

*Bulletin*

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May 18, 1956

TO GOVERNOR ROBERT B. MEYNER AND  
MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE:

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SUBJECT: Report on State Song Project

Chapter J R 11, of the Laws of 1954, directs the State Department of Education, by a joint resolution, to make a study of various suggested state songs and make a recommendation thereon to the Governor and the Legislature in 1956. Pursuant to this mandate, Commissioner F. M. Raubinger established in the fall of 1954 a State Song Study Commission. The members of the Commission were as follows:

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| (1) Mr. Arthur Berger<br>Director, Music Department<br>Trenton State Teachers College<br>Trenton, New Jersey  | (6) Mr. Herald Jones<br>Director of Choral Music<br>East Orange High School<br>East Orange, New Jersey                   |
| (2) Miss Ruth E. French, Past President<br>New Jersey Association of Teachers<br>of English<br>2 South Hartford Avenue<br>Atlantic City, New Jersey | (7) Mr. Robert B. Macdougall<br>Director of Educational Activities<br>Station WATV<br>Newark 1, New Jersey               |
| (3) Mr. Siebolt H. Frieswyk<br>Educational Director<br>Griffith Music Foundation<br>605 Broad Street<br>Newark 2, New Jersey                        | (8) Mr. Ivor Newman<br>Manager, WVNJ<br>Halsey Street<br>Newark, New Jersey  |
| (4) Mr. Ray Green<br>Executive Secretary<br>American Music Center<br>250 West 57th Street<br>New York City, New York                                | (9) Mr. Willard D. Newton<br>Sussex County Helping Teacher<br>22 Chestnut Street<br>Sussex, New Jersey                   |
| (5) Mrs. Doris Allbee Humphrey<br>President, New Jersey Music Clubs<br>7607 Boulevard, East<br>North Bergen, New Jersey                             | (10) Mr. Roger Sessions<br>Music Department<br>Princeton University<br>Princeton, New Jersey                             |
|   | (11) Mr. Michael Skislak, President<br>State Conference of Musicians<br>3010 Hudson Boulevard<br>Jersey City, New Jersey |

- (12) Mr. F. Austin Walter  
Music Department  
Rutgers University, the State  
University of New Jersey  
New Brunswick, New Jersey
- (13) Mrs. David Williams, President  
Music Educators Association of  
New Jersey  
378 Greylock Parkway  
Belleville, New Jersey
- (14) Mr. John F. Williamson  
Westminster Choir School  
Princeton, New Jersey
- (15) Mr. Henry P. Zimmerman, President  
Department of Music  
117 East Westfield Avenue  
Roselle Park, New Jersey
- (16) Mr. Lawrence J. Greene  
Attorney at Law  
115 West 57th Street  
New York 19, New York
- (17) Dr. Frank B. Stover  
(Secretary of the Commission)  
Assistant Commissioner of  
Education  
State Department of Education  
175 West State Street  
Trenton 25, New Jersey

At the request of Commissioner Raubinger, the Commission members agreed to do the preliminary screening of the songs submitted for consideration. In addition, rules for the State Song Project were adopted, stating the method and regulations by which songs could be submitted for consideration. Most of these regulations consisted in defining the type of manuscript which could be considered, giving such details as size of manuscript, types of lyrics, etc. Entries were limited to residents of New Jersey or persons born in New Jersey, and excluded members of the State Song Study Commission or their families.

The rules for the project and entry blanks were further considered by Mr. Lawrence J. Greene, Attorney at Law, 115 West 57th Street, New York 19, New York. Mr. Greene is frequently consulted by music publishers and is conversant with all the legal implications of such a project and the safeguards which would be required by the state to protect it against suit. The rules adopted incorporated his suggestions.

While all persons submitting songs for consideration were required to sign in their application the appropriate releases and were also informed that their songs could not be considered unless they conformed to the rules and regulations adopted by the Commission, some songs which were submitted within a reasonable time after the deadline of June 3, 1955, were also considered.

Because of the difficulty of assembling a Commission of such prominent musicians and persons active in music for enough regular meetings to consider all 66 songs submitted, it was agreed that Messrs. Arthur Berger and Willard D. Newton, who are also employed by the State Department of Education, should do the initial screening of the songs, and that subsequent to such screening they should submit the most appropriate songs for consideration by the Commission. This process was authorized by resolution of the Commission which reads as follows:

"Upon motion duly made, seconded and carried, it was unanimously:

"RESOLVED, that the screening performed by Messrs. Arthur Berger and Willard D. Newton, members of the State Song Study Commission, of the songs submitted by entrants in the State Song Study be adopted as the screening action of the entire State Song Study Commission; that the decisions by Messrs. Berger and Newton in eliminating all but 16 of the said songs as not meriting further consideration by the State Song Study Commission be ratified and approved; that the State Song Study Commission dispense with further consideration of the songs so eliminated by Messrs. Berger and Newton in their screening; and that the acts of Messrs. Berger and Newton in connection with the said screening and elimination be ratified, approved and adopted as the acts of the entire State Song Study Commission."

Sixteen (16) songs were selected as the most promising of those submitted for approval. They were recorded on tape at the Trenton State Teachers College by student musicians at the college. On February 9, 1956, the songs were reviewed by the State Song Study Commission, without being identified as to author, composer, etc. Several other songs not selected for the final screening which had previously been submitted to the Legislature for official adoption were also considered.

After considerable deliberation and discussion, it was the opinion of the Commission members that no song had been found which they considered to be of sufficient worth to recommend as the official State Song for New Jersey.

During the various sessions of the Commission it became apparent that most of the Commission members did not believe that most well known state songs (California, Here I Come; My Old Kentucky Home, etc.) are ever the result of such

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a project, or the result of the inspiration of an individual composer. It may be that in the future a similar project to consider other songs would be appropriate and that as a result an official state song could be discovered.

It is, therefore, my duty to recommend to the Governor and the members of the Legislature that no song be adopted at this time as the official state song of New Jersey, but that composers and authors in our state be encouraged to continue to give their attention to this important task. The Department of Education would be glad to receive from time to time other songs, and to convene without further authorization by the Legislature another commission in the future which might consider the suitability of such compositions.

Respectfully submitted,

F. M. RAUBINGER

Commissioner of Education

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