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CITIES FARE BADLY IN LEGISLATURE

RALEIGH — One potential result of the hectic 1948 session of the General Assembly is likely to be a wide rift between urban and rural residents which, in the long run, can seriously retard the harmonious development and progress of the state.

Like the weather, everyone talks about it, but the one seems able to do anything about it.

Veteran legislators agree that never before in their experience has there been quite such an open display of mutual hostility between those groups favoring a better place on the sun for North Carolinians harassed cities and towns, and those promoting the welfare of rural residents.

The hostility, however, is not limited to the individuals and organizations on the outside who are interested in the doings of the Legislature. It lays over into the halls of the General Assembly, breaks out in committee meetings, and at some times flares up on the floor.

It is, perhaps, a natural result of Governor Scott's oft-repeated concern for the state's rural areas, the fact that he is a farmer, believes firmly that the state's prosperity stems from its rural areas, and is convinced that the great proportion of State services ought to funnel back to those areas. He thinks the cities can take care of themselves.

CITY dwellers have known for many years that the North Carolina General Assembly has been traditionally rural-minded. That rural-mindedness is more than a dozen or so bona fide farmers in the two houses, there are many who seize every opportunity to demonstrate their concern for the farmer. And they are beginning to be convinced that those same legislators have more than a casual distaste in city dwellers — rather a determined negative attitude.

It has been a sad year for the urban dwellers.

The N. C. League of Municipalities, which represents most of the cities and towns in the state, has racked up a big round zero on its legislative tally sheet. Many of the bills which have been knocked down, despite the fact that many of them had obvious merit and fairness. Here are a few examples:

1. A home rule bill, which would have granted to incorporated cities and towns the same type of constitutional protection as they have in such states as Colorado or New York, was killed in committee this week. This would have enabled local government to carry out their own local functions without chasing off to Raleigh each time they wanted to make a minor change. Critics of the bill called it "experimental" and "revolutionary," despite the fact that it has worked well in other states.

2. An effort to have one cent of the gasoline tax returned to municipalities for use in keeping up city streets was approved overwhelmingly by the House Roads Committee, but subsequently was killed by the House Finance Committee which merely increased the appropriation to cities from \$500,000 to \$250,000. Even so, the money must be spent in the form of grants to run through the cities, and is completely under the authority of the State Highway Commission, not the local governments.

3. The Legislature turned thumbs down on a bill to exempt the gasoline tax from city streets doing public work. Cities argued unsuccessfully that, for example, a Charlotte fire truck which answers a call and travels exclusively on city-maintained streets ought not to have to pay the State of North Carolina a gas tax premium for doing so. But their arguments were unavailing.

4. The House killed a bill which would

have made it legal for automobiles to pass on either the right or left hand side on one-way streets or multiple-lane streets within municipalities. It is done thousands of times daily in Charlotte — through necessity — but it is still illegal under State law. A Cleveland County legislator, who had a hand in enabbling the bill, drew in his best rural manner, "Why, if I went down to Charlotte some day and cars started passing me this way and that way, I'd get all mixed up — a pore country boy like me."

5. A Senate bill to permit municipalities to control auto speeds on strictly residential streets was not a part of the State Highway system was killed in the fact that action cities can not enforce speed on streets near schools and parks, for instance, below the State's 35 mile-an-hour permissible limit.

6. The cities asked for the return of half of a 4 per cent State franchise tax levied on utilities which operate within municipal limits. The cities contended they had to service those utilities, not the State, and that they deserved a part of the tax. Instead of getting half the revenue, they get less than one-tenth, a piddling \$500,000 which must be divided some 300 different ways.

7. The cities asked that the Schedule B license taxes collected on businesses operated exclusively within city limits be returned to them. This effort also was lost.

8. Last week a measure introduced by Senator Libby Ward which would have permitted cities to adopt slum clearance laws to comply with requirements of the Federal Housing Act was knocked down as "socialistic." The action in a way jeopardize the chances of cities to participate in any housing funds voted by the State Congress.

THERE have been other minor measures in which the League of Municipalities was interested but which were not on its legislative program. For example, the effort to remove the sales tax from restaurants and other urban dwellers — failed. So did the others.

The trend is unmistakable. These are minor measures, involving in all not more than a few million dollars. There are others of greater significance.

The \$200,000,000 rural road bond issue is the most far-reaching attempt in many years to pour out the State's resources exclusively into the vast rural areas. Half of it will be paid for by motorists who do the major part of their travel within city limits, but the State will receive the money on rural roads not now a part of the primary State Highway System, if Governor Scott has his way.

The effort to hand out the proposed \$50,000,000 school building bond issue on a flat per-county basis, if successful, will penalize the cities. Small rural counties with a small number of school children will get many times more than they actually need under such a plan, whereas the cities, with thousands of youngsters to house, will get far less than they need. Yet the major portion of the revenue paid into the general fund in future years to retire such a bond issue will be paid by urban dwellers.

There are other reasons for this increasing split, too numerous to discuss here. They all add up to a pronounced effort to fund in future years to retire such a bond issue will be paid by urban dwellers. There are other reasons for this increasing split, too numerous to discuss here. They all add up to a pronounced effort to fund in future years to retire such a bond issue will be paid by urban dwellers.

The sad fact is that, in this General Assembly at least, there are not enough such men. — C. A. McKnight.

