

CAPITAL REPORTER

Scott Summers

Raleigh, N. C. — North Carolina will lose one seat in Congress, despite early reports to the contrary. Although the state picked up 3,500,000 more than 4,000,000 noses counted this year, the percentage of gain is a flat 13%. The national average gain is 14.3%. Virginia and Florida are the only two southern states that are even up to the national average. Seats in Congress (referring to the House, of course) are assigned on the basis of population. But any reshuffling is done on the percentage of gain and loss.

Thus, the folks on Capitol Hill here are hearing that North Carolina will lose one seat because — although we picked up nearly a half million population — our gain is below the national average.

This would result in a knock-down dragout battle in the legislature over redistricting, and likewise would send the General Assembly into one of its longest sessions.

Willis Smith, U. S. Senator-nominate, has resigned as head of the Kerr Scott-appointed committee to study the impartial administration of justice.

In his resignation, Smith said he was quitting because he expects to be busy, but added a barb at Scott. Smith said the committee had not been able to operate because of lack of funds.

The committee's secretary, Allen Langston of Raleigh, denied this, saying that the chairman (Smith) had kept the committee from working.

The governor's office said the committee never was supposed to have any appropriation; that its members were appointed because they were believed to be "public-spirited citizens" who could afford to come to Raleigh and make the study at their own expense.

The governor's office compared it with the Advisory Committee on Highway Safety, all of whose members are meeting and traveling at their own expense to try to do something about the highway death toll. This last committee has no appropriation either.

The Justice Committee held only one meeting. That was for organizational purposes on February 10. It has done nothing since.

Folks in the Eastern Tobacco Belt are mighty peeved about the delay in opening of their markets. It was the second year in a row that the Belt opening was delayed, and from editorial and personal comment, the boys in Wilson, Goldsboro, Rocky Mount, Greenville and other markets seem to think there's something more than meets the eye in the move.

They point out that Fred Royster of Henderson, president of the Bright Belt Association, knew more time was needed for Georgia-Florida growers when the dates were first announced. They seem to think he could have done something about the situation a long time ago.

Ironically, the Middle Belt — where Royster has at least a part interest in one warehouse — stands to benefit most by the move. Their markets will open only 10 days behind the Eastern Belt. A lot of growers in that section, which included Henderson now probably will sell their tobacco on the Middle Belt rather than truck it to the Eastern Belt, as they would have if there were more time between belt openings.

If enough folks get sore about the Eastern Belt snafu, it could hurt Royster's chances at the speakership of the House of Representatives. With his only announced opponent, Frank Taylor of Goldsboro, reaping criticism for his part in the Advisory Budget Commission's denial of a bonus to the teachers, this could set the stage for a dark horse to snap up the 1951 speakership.

State Civilian Defense Chief E. Z. Jones of Burlington isn't getting too good a response from mayors of North Carolina's cities and towns. More than two weeks ago he asked them to appoint Civilian Defense bosses for their municipalities. Up to now 42 of the more than 350 incorporated towns and cities have named a Civilian Defense head.

Jones is preparing a map of each town and city, showing graphically what would happen to it in case of an atomic bomb attack. Maybe it will shake the mayors



out of their lethargy. Or maybe it will take a bombing or two in this country to wake up folks. Whether you like it or not, we're at war.

At Mocksville recently Secretary of State Thad Eure made himself a speech. The occasion was the annual picnic for the Masonic Orphanage. Reports reaching here are that Thad sent up a few trial balloons to see what his chances are for either the gubernatorial race in 1952 or the senatorial race in 1954.

He picked a good test spot for an easterner to test the validity of the old east-west rotation tradition. The next governor by tradition is supposed to come from the west.

Incidentally, a rumor keeps popping up here that Charley Johnson is aiming to run again for governor in 1952. The ex-state treasurer who got his lumps from Kerr Scott has moved to Charlotte and some folks are claiming he is now eligible as a candidate from the west. It's reported here that the conservative "Old Guard" is inclined to favor Charley. But a one-time loser has a hard row to hoe. O. Max Gardner of Shelby was the only man to do the trick in modern times. Cam Morrison of Charlotte whipped Gardner in 1920 but Gardner announced in 1928 and was unopposed by another Democrat. Gardner is the only one to make the grade, and also the only Lt.-Governor ever to be elected governor.

In the waiting room at the governor's office, there's a lot of free literature advertising the State. One piece shows the wonders of the eastern half of North Carolina, another sings the praises of the west. There's a pamphlet telling the history of the Capitol, another gives general history and facts about the state, still another gives a history of the governor's mansion.

The most interesting, however, is labeled: "What to See in North Carolina, Variety Vacationland."

There's a good chance the various Rural Electrification Authori-

ties in North Carolina will organize themselves a state-wide association this fall. They already are thinking about pooling funds to buy a huge tent to take around from place to place for various REA meetings.

