

# The Santiam News

Politically Independent

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EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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### HOW DO THEY STAND?

WHENEVER THE PEOPLE OF OREGON have had an opportunity to express their sentiments concerning our direct primary law, in any way or manner, they have pronounced emphatically for the law. Of the total vote of 99,315 in 1904, the law was adopted by 56,205 votes. The law then as now contained the Statement No. 1 provision. In the election of 1908, a law was proposed, through the initiative, which made the provisions of Statement One obligatory on all legislators. That is to say, when the legislator accepts election he becomes pledged to vote for the people's choice for United States senator. The measure was adopted by 69,668 for to 21,162 against. Thus it was demonstrated that the people were, not only in favor of the law as it now stands, but when given an opportunity to pass upon Statement One separate and apart from other features of the law, they adopted it by a more than three to one vote. This emphatic second vote ought to be sufficient evidence to show that the people are overwhelmingly in favor of the direct election of United States senators and, until the federal constitution is changed permitting this, they favor the Oregon plan. But there is a bunch of old time republican political bosses and office holders who are not willing to accept this evidence and have evolved the assembly as a means of evading the law. As a result of the assembly, there were enough assembly candidates for the legislature nominated, providing they are all elected, to control the legislature. And should Jay Bowerman be elected governor, then assemblyism will be in the saddle and tinkering with reform laws would be the inevitable result.

Should assemblyism control the legislature and, with a governor who would approve assembly legislation, the primary law including Statement One will be destroyed in spite of all the people can do. By amending the law to suit their ideas and by declaring that an emergency exists, the people will be helpless to prevent the accomplishment of their purpose. There is but one plan by which our reform legislation can be preserved for the people, and that is to elect a legislature which is friendly to such legislation. It would be unsafe to trust men too far, who have shown a disposition to disregard the law as our assembly friends have shown. Nor will it be safe to trust them because of the honeyed words the friends of assemblyism are now using profusely. Only when a legislative candidate has proven his fidelity to the primary law by signing Statement One and the further purpose, to not attempt by legislative enactment, to change the full purpose and intent of the reform laws now upon our statute books. Unless a candidate is willing to pledge himself in this manner, no friend of the primary law and other laws, enacted by the people, should vote for him. Every legislative candidate should be made to show his colors. He is either a friend or an enemy of these laws and we, the people whose votes are solicited,

have a right to know about the matter before election day.

Mr. Bowerman, the republican candidate for governor, has announced that he would subscribe to such pledge. This is hardly in harmony with his very active assemblyism. Yet, he may now see the error of his ways and be willing to stand by the interests of the people. But the change of sentiment may be for the purpose of catching votes. If so, the people are excusable if they do not accept the statement in full. Especially, when his opponent, Mr. West, has ever been a pronounced friend to all of our reform legislation.

Elsewhere in this issue will be found the statement of F. J. Denny, candidate on the democratic ticket for representative. There is no room to doubt how Mr. Denny stands and every other candidate for the legislature should be required to pledge himself similarly.

There is an element in our state which is endeavoring to so cripple our reform laws, that business advantage will be served. This element works secretly and has an abundance of money at its command, to use for the accomplishment of its designs. The element will work through the legislature. This is why the people should use the utmost caution in selecting members of that body.

### THEN AND NOW

IT IS SOMEWHAT REMARKABLE to note the change of political thought throughout our nation. The Wrong of yesterday has become the Right of today. Of course, this change of thought is due to a better understanding of the question at issue, at least sometimes it is. When the scales fall from our eyes, we see that we have been wrong, mayhap honestly so, and a sense of right and justice forces us to attempt to be honestly right. It has been said that fools never change their opinions, and that wise men sometimes do. If a man has not intellectuality enough to grasp a new truth, or an old truth stated in a new way, of course he cannot nor will not change his opinions. On the other hand, the wise man, or a man who has good ordinary horse sense, uses his reasoning faculties. He may have accepted a certain view of a question as being the only correct solution; yet when he gets his think tank into operation, he finds that he has been wrong. If he is conscientiously honest, he is compelled to change his opinion to accord with his new views of the question.

In political thought, prejudice and hidebound partisanship, has blocked the way to a correct and honest view in many instances. Too many of us, like a band of sheep, follow our leaders in a sort of blind manner, thinking that they must be right, of course. We accept their views, because they are high up in the party councils and are in a position to know about political matters better than we and, we accept their teachings as being honest and true. At last, we get to thinking about these matters ourselves. Mayhap the leader in whom we have had the most confidence, has been proven to be wrong and dishonest; when we are apt to conclude that his teachings were wrong as well. We then conclude that the only safe course to pursue is to do our own thinking and when we reach this stage, a very great many of us become politically independent. A great many men are now finding out that our leaders, many of them at least, have been wrong on the great political questions. They have been teaching us political heresy instead of political truth. Now the people are taking matters into their own hands. They are distrusting the old leaders. They are cutting loose from partisan prejudice and adopting a spirit of political tolerance in lieu thereof. The people are examining political and economic questions as never before and from the other fellows viewpoint, and strange to say, we find that the political cranks of a few years ago were teaching political truths and facts which the people are now assimilating.

Mr. Bowerman is looked upon as one of the chief instigators of the assembly. If the assembly stands for anything, it is and was opposed to the popular selection of candidates and was and is especially bitter towards Statement No. 1. Mr. Bowerman now announces that he is willing to subscribe to the statement and guarantees, if elected, to not countenance any interference whatever of the primary law. If the people do not trust in the eleventh hour conversions, Mr. Bowerman should not find fault. Certain it is, had he published the statement he made public in last Monday's Oregonian, his assembly friends would never have given him the nomination for governor.

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