THE BLOOD OF A CITY

CHARLOTTE could be proud of itself earlier this week. When a mother was in the midst of the maternity ward of a local hospital, losing blood rapidly, the Regional Red Cross Blood Center called for volunteers among the citizens of Charlotte. The Center's officials got the volunteers. Two points of O-RH blood were badly needed; they got the two points. But they may not have. The mother may have died to death if some people had not offered their own through chance — the same O-RH blood as the mother. She's alive now. Very lucky. There will come a time, we're afraid, when some others of us might not be so fortunate. There will come a time when another person will be lying in a surgery room with a doctor helplessly watching the blood flow out of her. There will come a time when the Regional Red Cross Blood Center will answer the phone, hear another request for three points of O-RH negative blood and be forced to report, "We haven't any." There will come a time when an-

other search over the city will fail to turn up anyone to provide the blood.

And someone will die. If we are unable to prevent that. The stock-piled blood at the Regional Blood Center doesn't just grow there. Someone has to put it there. It's our city, we are its citizens, and we have a duty to do and will need a ready supply of blood of all types.

It's our job to put the blood there.

There is, as we know, no rest for the wicked. Nor, it may be added, is there any rest for the worthy, either. The same folks who were worrying so greatly about inflationary prices last August are now doing an equal amount of brow-furrowing about falling prices and deflation. — Oklahoma City Daily Oklahoman.

And for men who still suppose the new look in women's dresses it will be a source of encouragement to know that while the ladies look like Mother Hubbard now, they will look a little more like her cupboard in a couple years according to style experts. — Odessa (Mo.) Odessa.

Sorry, Brother, He Saw Me First



Major Issue Before The Present Congress

How Much Social Security?

THE Social Security Act of 1935, one of the basic accomplishments of the second New Deal Congress, is up for a major overhaul in the first Fair Deal Congress.

The Administration proposals before the House Ways and Means Committee, which has jurisdiction because of the laws involved, opens up the question of how far social security goes, how far it ought to go, and how much of it the U. S. can afford.

A Congressional Quarterly roundup of the issues involved shows that the Social Security Act of 1935, one of the basic accomplishments of the second New Deal Congress, is up for a major overhaul in the first Fair Deal Congress.

Old-Age and Survivors Insurance: Now covers about 35 million of the 57 million persons now at work. Financed by a 1 per cent pay roll tax on all wages and salaries.

Disability Insurance: Now no Federal program. Proposed to give persons covered by old-age and survivors insurance payments during temporary disability based on wages and dependents, ranging from 48 to 64 weeks.

Relief Grants to States: Now Federal Government pays part of costs of relief for aged, needy children, and the blind under different formulas for each category.

General Assistance (Relief): North Carolina is paying an average of \$14.70 a month to 3717 persons on relief. Annual cost is \$556,000. Federal Government now pays \$420,000.

ment now pays \$420,000. Under proposed law, it would pay \$520,000. State and localities would pay \$197,000.

Old-Age Assistance: North Carolina is paying an average of \$20.48 a month to 45,824 old people. Under present law, Federal Government puts up \$8,964,000 a year.

Blind: North Carolina is paying \$374,610 persons an average of \$29.10 a month. Federal Government pays \$18,000 a year of total cost.

Medical Care: Under proposed law, Federal Government would pay North Carolina \$1,170,000 a year for medical care for persons on relief.

People's Platform Choice For Mayor: Editor, The News: Many voters in the city are waiting for a chance to vote in the coming election for mayor.

The Loco Weed: Editor, The News: I am enclosing a clipping from a Texas paper in regard to the weed known as marihuana.

The People's Platform is available to any reader who cares to mount it. Communications should be less than 300 words, typewritten if possible, and on only one side of the paper.

Reasonable Return

WASHINGTON — The ancient principle that half a loaf is better than none, the White House is inclined to accept, especially if the rent-control bill is passed by Congress.

Under the "decontrol" provisions the pattern of rent control seems almost certain to undergo a radical change along geographical lines.

A letter from a widow in New Jersey is typical. She has a little over \$1000 a year in income from property as her only source of income.

The tax for someone like the judgment of Solomon. Officials immediately responsible for the administration of rent control are not so optimistic.

James Marlow: The tax for someone like the judgment of Solomon. Officials immediately responsible for the administration of rent control are not so optimistic.

The Big Show

WASHINGTON — FOR butter patties — on the back, the United States Senate.

See the 90 senators, although not all are here at the same time, sitting in the gallery for free any day.

Will the very distinguished "elder statesman" say one, although he may not think there's anything very distinguished about the man he's asked to yield.

Other one would stop interrupting, but he says "It is a pleasure to yield to the distinguished gentleman from the high point this year was reached by Senator Douglas, Illinois Democrat, during the Senate debate.

Connelly is chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which soon will begin hearings on the Atlantic Pact. But Senator Donnell, Missouri Republican, has doubts about it, and he has been talking to the press to say so although the pact wasn't up for debate.

Far Eastern Timber — Secretary of State Acheson has sent instructions to all American diplomats in the Far East to avoid any action which might be interpreted as an insult to the yellow race.

Labor-Labor Ambassadors — The State Dept. has decided to shut out labor union leaders to diplomatic posts. One of the first to be considered is a capable CIO official now working as an adviser to the Economic Council.

Capital News Capsules: QTO Wants Help — This may be denied, but Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia has appealed to the United States for American artillery, communications equipment and spare parts for his air force.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

WASHINGTON — NOW that James Forrestal is out as Secretary of National Defense, the story can be told of one of his last sessions with the President and the man who was to take his place.

President Truman Is Cross-Examined

of political money has been raised in this country. The Justice Dept. has fuddy-duddyed round with a semi-annual report on the subject of political contributions.

BETTER ENGLISH

What is wrong with this sentence? "He has been pretty successful." "That is the correct pronunciation of 'quietest'?" "What are these words misapplied? Recommend, condemn, supernumerary."