bill proposes creation of a nine-member State Board of Higher Education to coordinate the functions and financing of these institutions. This board would be directed to prepare an over-all plan of development for the state's system of higher education and require each institution to conform. It would exercise a large responsibility in screening budget requests (advising both the budget officials and the General Assembly) and could determine the types of degrees to be awarded by each institution. The nine members of the board would be appointed by the Governor under strict regulations as to place of residence and college affiliation.

Judges, Jurors, and Defendants

The idea of allowing defendants in non-capital cases to waive jury trial if represented by counsel ran into opposition from some Senate lawyers this week, but it continues to make a slow progress. The bill was amended to state that neither judge nor solicitor should "by any manner or means" participate in the waiver. At the end of the week the second committee to study this proposed constitutional amendment, by split decision, voted a favorable report. This split means there probably will be an interesting de-



WRONG NAME — "Why do they call them firemen?"—that's the question posed by this picture of ice-encrusted Ed Hansen, Chicago, Ill., fireman. Covered with spray from his engine's hoses, he helped battle a blaze which forced 75 persons out in subzero weather.



NO FLIGHT OF IMAGINATION—Pilot shown above is seated at an instrument panel which may appear in planes of the not-too-distant future. Office of Naval Research, which recently released this picture at Los Angeles, Calif., says that the round windshieldscope and television tubes which will provide pilot with all operational data he'll need. In-flight test of the system is expected to occur in about three years.

keeping procedures for JP's so that the annual audits of their receipts as required by the bill would be effective. The sport of chasing fire trucks, already outlawed by North Carolina municipalities, would be forbidden in areas outside towns under a new House bill.

GI Loans Expected Reach Record High

4.3 Billions Ear-marked For Vet Home Builders

GI loans are expected to reach an all-time peak in the year, 1955, according to a prediction by Thomas J. Sweeney, acting head of the Veterans Administration loan guaranty program. In an address to a meeting of the National Association of Home Builders in Chicago, the VA official estimated that the volume of GI loans in the current year would exceed the record total set in 1954 by about seven and a half per-

cent. Indications are, he said, that about 4.3 billion dollars will be earmarked by private lenders for the needs of veteran home-buyers. This would be the largest amount ever channeled into the veteran home-buying market by lenders in a single year.

The speaker qualified his prediction with the caution that any unexpected change of major proportions in the economic picture could radically alter the bases on which these predictions are laid.

His estimate was that an aggregate of about 20 billion dollars will be available to lenders for financing new private dwelling units. Of that sum, VA figures that more than 20 per cent will be employed in GI loans.

Mr. Sweeney promised his hearers that VA will do all in its power to streamline its loan guaranty program further during the coming year and believes it will be able to render relatively speedy service in handling the guaranty of GI loans.

"The wise man will want to be ever with him who is better than himself." —Plato.

DISTRICT MANAGER—SALESMAN

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Actual photo of the Plymouth Belvedere 4-door Sedan, powered by the new 6-cylinder PowerFlow 117 engine.

THEY ALL OWNED OTHER MAKES



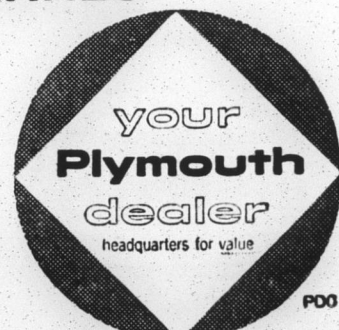
"That sleek new styling made me switch to Plymouth this year. It looks like a dream on wheels, and that's the way it rides!" *Claude L. Council, Washington, D. C.*



"I shopped around carefully and switched from car 'B' because Plymouth was way ahead in size, riding comfort and in appearance." *Clarence Krauel, Chicago, Ill.*



"I used to drive car 'A' but I'm glad I changed to Plymouth this year. It's so much bigger it's hard to believe it's a low-price car!" *Kermit C. Lien, Minneapolis, Minn.*



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Ham Mites Controlled By Electric Lighting

Ham mites can be controlled easily with ordinary electric light or daylight, according to results of tests at the North Carolina Experiment Station.

That's good news to farmers, locker plant operators and meat packers, because mites will destroy all the lean meat in a ham in an estimated four to six months under ideal conditions. They always work in the dark.

To kill the mites, lights must shine directly on the hams. Yet they should be covered by a paper or cloth or both to protect them from skippers. When exposed to light, the ham is left open to skipper damage.

The simplest way around this problem is to put the hams inside a recommended cover immediately after curing to protect them from skippers. They should have no mites then because the curing salt keeps them from getting into the meat. Then put a strong electric light in the ham storeroom for 24 hours, once every two weeks, to kill any mites that get in there.

Another way to keep mites away is to build a wooden frame for a cage and cover it with 30-mesh screen (much finer than ordinary window screen) and store the ham inside. Hardware dealers can order the screen. The ham should be hung some place where light can get at it—near a window or electric light bulb. Another important point: keep all skippers off the hams before putting it into the cage.

TRY A HERALD WANT AD

PRESBYTERIAN SERVICES

Morning worship service at 11, with the message by the pastor, the Rev. James MacKenzie, from the first chapter of the Gospel according to John. Sunday School at 10, with classes for all age groups.

There will be a congregational meeting after the morning service for the purpose of electing officers. Prayer service Wednesday night at 7:30. Lesson from the First Epistle of John.

DISCHARGED FROM ARMY

Sgt. Paul G. Hassell, Route 3, Edenton, was separated from active military service at Fort George G. Meade, Md., February 7 after serving for a period of six years and six months. His most significant assignment while serving in the Army was with the Heavy Mortar Company 33rd Infantry Regiment at Fort Wobbe in the Canal Zone. He is the son of Mrs. George Hassell.

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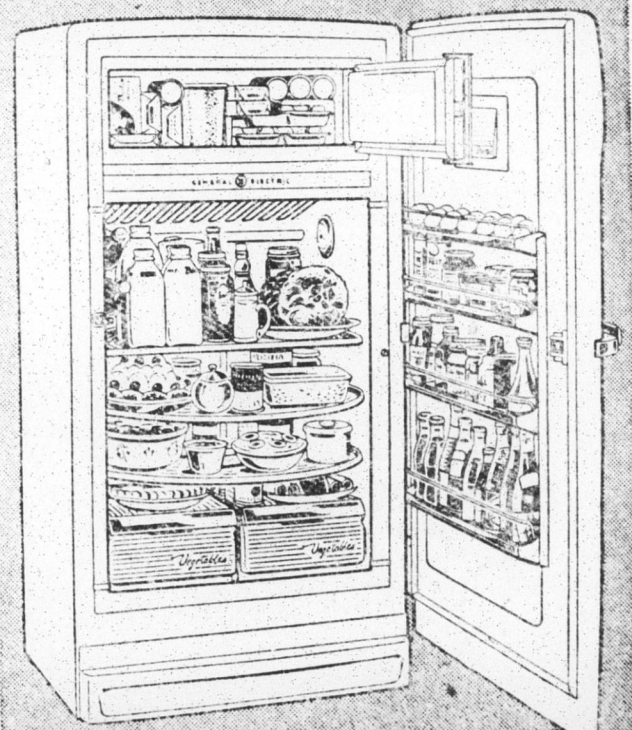
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