

## WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

This is the twelfth and final in a series of weekly summaries of the work of the 1947 session of the General Assembly of North Carolina. These summaries are not intended as a report upon all legislation, but are confined to discussions of matters of general interest or of major importance.

Pursuant to HR-1127, a joint resolution setting the time for adjournment sine die, gave in the hands of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House descended simultaneously at the official hour of 9 P. M. (the clocks having been at a standstill for a little more than an hour) Saturday, April 5, the 76th legislative day, to bring to an end the 1947 session of the General Assembly. During those 76 days of actual sessions, 481 bills and resolutions were introduced in the Senate, and 1,129 were introduced in the House, for a total of 1,610 bills and resolutions and an average of 21.3 per day. Of the total of 1,610, 33 joint resolutions and 1,098 bills, for a total of 1,131, were finally enacted and are now ready to take their places on our statute books. 479 bills (including a score or so of "companion" bills which were introduced for the purpose of permitting consideration by joint committees) fell by the way—some through unfavorable reports by committees, some through failure to emerge from committees at all, and some through floor action. This mortality rate of approximately 30% seems great enough, but many would

doubtless wish to see the total of defeated bills further swelled by particular bills which went the full route. The 1947 session was notable in several respects: for its spending program, for the fight over teachers' and other State employees' salaries, for its treatment of the always troublesome problem of alcoholic beverages, and for its legislation along economic-political lines. As for spending, it burst all previous records with plenty to spare. The biennial appropriations bill, as originally introduced, would have appropriated \$306,095,186 to the general, agriculture and highway funds, but this amount was increased in committee by \$8,013,784, for a total of \$314,107,204 for the biennium. Add to this the \$48,432,256 appropriated by the Permanent Improvements bill and the \$9,300,000 added to the Post War Reserve Fund and we go beyond the \$370,000,000 mark without even taking into account several hundred odd thousands scattered through a number of independent bills, the estimated \$8,050,000 needed to meet pay raises for the last part of the biennium, and the \$1,000,000 contingent appropriation for a State Art Gallery. This means an expenditure of over \$100 for every man, woman and child in North Carolina for the next two years, or spending at the rate of more than \$500,000 per day, which is pretty good going for a State with a relatively low per capita income. This high rate of spending comes from two causes: the State, has definitely launched a program of broader service to its citizens, and it has been

forced, through inflationary measures, to increase State payrolls somewhat in keeping with the increased cost of living. Predictions are that the Revenue Act, with only minor changes in effect, will produce enough to meet current expenditures for the next biennium but if not, the \$30,000,000 Reserve Fund provides a fairly substantial cushion against declining revenues. With all of its unprecedented spending, the State's fiscal affairs appear to be in exceptionally good condition.

With respect to economic-political legislation, one may point at and ponder the implications of the passage of, and probable future effects of, such bills as HB 229 which is entitled "An Act to protect the right to work and to declare the public policy of North Carolina with respect to membership or non-membership in labor organizations as affecting the right to work; to make unlawful and to prohibit contracts or combinations which require membership in labor unions, organizations or associations as a condition of employment, to provide that membership in or payment of money to any labor organization or association shall not be necessary for employment or for continuation of employment and to authorize suits for damages;" SB 353, which requires all persons, firms and corporations (except those who operate solely through media entitled to second class mail privileges or radio) who are engaged principally in the business of influencing public opinion or legislation, to register with the Secretary of State and to file a detailed statement of income; and HB 980, which makes it a felony to advise, advocate or teach the duty or necessity of overthrowing the State's organized government by force, whether such teaching is done by word or mouth or by writing, and the publication or circulation of any book or writing advocating such a doctrine is likewise made a felony. In the meantime, a bill which would have provided a measure of regulation for industrial home-work (and even a resolution which would have provided an investigation to be used as the basis for considering future action with respect to industrial home-work), and a fairly modest wage-hour bill were killed.

