

CAPITAL REPORTER

Scott Summers

Raleigh.—Rural schools will be opening in a couple weeks, and the State had made big plans to provide around 1,000 new school buses.

Most of them will be ready. But a lot of school kids will ride to school in old, ramshackly buses because one firm—Hackney Brothers of Wilson—has not delivered new buses.

The most ironical thing about the fight over giving school teachers a chunk of the \$13,000,000 (surplus or cash balance, take your pick) is that nobody in the legislature thought there would be one when they passed that little section known as 20 1/2 of the appropriations bill.

That's the little piece of fancy writing that says teachers should get a retroactive pay raise last June 30 "if there was a surplus." In fact, the only speculation was as to how much of a deficit the State would have at the end of the 1949-50 fiscal year.

Now the teachers—particularly the N. C. Education Association—claim there's a \$13,000,000 surplus. Assistant Budget Director Dave Coltrane calls it "cash balance" and says it'll be needed to balance the budget for the current year. In January 1949 the current fiscal year's estimated income was fixed at \$129,000,000. Appropriations for 1950-51 are \$142,000,000.

When the advisory Budget Commission met with the Governor last week, it stuck to the nearly two-year-old estimated income of \$129,000,000—despite indication of much more—and agreed unanimously that there was but some \$850,000 surplus and that wasn't enough to pay "in multiples of two percent" as the law stated.

The six-man budget commission is forty-two anti-administration. Senators Edwin Pate of Laurinburg and Grady Rankin of Gastonia, and Representatives Frank

Taylor of Goldsboro and Larry Moore of Wilson generally are classed as Scott opponents. Appointees Harry Caldwell of Greensboro and Alonzo Edwards of Hookerton are pro-Scott.

Before the meeting, the Governor said he would stand by the Advisory Budget Commission's decision.

The decision was unanimous that there was not enough surplus to pay the teachers.

What isn't generally known, is that Taylor—always conservative—set the pace. He always has been a watchdog on the State's spending. He could have waged—and perhaps won—a fight to give the teachers the \$6,000,000 they claim they should get now. And it's possible that such a move would have caused a deficit by the end of the year, which would have necessitated an across-the-board salary cut for all State employees and, incidentally, made Governor Scott rather unpopular—to say the least.

But Taylor thought more of the State's credit than that—and much as he might like to see Scott embarrassed, acted as he did.

His action could possibly cost him the speakership of the 1951 House, if the teachers put enough pressure on their own representatives.

And the teachers are hot about it—at least the NCEA itself is. Mrs. Ethel Perkins Edwards, the NCEA executive secretary, says NCEA is not planning a court suit. They have asked the governor and Advisory Budget Commission to reconsider their action, however, and have called on Attorney General Harry McMullan for an opinion on the legal aspects of the case.

Actually, the whole thing is the governor's baby. The law says the Advisory Budget Commission is just that. He can overrule the commission any time he sees fit, although governors usually don't

Once more, Kerr Scott's on the hot spot—a situation that, must seem normal to him by now.

The State Highway Commission expects to have 40 percent of the secondary road-buildings program completed by September 30. If that happens, it will mean that six months of work have seen more than 2,000 miles of rural roads paved and another nearly 3,000 miles stabilized under the \$200,000,000 bond program. And it will bring the total of secondary roads paved under the Scott Administration to approximately 3,500.

Even the pigeons on Capital Square are suspicious these political days. A car backfired the other afternoon and several hundred of the birds took to the airways immediately. They circled the Capitol for several minutes before deciding that they weren't caught in a Scott and anti-Scott crossfire, then settled back to mooching peanuts from passerby.

Remember the "road of the 99 fords"? It made the headlines less than a year ago when red-headed, big-hearted Miss Nora Edmonson—teacher in a one-room Watauga County schoolhouse—waged a one-woman fight for a road-building job that would end the isolation of 23 families in that Dan'l Boone country.

Miss Nora—who doesn't admit her age but is "74 if she's a day", according to schoolkids she taught—is a retired Georgia schoolmarm. Last Fall she took over the one-room school in Elk Valley.

There used to be a road through that section. It wasn't much of a road. It was possible in good weather if you had a high-wheeler car that could drive through the 99 fords of Elk Creek. In 1940 Elk Creek went on a rampage, and when the old gal simmered down there just wasn't any more road.

After it was forgotten by the Highway Department until Miss Nora came along.

The 23 families in the area were isolated. A trip to nearby Tripplett was an occasion. You had to



CAN'T TAKE IT. Claude Rains, as a weary Alpinist, in "The White Tower," gets sympathy from Valli because he can't make the grade. The RKO Radio thriller filmed on Mont Blanc in color by Technicolor, presents Glenn Ford and Oscar Homolka as the co-stars, with Ted Tetzlaff as director.

have an old gray mare or mighty good knee action to get anywhere.

