

Capital Punishment Issue Raises Public Interest in State

By DICK HUMPHREY
UPI Correspondent

Salem—The ballot measure eliminating the provision for capital punishment from the Oregon constitution is one that has raised a good deal of public interest.

The measure (proposition 4) would not "abolish" capital punishment in a strict sense. What it would do is remove the mandatory provision for death as the penalty for first degree murder from the constitution and leave the penalty up to the state Legislature.

However, the legislative intent is pretty clear. Lawmakers probably would make first degree murder punishable by life imprisonment with parole possible after 15 years. Second degree murder would be punishable by not more than 25 years with parole possible after seven years as it is now.

Both Gov. Robert D. Holmes and Republican candidate Mark Hatfield favor abolition of the death penalty. Seven states have abolished capital punishment and it is optional in 12 others. Oregon

abolished it in 1914, then reinstated it in 1920.

Another constitutional angle to the measure is that proponents believe the death penalty violates the article

providing that punishment shall be for purposes of rehabilitation only.

The State Power Development Measure (proposition 10) also has caused comment. It,

too, is favored by both candidates for governor.

Under this measure, the state could buy or build water, thermal or nuclear power generation facilities and trans-

mit and sell power to industries using 10,000 kilowatts or more.

A State Power Commission could join in power development with the United States,

other states or private industry.

Proponents of the measure say that by amending the constitution to give the commission such powers, Oregon would receive more federal power or be able to produce its own cheaper. Opponents say the state should not be in the power business and that the 10,000 kilowatt limitation would prohibit sale to most small industries.

Under the so-called "preference clause" in the Bonneville Power Administration act, federally generated power is sold first to coops, government owned agencies and other public bodies. Washington state now has more such public groups than Oregon and so gets a larger share of federal power.

Oregon was empowered to create a power commission in a 1932 amendment to the constitution, but so far has failed to do so.

Under the present measure, the commission would have to get legislative approval before borrowing money for its projects.

County Home Rule

A third measure favored by both candidates for governor is county home rule (proposition 11) which, if passed, would let voters in any county adopt a charter choosing their form of government.

The state constitution now

provides for county management, but this proposition would amend the constitution to allow any form.

Proponents say counties should have the same right as cities to choose the most efficient government to solve their local problems. They say present county government is

rigid. Opponents argue that counties are creatures of the state and don't need powers such as cities wield.

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Homecoming Dance Set at St. Mary's

A Homecoming dance is scheduled following the football game between St. Mary's High school and Bonanza Friday night in the gymnasium at St. Mary's school. The dance will be from 10 p.m. to midnight.

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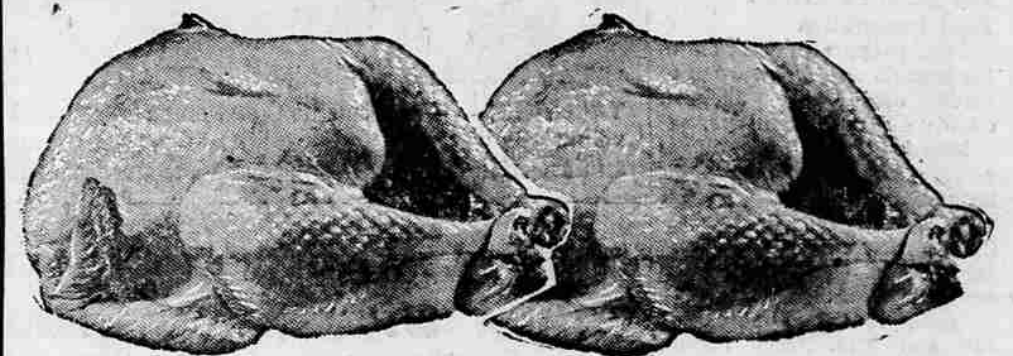
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