

# Editors Say Townsend Plan Factor

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a general feeling that the Townsend plan would be all-important in the coming elections.

One editor wrote: "It will be a very important issue," and underlined the "very" and the "important."

Another said: "There is no doubt but that the Townsend plan will play a most important role during the coming election, but unless greater enthusiasm is aroused it will be nothing better than a 50-50 proposition."

"In one southern Oregon community of 100 persons there is a Townsend club of 210 members."

**Townsend Deciding Factor**  
From a little farther down the coast:

"I would say that the Townsend plan will be the deciding factor in the election of legislative candidates."

Still another coast publisher said that "over 50 per cent of the voters are members of the Townsend group and will vote for any congressman or senator who favors the plan."

Another said: "Will control at least 40 per cent of the vote."

Another coast publisher said: "Present indications are that it will be the leading issue in the coming campaign. This section of the state is a solid unit in favor of the Townsend plan."

**Group Strength Respected**  
A Clatsop county editor thought: "Townsendites are an unknown quantity. Unless a multiplicity of issues split their ranks, they will have sufficient strength to be a deciding factor in the election."

Also from the coast: "The Townsendites are thicker on the coast than sand fleas, and will vote unanimously for anyone who swallows the bait."

Another view: "The Townsend people are well organized and sold on the \$200 proposal and will cut a big swath in any election."

A Coos county editor: "I do not believe the man who is against the Townsend plan can be elected, with the single exception that this may not apply to Senator McNary."

**Hopful Held Optimistic**  
Another coast editor declared: "It will be strong but not as strong as the Townsend boosters hope."

From the lower Columbia section came this idea: "It seems to me that the tendency is to over-estimate the strength of

the Townsend movement. We cannot expect the Townsend advocates to present a united front on any matter either in Oregon or elsewhere."

From Klamath county one editor said: "The Townsend plan will reach its maximum power in the next election. The candidate who opposes it will be defeated."

**Josephine Editor Negative**  
A conflicting view came from Josephine county, where an editor said:

"Do not believe it will be an important factor."

Another southern Oregon observer, who has long been associated with practical politics in the state, said this:

"Anybody in the political game is foolish if he tries to kid himself about the potential strength of the Townsend movement. I have the impression that candidates for president to dog catcher will have to state their unqualified position on the plan."

**Opponents Held Doomed**  
A Douglas county publisher declared:

"Candidates who do not take a definite stand for the plan are doomed to defeat."

Another Douglas county newspaper man believed that the "Townsend plan would have so faded by 1936 that it would not be a factor."

This editor felt that many persons were affiliated with the Townsend plan for "business reasons only."

Another publisher in Douglas county thought the Townsend plan would be more difficult to cure than the seven-year itch and the chain-letter period."

In Jackson county one publisher declared: "A solid and aggressive minority will smoke out candidates who, as a whole, will not have the courage to oppose them."

**Strength Held Overestimated**  
An opposing view came from the same county:

"The Townsendites are strong here, but not as strong as they think."

From southern Oregon, too, came this view:

"I think the Townsendites will just about elect a clean ticket in Oregon next year. Doubtful if they can unseat McNary, but if he is the only one they won't get. I do not think that either Mott or Pierce will be elected because they have been

straddling the Townsend issue."

From far eastern Oregon came a very interesting comment:

"The Townsend plan may be a considerable factor. Its weakness, I believe, is due to the type of persons actively engaged in its promotion. Since they were not successful in a more simple task of succeeding in any one type of more personal endeavor, do not believe that they can give the leadership necessary in the more complicated task of government. Since they failed before, believe they ultimately will fail again. I believe the Townsendites are more vociferous than substantial both in influence and in numbers."

**Politicians Held Craven**  
"The principal reason for their apparent success has been the craven attitude of politicians in submitting to their threats. There is no office worth the surrender of beliefs honestly arrived at."

"I believe old-age pensions are going to come and are, under our present economic conditions, justified and are within reason obtainable."

"The Townsend agitation may hasten the day but it is itself, in my opinion, utterly unattainable."

Another idea from the same section:

"The man who does not endorse the Townsend plan will have a hard time being elected in the forthcoming election."

**Pierce in Difficulty**  
From Union county comes this interesting view:

"The Townsend plan is likely to be a factor of considerable importance in this section of the state where clubs continue to grow and where sentiment among the members is that none but tried and true Townsend advocates be supported for office. Walter Pierce is having some difficulty in trying to convince the Townsend people that he is 'tried and true.'"

From Gilliam county came this view:

"I believe from sentiment I have heard expressed that the Townsend plan will prove a big factor in the forthcoming election. The plan appears to be growing in strength and apparently both major parties are recognizing this factor."

**People Know Futilities**  
From another part of eastern Oregon:

"In some sections of the state it will be a big factor especially in the larger centers. Here in eastern Oregon where people like to think they can think for themselves, it isn't going to cut so much ice. Most of the people here have discovered the futility of paying a \$1000 debt with \$100; with trying to grow apples on a currant bush and with making the country rich by taxing."

From Baker county:

"The Townsend plan will be quite a factor. We will have some real sport over here. The Townsendites have Walter Pierce scared stiff. He has endorsed their program, but they are rumored to be planning a candidate of their own in the person of District Attorney Burleigh, a Townsend leader. In my opinion, a politician who takes a firm stand doesn't have as much to fear as a 'pussy-footer.' Both of our representatives in the legislature voted against the Townsend memorial and nobody has been killed over it."

From central eastern Oregon came this view:

"From appearance here, it will not play a big part. The most rabid Townsendites are folks who have not done much for themselves but would like to have the government give them a bed of roses. No Townsend plan booster attempts to give any reasons for his beliefs. The stock reply is 'Everything else has failed. It can't do any harm to try this.' Enthusiasm waning."

From Umatilla county an editor said:

"Believe it will be a very important factor. These people are in earnest and I believe will stick together until the next election."

Another eastern Oregon editor questioned the leadership available in the Townsend group. He said:

"It would be a major factor if it had leadership. The people are nine-tenths for it."

**"Distressing Element," View**

Another view: "The Townsend vote is going to be a very great and very distressing element in the coming election. With them there is no compromise. They will vote almost as one. The Townsendites look to Los Angeles for guidance just as the Mohammedans looked to Mecca."

Another editor said:

"The Townsend plan will be such a factor that if the forces are organized properly they will absolutely dominate the 1936 election."

Another opinion:

"Believe it will have a lot to do with the results of the next election. We doubt if there is an institution in our county opposed to the plan excepting this newspaper."

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