The kids had to walk to school—some of them as much as six or seven miles. They had to cross over wobbly foot-log bridges. But they came, and Miss Nora taught them.

Last October 27, Miss Nora wrote a letter. She asked Kerr Scott if he didn't think there should be a road to every school.

Scott did, and he began to write some letters. Eighth Division Highway Commissioner Mark Goforth of Lenoir put on his walking boots and made a personal inspection. His answer to the governor was that "conditions are much worse" than Miss Nora had said.

By December 2, work on the road of the 99 fords had been started. It now is almost finished, and will be completed by the time school opens.

But Miss Nora—who at 70-odd was young and spry enough to hop across rickety foot-logs—won't be teaching her 22 youngsters this fall. They say—now

that she's "too old."

It seems the Lower Elk School is being absorbed in another one of those consolidations. The kids will be picked up by school buses and driven over the new road—without the 99 fords—to sniney new brick buildings—a far cry from their one-room shack of last year.

Reports reaching here indicate that Miss Nora stepped on quite a few toes when she forgot red tape and went to the governor with her road problem.

Technically, she wasn't fired. She just wasn't re-hired for the coming year. It seems the folks that get things done invite a kick in the pants from the stand-patters.

But up in Elk Creek valley—where the new road of 99 fords has ended a 10-year isolation—the mention of Miss Nora's name will bring big smiles for many years to come.

And she must have a wonderful feeling of satisfaction, despite the raw deal she was handed.

Put this down as something to remember come January 1 and legislature.

Governor Scott will ask the General Assembly to do something about two things—stream pollution and highway safety.

Outside of that he'll tell the lawmakers to do anything they want to, but be sure they find the money for it.

Stream pollution will be the number one project for Kerr Scott.

Cleaning up the streams will help bring in new industries, which must have clean water; it will help preserve fish and game, both of which are killed by the polluted water.

On the highway safety side, the governor may recommend a simplified motor vehicle inspection law. The hopped-up death toll on our roads shows a need for definite action. In addition, he may request an expanded highway safety education program.

And you definitely can count on a Scott request for at least 100 more highway patrolmen. More patrolmen are needed on the primary highways, and the governor would like to see patrolmen on the secondary roads—not now patrolled at all.

Nobody's hoarding these days, they're just buying up stuff to "keep the hoarders from getting it."

A quick check around Raleigh brought this picture:

Restaurant operators being told by their state organization to "raise prices or go broke." Their food costs are jumping—up 15 to 20 percent in the last month and a half. One said he wished OPA would come back. "If they don't do that, or stop the wholesale price boosting, I'll have to go out of business." This same man said the better restaurants are keeping the same quality food but are raising prices. If the prices on the menu are the same as they were a couple of months ago, he said, you can be sure that

quality of the food has suffered. Office supplies—One salesman said folks are buying "enough stuff to run them for a couple of years." Outfits usually giving a \$25 order now are buying in the hundreds of dollars class.

Groceries—From all over the State it's the same story, folks are loading up on sugar, canned goods, processed meats. One clerk here said folks who never bought out of this store more than two to five pounds of sugar a week now are staggering out of his store with 50 or more pounds of the sweet stuff. "Makes you ashamed of bein' a human," he said.

Florists supplies—Wholesalers are being swamped. One Piedmont North Carolina florist—usually a few-dollar-at-a-time buyer—recently sent in an order that included \$250 worth of ribbon. Incidentally, the cost of ribbon is going up. It's made in North Carolina, sent to New York and given a new name, then sent back at twice the cost.

And that's another thing. We talk about "living at home", yap about bringing new industry to North Carolina and the South. And our manufacturers are carpetbagging us to death. It looks a little crazy to me—you have to buy something made in North Carolina out of New York. In addition to the middleman profit you have to pay, you're nicked for the freight there and back.

North Carolina and the South will never get out of their economic hole until manufacturers build up their own sales and distribution systems. We've got to stop handing out southern cash to Yankee middlemen—especially when those dollars could so easily be kept at home.

Well known fact: Governor Scott says more telephones is one of the greatest needs of rural North Carolina. He said it again at the recent Farm and Home Week at N. C. State College.

Little-known fact: Forty-two years ago the president of Farm and Home Week made the same—almost identical—statement. That

man was R. W. Scott, the governor's father.

It sounds unbelievable, but I'm told that there are less telephones in rural North Carolina today than there were 42 years ago.

The motor vehicle registration mark in North Carolina for the first half of 1950 reached 1,036,811, says the North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles.

