

GUEST EDITORS' COMMENTS

WHY WE ARE POOR

National Library Week, April 20-26, is a good time to make the point and to make it stick.

Lack of libraries is one thing that keeps North Carolina poor, very poor. Lack of books for the libraries we do have and lack of adequate facilities help keep North Carolina poor.

Libraries are not included as necessities for which county commissioners and the state can make appropriations because libraries are not among "essentials."

A special study commission set up by the last General Assembly has filed a challenging report. It has made a study which should arouse our people and our organizations to change the constitution so that the money libraries must have shall be made available.

The state makes no appropriation for public libraries now. Such an appropriation is not authorized. And appropriation of finances from tax money directly for public libraries is not allowed. Money made available for library purposes by counties and municipalities must come from non-tax sources.

The local sources provide about half of the library support from non-tax sources. The Federal government has in recent years increased its aid for library building.

The library study commission recommends to the General Assembly constitutional changes which would classify library needs for what they are, absolute essentials.

The recommendations coming out of the careful library study were from well-informed people. The recommendations as presented did not represent the work of "far out" liberals. The people who manned the study and made the recommendations are thoughtful and dependable. But they recognize that if the state does not include libraries in its budget for state aid, and if the acceptance of libraries as essential is denied we shall be the longer in climbing out of the well of poverty in which a great percentage of our people live.

The Goldsboro Chamber of Commerce several years ago made a survey to determine the greatest needs of the community. Many were questioned as to their views. It was a surprise in many directions when the poll listed better library facilities as the greatest need.

The Legislature now in session has the recommendations of the special study commission. These recommendations should not be allowed to be forgotten, overlooked or ignored. Local library boards should urge favorable action on their representatives. And you can help by calling on your representatives for action. And why not stage Library Week programs in your clubs and organizations?

HENRY BELK, *Guest Editor*

NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

This year, more than in any other recent year, we are conscious of the necessity for a more acute awareness of the needs of our North Carolina Libraries among the

lay citizens and professional librarians alike. This year it is possible for us to set in motion far-reaching proposals which will bring about much needed improvements in our public libraries as well as school libraries.

For this reason I am hopeful that there will be an observance of National Library Week in every area of our state.

This will emphasize the many things now being done on behalf of libraries, and will point up the things which need to be done.

It is said that the people get the kind of government they really want. It can also be said that we in North Carolina will have the kind of libraries we really want.

If we are truly dedicated to the proposition that it is the right of every school child to have adequate library facilities we can have them. And if we truly want adequate public library facilities for every child and adult in North Carolina we can have these, too.

The question is whether we're willing to work intelligently and constructively toward these ends. One valuable place to work is in making the general populace aware of libraries and their needs, and one suitable time to do this is during National Library Week.

So won't you join with others who are going to make April 20-26 a week to be remembered?

Your State Layman's Committee is made up of very distinguished citizens: Mrs. Robert W. Scott, the wife of the Governor; Henry Belk, former Editor of the Goldsboro "News Argus"; David Stick, writer from Kitty Hawk and Chairman of the Commission to Study Library Support; Senator Hector McLean, President, North Carolinians for Better Libraries; Sam Ragan, Editor, Southern Pines "Pilot"; Miss Marlene Plyler, President of N. C. B. & P. W.; John Wheeler, President of Mechanics and Farmers Bank of Durham; Dr. Rachel Davis, physician from Kinston; Jesse Helms, Exec. Vice-President of WRAL, Raleigh; and Charles Adams, Librarian of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

They ask for your assistance. It cannot be done without you.

MRS. JAMES M. HARPER, JR.
Chairman, Library Week

NEW PUBLICATION FROM STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

A revised edition of *Reference Materials for School Libraries; Grades 1 through 12* is now available from the State Department of Public Instruction. The publication, Number 424—3d edition, is comparable to the 2d edition. Each school superintendent in the state has received enough copies to supply each school with one. Additional copies may be purchased for \$2.00.