

CRITIC EXPERIMENTS IN DIRECT LEGISLATION IN OREGON

Publication of "Official Gazette" Merely Provides Useless Sinecures for Three Men—The Impractical Scheme of Proportional Representation and Its Manifest Disadvantages—Proposal to Make a Czar of the Governor.

Address read before the Portland Republican Club, March 1, by C. N. McArthur, speaker of the Oregon House of Representatives, session of 1910.

At the general election in November, 1910, the voters of Oregon will be called upon to approve or reject the following propositions submitted under the initiative by the People's Progressive Government League of Oregon.

1. A bill for an act to create a board of People's Inspectors of Government, to provide for the publication and circulation of an Official Gazette; to fix the salaries and to define the powers and duties of said board of inspectors and making an appropriation therefor.

2. A constitutional amendment, designed to make the initiative and referendum more effective and prevent the abuse of the emergency power by the Legislature; to prevent log-rolling; to provide for a system of proportional representation and to prevent hasty legislation.

3. A constitutional amendment substituting the Governor for various boards and commissions and for the different institutions and departments, giving the Governor the power of appointing and removing all judges and county officers, and providing for a cabinet system of state government.

4. A constitutional amendment abolishing a majority vote in the election of county officers, and providing for a county business manager.

5. A constitutional amendment intended to decrease the number of technical appeals and new trials; to provide for printing only such opinions of the Supreme Court as are of public interest, and to remove constitutional restrictions on the adoption by law of better methods from other judicial systems.

I shall discuss the first three of the above mentioned propositions, leaving the last two for some future occasion, as lack of time prevents a careful study of their provisions.

This bill proposes to create a board of "People's Inspectors of Government," consisting of three members, at an annual salary of \$3,000 each, to govern the terms of the bill the members of this board are to be as nearly non-partisan as possible.

The first and most serious objection to a board of this character lies in the fact that it imposes an additional burden of taxation upon our people without any corresponding benefit.

The first board of inspectors would be a board of three men, one of whom would be chosen by the voters of each county, and the other two by the Legislature.

monarchies or oligarchies, but is and should be maintained as republican in form.

The proposed blending of the legislative and executive functions of our state government would produce an inharmonious mixture of these two great powers—an unhealthy overlapping of two separate branches, producing friction, confusion and uncertainty, and lodging altogether too much power in the Executive.

Another fat-salaries office, that of "state business manager" is proposed in this amendment. It imposes another additional burden upon the taxpayers, with no particular benefits.

The initiative and referendum are institutions that should be guarded with jealous care by our people. It is not their use, but their abuse, that threatens the safety of the state.

Let us move forward, guarding with jealous care the name of our fair state, and holding deep reverence for her institutions and traditions, and a greater love for our Common Country.

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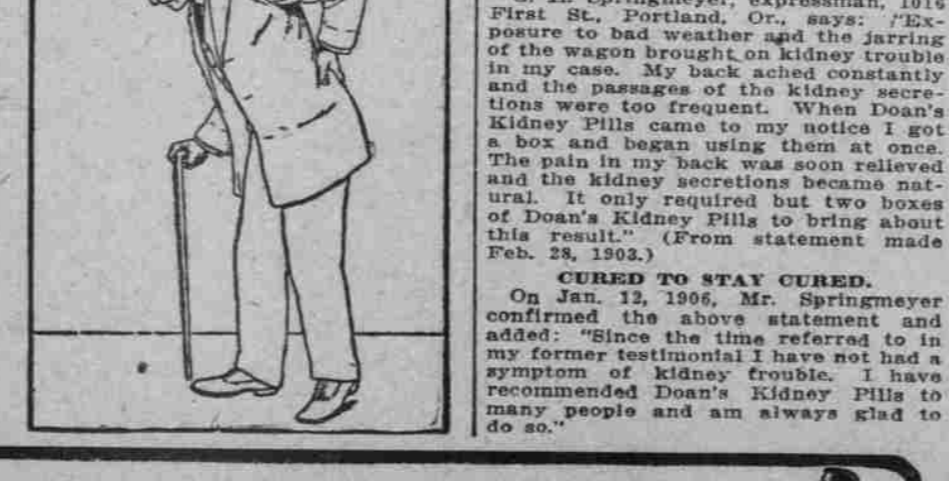
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