Whether it is another step near to total prohibition or simply an indication of the policy which we will be following for some time, 1947's legislation with respect to alcoholic beverages was principally of the "local-option" variety. Present local-option laws were not only allowed to remain in force; they were also considerably extended. All three of the State-wide liquor referendum bills introduced during the session died in committee, thus preserving the present State-wide county local-option liquor system. Carrying the local-option idea beyond the county-unit set-up were local acts permitting the towns of

Asheville, Hickory, Lenoir and Franklin to call ABC elections independently of the county. And most significant of the local-option legislation was HB-702, passed in the closing days of the session, which not only extends local-option rights to include beer and wine but also permits voting by either town or county unit, the wishes of neither unit to affect the other (a town must have at least 1,000 population to call an election, however). Included in this Act also was provision for increasing the taxes on both beverages, the benefits of the increase to go to the counties and towns in which the beverages are sold. This provision, along with the provision of many local acts calling for sharing of county ABC profits by municipalities located in the county, is indicative of the growing demand for greater municipal revenues to finance increasing services. Other legislation passed affecting alcoholic beverages consisted principally of local bills permitting prohibition of beer and wine sales in special areas, such as near churches and schools, and of SB 471, amending the 1945 wine law to give the State ABC Board additional controls over the issuance of retail wine licenses and over wine sales.

Among bills of general interest which were passed during the last week of the session were SB 28 which (with amendments exempting 33 counties), provides a 10-year statute of limitations upon the forfeiture of local real valorem tax liens; SB 328, which strengthens regulations with respect to fire protection in hotels; SB 87, which, among other things, provides additional grounds upon which women may be excused from jury duty and provides that jury lists may be selected from places other than tax lists, such as telephone and city directories; HR 703, authorizing the appointment of a commission to investigate the activities and methods of operation of a large number of State examining boards; SB 396, authorizing deductions for income tax purposes of gifts to veterans' organizations; and HR 979, which requested an advisory opinion from the Supreme Court with respect to the constitutionality of a proposed Act which would have given the members of the 1947 General Assembly an expense allowance. The advisory opinion was soon forthcoming, and briefly, the court said "No." The bill which would have provided the expense allowance was thereupon tabled and, whether or not

there was any connection, four days later SB-46, which would have increased the salaries of the Supreme Court justices from \$7,500 to \$8,350, and which had fought its way through the Senate, was reported unfavorably in the House. (But two bills aimed at increasing the salaries of Superior Court judges were likewise killed).

### Beyond Comprehension

Things I wouldn't understand about the army if I lived to be a 30-year man:

Why the guy who has the least privacy of any human being is called a private.

Why a 10-minute break only lasts five minutes.

Why an officer of the day has to stay up all night.

Why there are such long periods between CQs.

Why it always gets cold the day you put on surtans and always gets hot the day you put on OD's.

Why you come to halt instead of running like mad when the bugle sounds retreat.

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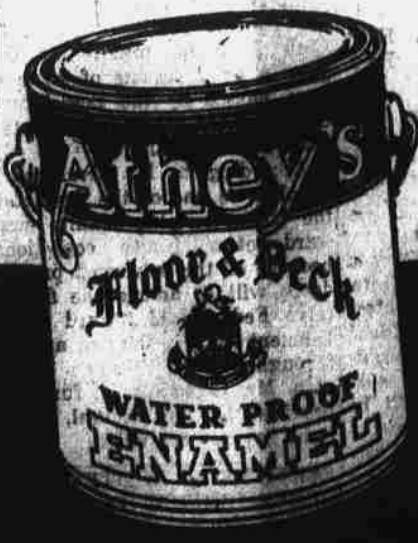
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- 1 Wash thoroughly with soap and water.
- 2 Wash thoroughly with soap and water.
- 3 Wash thoroughly with soap and water.
- 4 Wash thoroughly with soap and water.
- 5 Wash thoroughly with soap and water.
- 6 Wash thoroughly with soap and water.
- 7 Wash thoroughly with soap and water.

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