The new prisons director, former Chief of Police John M. Gold of Winston-Salem, got one of the most cordial welcomes ever hand-

ing machines — in the State. These cuts have started already. No big reductions are expected for a while yet in other items.

Captain L. R. Fisher, Highway Safety director, has asked county commissioners of the state to set up a Safety Council in each county. This week he'll send a complete kit on highway safety to each chairman of a county board of commissioners, showing them just how it is done.

The State Merchants Association has plans in the making to keep an eye on all requests for rate increases by utilities. The association's executive committee has O.K. ed the plan, and will present it to the board of directors for approval at a September session. The plan calls for expansion of an existing Transportation Committee and renaming it the Transportation and Utilities Committee. This group will take a look at all utility rate boost requests and pass along information to members for possible protest or approval. Attorney I. M. Bailey of Raleigh will be the number one watch dog.

Folks in North Carolina who buy insurance should have a kind word these days for Insurance Commissioner Waldo Cheek. Since he has been in office — some 15 months — he has ordered reductions in insurance premiums of all types totaling more than \$7,000,000. That's about \$1.75 saved for every man, woman and child in North Carolina.

Hackney business in Wilson — who are way behind on a contract to build school bus bodies for the State — finally have begun to deliver a few.

August 11, Hackney delivered 9 school buses and promised 50 or 60 more by August 18. That big delivery didn't come through on schedule.

Used to be that bus deliveries weren't pushed, but the State Division of Purchase and Contract under Charley Williams is demanding that bidders live up to their contracts.

It's a remote possibility that failure to deliver the new buses before opening of school could be responsible for a school bus accident. Some old bus, that would have been replaced, could fail mechanically and cause injury or even death to some of the school kids.

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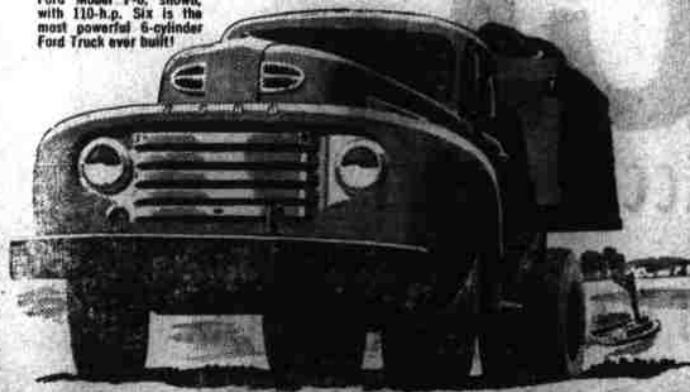
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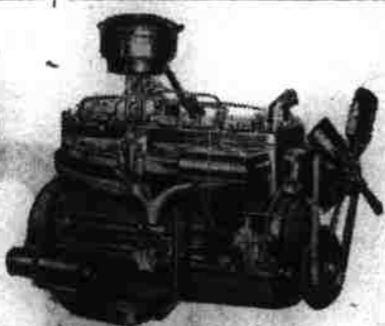


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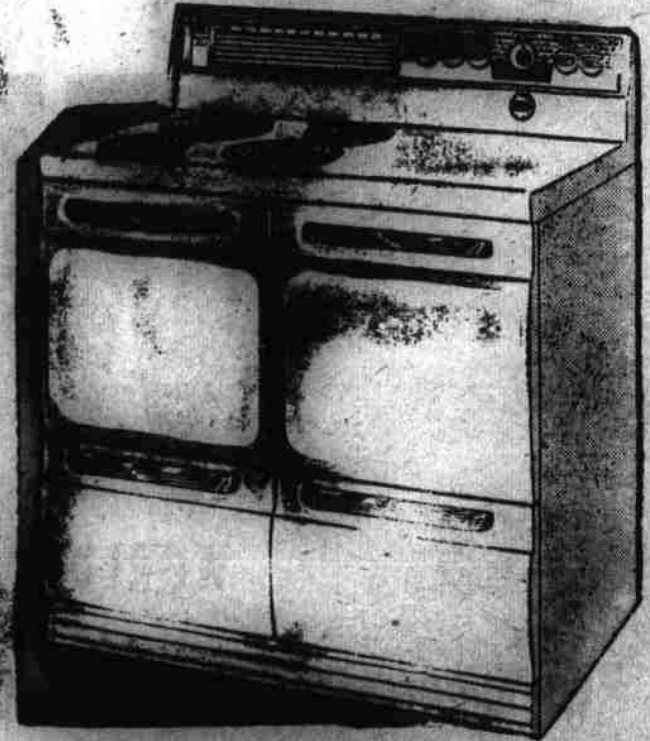
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