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and

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Needed—Safer School Buses

WE are glad to hear that some concern has been aroused at Raleigh over the present means and methods of transporting children to and from school. We know of no flaw in our school system, at least in Macon County, which more urgently demands corrective measures.

It was Revenue Commissioner A. J. Maxwell, we believe, who brought the school bus situation into public focus, for which parents of school children should be most grateful. We do not know whether it would be advisable to follow his suggestion to turn over operation and maintenance of school buses to the State Highway Commission, for that involves various ramifications which should be thoroughly investigated; but it is most certainly clear that Mr. Maxwell is right in his premise that something ought to be done, that school buses at present are too dangerous.

In a majority of the counties—but unfortunately Macon is not one of them—the state maintains and operates its own buses. The objection in these counties is that in many instances school boys still in their teens are employed as drivers. These youngsters, it is contended, have not had sufficient experience as drivers and do not possess the mature judgment necessary for a task so responsible. They might attempt to beat a train at a railway crossing, whereas an older driver would stop and wait for the train to pass.

So far as we know, there are no school boy buy drivers in Macon County; but the system of school transportation is most unsatisfactory, uncomfortable and unhealthy, to say nothing of being downright dangerous. Here the state does not own and operate the buses. The transportation of school children is done on contract by private bus owners, whose conveyances are the most weird assortment of death traps one can find on the highways. Most of them have makeshift, homemade bodies, thrown together from flimsy ceiling boards and tin. Children are crowded into these pens with about as much concern as if they were cattle. They must breathe and rebreathe the air exhaled by their companions, and it is just too bad if someone in the crowd has the itch. Those who are loaded first have rough board benches to sit upon, but many of the children must sit in the laps of their schoolmates or stand and have their heads banged against the top every time the bus goes over a bump.

But the discomfort is a small matter compared with the danger involved. Every time we see one of these buses we have a horrible premonition of catastrophe. Suppose one of the buses should roll off a mountain road, or collide with a mammoth motor van. There would be children strewn all over the landscape with busted necks and splinters through their innards. This is but a foolish fear, someone may say; we have never had any serious school bus accidents in this section. Perhaps so, but we cannot help feeling that the danger exists and that it would be well to overcome this danger before it is too late. As someone has said, "It is better to build a fence at the top of the precipice than to station an ambulance at its foot."

Our representative in the Legislature would deserve the undying appreciation of the parents of Macon County if he could get the state to provide good buses and careful drivers to carry their children to and from school.

It is important that our children be schooled, but it is even more important that every precaution be taken to safeguard their lives and limbs.

Concerning the Weather

Judging by the fine plowing weather we have had this week, the groundhog legend is a myth. But there are still plenty of folks who will place their dependence on groundhogs and other weather indicators rather than in Uncle Sam's farflung weather reporting and forecasting service. It would be interesting to know how many farmers use the moon for a planting calendar instead of following the advice of farm extension service experts.

A Silent Winter Movie — by A. B. Chapin



THROUGH CAPITAL KEYHOLES

BY BESS HINTON SILVER

G. O. P. CANDIDATE—
Some Republican members of the General Assembly are inclined to view with favor the suggestion that former Congressman Chas. Jonas, now the Representative from Lincoln County in the Legislature, may become a candidate for Governor next spring in opposition to William Grissom, who already has voiced intentions of making the race. Mr. Jonas attracted wide attention with his bill to provide discretion between capital punishment and life imprisonment in first degree criminal cases and his attitude favoring removal of tolls from bridges in Eastern North Carolina. It might be well to observe his smoke.

DOUBT REMOVED—
Former Lieutenant Governor R. T. Fountain, of Rocky Mount, has let it be publicly known that he is seriously considering running for Senator in opposition to Senator Josiah W. Bailey in the Democratic primaries next spring. Nevertheless, there are some rather astute political observers around this Capital City who say they believe Mr. Fountain's announcement is intended as a blow at the potential candidacy of Governor Ehringhaus, who beat him by a nose three years ago, more than as a thrust at Senator Bailey. The Governor doesn't appear worried.

DON'T LIKE IT—
Some members of the joint legislative finance committee can't take the idea of Representative McDonald, of Forsyth, to introduce a substitute to the sales tax on the floor of the House of Representatives. Representatives R. Greg Cherry, of Gaston, and Thomas O'Berry, of Wayne, made certain remarks indicating that they thought Dr. McDonald was "holding out" on them by not giving the committee the benefit of his views. The Forsyth Representative is a member of the House finance committee.

