

Instead, Griffin forces came up with some proposals of their own, which failed. Then Lt. Gov. Ernest Vandiver's team pulled out the committee proposals and put them through. This all happened right at the close of the session.

Then Governor Griffin didn't get around to signing the bill for over a month after the legislature adjourned. Nobody made a move because there was a chance he might veto it—a chance that speculation had was pretty good because the measure bore the Vandiver stamp.

Thus, with one thing and another, the new law is 6 weeks to 2 months later getting going than the study committee figured on.

Nowhere in its approximately 9,000 words does the act mention Negroes, but it has been plain all along that the intent is to discourage Negro registration.

Some voter groups like the Metropolitan Voting Council of Atlanta and the Georgia League of Women Voters take a dim view of the new law. They say it will discourage anybody, white or Negro, from registering.

Once the law does get into operation, this is how registration will go:

Basic qualifications: They're the same—18 years old, 1 year of residence in Georgia with 6 months in the county in which registering.

Application: Go to the office of the county board of registrars—it may be the same as the tax collector's office—and fill out a registration.

It asks name, address, date and place of birth, color of hair and eyes, weight, height, race, occupation, mother's maiden name and father's name.

It also contains an oath about length of residence and another about crimes convicted of that would bar you from voting. These are the same as in the State constitution and are unchanged, though there was talk in the legislature of lengthening the list.

There's also this question to be answered: "Under what constitutional classification do you desire to make application for registration?" That brings on more talk.

Classifications for application: There are two: (1) literacy; (2) good character and understanding of the duties and obligations of citizenship.

These are provided in the State constitution. The law spells out the tests for both classifications.

Literacy test: The county board of registrars gives the applicant a section of the State or U.S. Constitution—any one it wants to—to read aloud and write "in the English language."

If, in the board's judgment, the reading is intelligible and the writing legible, the applicant passes the test.

This is about the same as past procedure.

Citizenship test: This is the only way an illiterate can qualify, and it involves the much-discussed list of 30 questions.

The new law sets forth 30 questions about government—and no answers—to be propounded to the applicant orally by the registrars. The applicant must answer 20 of them correctly to pass.

This is real toughening up of the law. There was a question-and-answer provision in the former law, but the questions were easier and the applicant had to get only 10 out of 20 right.

Two trips to register: It will take two trips to register unless a county board of registrars makes special arrangements to accommodate the applicant.

The first trip will be to apply—to fill out the registration card.

The second trip will come after the board of registrars notifies the applicant to report to take the test he has chosen—either the reading-and-writing test or the question-and-answer test.

No longer can a deputy qualify an applicant. The board of registrars itself must do so.

Fulton County already is planning to have the board of registrars in constant session to prevent the necessity of two trips. Under the new law, the tax commissioner and two deputies are to constitute the county board of registrars in Fulton. But this provision does not apply to any other county.

Challenges: As in the past, any registered voter can challenge the right of any other registered voter to be on the list.

But something new has been added—any registered voter may challenge the qualifications of any applicant.

Registrars: Existing county boards of registrars will continue to serve until July 1, 1961. However, right away—by Tuesday, April 1—the superior court judge in each county must designate one member of the board as chief registrar.

The 1961 appointments will be made as in the past. The superior court judge