NOTICE OF SALE

Under and by virtue of the power of sale contained in a certain Deed of Trust executed to the undersigned Trustee by R. L. Pate and wife, Dulah Pate, to Wheeler Martin, Trustee, dated January 24, 1947, of record in the Register of Deeds Office in Martin County in Book O-4, page 122, to secure a certain note of even date therewith and the stipulations in said Deed of Trust not having been complied with and at the request of the said holder of the note, the undersigned Trustee, will on the 25th day of September, 1950, at 12 o'clock noon, in front of the Courthouse Door in Martin County, offer for sale to the highest bidder for cash, the following described land:

A lot or tract of land on the South side of Main Street in the Town of Williamston, N. C., adjoining the lands of L. P. Martin and beginning at a point 30 feet from the center of the pavement of Highway No. 64, or Main Street, it being a point 60 feet from Fred Chesson's Northeast corner; thence along Main Street or Highway No. 64, 60 feet to a stake; thence South 30 deg. 15 min. East 180 feet to a stake; thence South 59 deg. 45 min. West 60 feet; thence North 30 deg. 15 min. West 180 feet to the point of beginning on Main Street, or Highway No. 64.

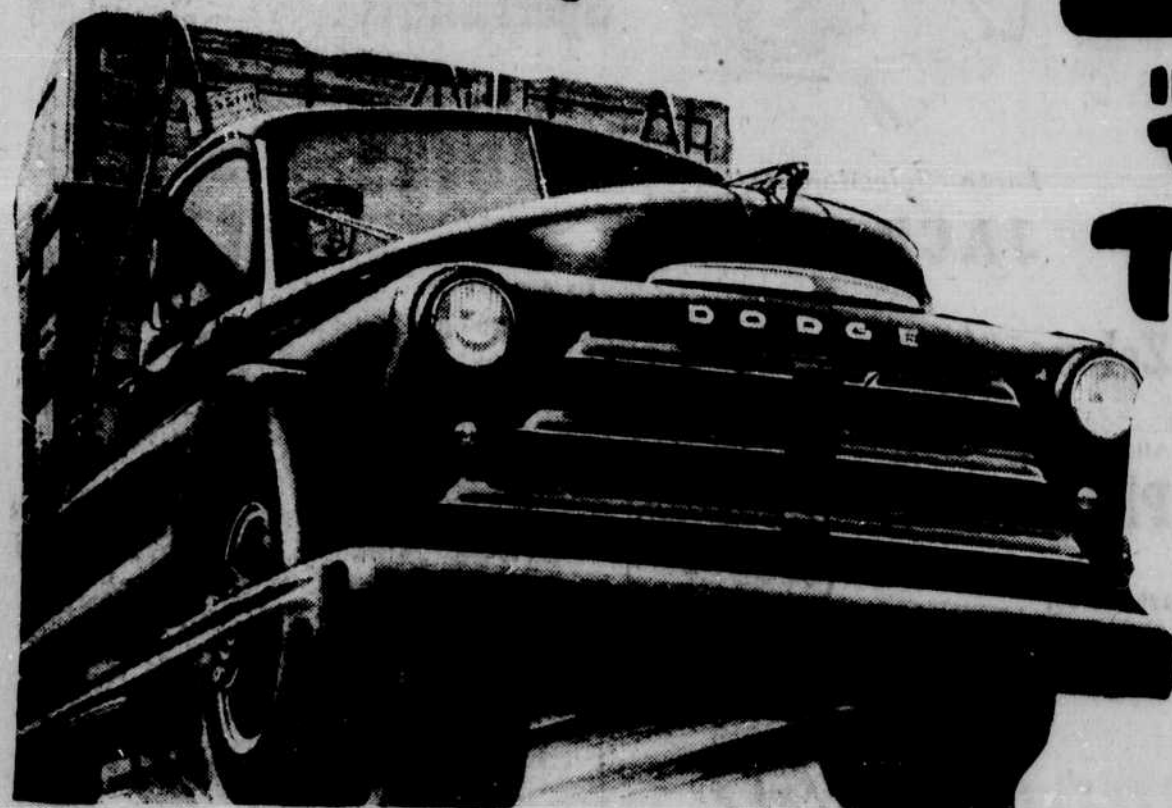
Dated, this 8th day of August, 1950.

WHEELER MARTIN, Trustee.

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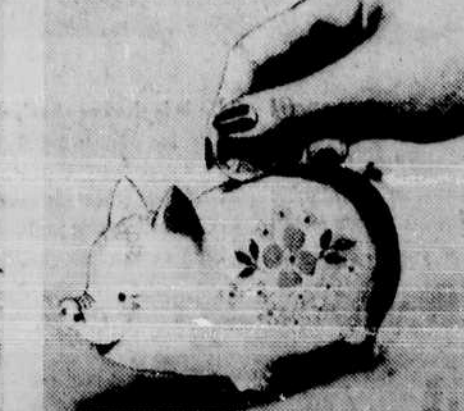
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