PATROLMEN—
It's entirely possible that you may soon catch sight of a State Highway patrolman in your county. Bills have been introduced in the General Assembly to transfer the patrol back from the revenue department to the highway department and to increase the number of patrolmen. Also, patrolmen would be relieved of duties of collecting gas and oil samples for inspection and required to do nothing except watch automobile drivers and attempt to reduce slaughter on the public roads.

SPEED LOST—
Not a few legislators express the opinion that rapid passage over sections of the revenue and appropriations bills is not going to save much time in the long run. They figure that opponents of the proposals of spending and taxing will hold their fire until the bills get on the floors of House and Senate and then loose their bombardments. It may or may not be significant that anti-administrationists are holding their peace in committee meetings.

HAND-OUTS—
Various and sundry bills have been introduced in the Legislature to use State highway gasoline and license taxes for purposes other than building roads. Some of the measures would have gas tax money reduce local government road debts while others would require the highway commission to pave streets in cities. One million dollars in highway money is already going into the general fund and the budget commission has endorsed this policy for the next two years. If you have any definite ideas on the subject of how gasoline and license taxes should be spent the present might not be a bad time to make them known.

LIQUOR—
Many legislative and political leaders believe that the Dey House bill to call a referendum on two wet and one bone-dry proposition should be "entitled an act to perpetuate the Turlington law in North Carolina." They figure that the two propositions for legalized liquor would split the wet vote and that the dries would stick together on the proposal to retain present absolute prohibition. Another bill now circling around legislative halls would provide a referendum on a system of State sale of liquor. What will happen is, of course, in the future but it is comparatively easy to strike out the section calling for a referendum. The dries realize that and are on their toes.

PUBLIC HEALTH—
Senator Griffin, of Franklin, introduced a bill to require your child (if you have one) to be vaccinated against diphtheria between the age of six and 12 months but it ran into some rocks in the health committee. It developed that diphtheria anti-toxin sensitizes some patients against other vaccinations with "horse" serums. The committee couldn't agree on whether it was better to allow the child to be exposed to diphtheria or take chances on barring it from vaccination against certain other contagious diseases.

ISN'T QUITTING YET—
Senator W. G. (Cousin Willie) Clark, of Edgecombe, wants it un-

derstood that he is not going to quit the race for Lieutenant Governor because his candidate, Senator Carl L. Bailey, of Washington county, was defeated for President Pro Tempore of the 1935 Senate. Cousin Willie isn't sure he will make the race in 1936 but he avows that if he does he will give Senator Paul Grady, of Johnston, former Senator George McNeill, of Fayetteville, Senator Harris Newman, of New Hanover, and other potential or actual candidates "a run for their money."

TOUGH BREAK—
Parole Commissioner Edwin M. Gill spent much time preparing his brief for presentation before the appropriations committees of the General Assembly. He made detailed studies of the best methods of parole investigation and supervision and then when the money-spending committees met Commissioner Gill was confined to his bed with an attack of the mumps. As a result his brief had to stand alone for his cause. Mr. Gill subscribes to the axiom that the best laid plans of mice and men often go astray.

NOT BEHIND—
Lieutenant Governor A. H. Graham isn't letting any grass grow under his feet in the race for the gubernatorial nomination on the Democratic ticket next year, in the opinion of many political wiseacres around Raleigh. They opine that his committee appointments in the Senate and his conduct in presiding over that body are not hurting his chances of nomination even if Clyde R. Hoey, of Shelby, and Congressman R. L. Doughton are getting the publicity breaks right now.

DR. NOBLE—
Prior to convening of the General Assembly many news writers were predicting that the Legislature would attempt to abolish the office of executive assistant revenue commissioner, held by Dr. M. C. S. Noble, Jr. The Legislature has been in session almost a month and no one has peeped for publication about abolishing Dr. Noble, but talk of making the revenue commissioner elective has cropped out.

HELP KIDNEYS

IF your kidneys function badly and you have a lame, aching back, with attacks of dizziness, burning, scanty or too frequent urination, getting up at night, swollen feet and ankles, rheumatic pains... use Doan's Pills. Doan's are especially for poorly functioning kidneys. Millions of boxes are used every year. They are recommended the country over. Ask your neighbor!

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