

State Elections Group Silent On Future Plans

By PAUL W. HARVEY JR.
SALEM — The Legislative Interim Committee on Elections won't tell until after the general election how it proposes to overhaul Oregon's antiquated election laws.

The committee, consisting of four Republicans and one Democrat, is afraid it might be accused of trying to influence the election. When the committee was created by the 1955 Legislature, leading Democrats suspected it would tailor the election laws to suit the GOP.

The committee, however, has remained completely nonpartisan. The credit for keeping the committee out of politics belongs to its chairman, Sen. Pat Loneragan, Portland, 76-year-old Republican.

An example of the committee's nonpolitical character was displayed at its recent meeting when it rejected a Republican move to have the attorney general appointed by the governor.

Another example was in the committee adopting a Democratic proposal to require the signing of only one poll book when voting. Two now have to be signed.

The committee made a total of 54 recommendations. They will be submitted to the Legislature in January.

These recommendations really give the election laws a face lifting.

NOT PUBLIC
While they won't be made public until after election, any reporter who has attended the meetings knows what the recommendations will be.

One proposes that every candidate who has entered a presidential primary in another state automatically is entered in Oregon. This would give Oregon voters a wide choice that they don't have now.

Another would eliminate the vice presidential primary. The committee feels it doesn't mean anything since the presidential nominee usually picks his running mate.

Oregon's delegations to party conventions would have to continue to support the presidential primary winner only as long as he gets 35 per cent of the convention vote.

The secretary of state would be given broad powers to supervise elections, which now are run by the county clerks.

Here's a summary of other important recommendations:

Make the state and county school superintendents appointive.

LENGTHEN TERMS
Give precinct committeemen and committeewomen four-year terms. Now they are two years.

Compel candidates to file expense statements 10 to 15 days before election, as well as after.

Have each candidate designate

one person to report the entire cost of the campaign.

Provide that false information given while registering must be intentional before the registrant can be prosecuted.

Allow candidates to spend more money than now is permitted. Provide that sample ballots be mailed to each voter.

Double the rates for printing material in the Voters' Pamphlet. Permit absentee ballots to be deposited until election day. Now the absentee voters must vote at least five days before election.

Make it harder to amend the Constitution by requiring a majority of all votes cast at a general election.

The requirement the proposed system, the state department of education would devise a standard test whereby a voter would have to be at least at the fifth grade level in school.

Eliminate some silly rules, such as the one that an officer of a church can't advise a friend how to vote.

Remove all ballot slogans. Pay election board members \$1 an hour, compared with the present top of 75 cents. Election boards would be reduced from five members to four or three.

Have presidential electors, who now are elected, appointed by party central committees.

Standardize the literacy test for voters. It now is up to the discretion of county clerks. Under

the proposed system, the state department of education would devise a standard test whereby a voter would have to be at least at the fifth grade level in school. The tests would be given only when the county clerk doubts the literacy of a voter.

Make the county offices of assessor, auditor and constable appointive.

State Rep. Kay Meriwether Kelly, Portland, is the only Democrat on the committee.

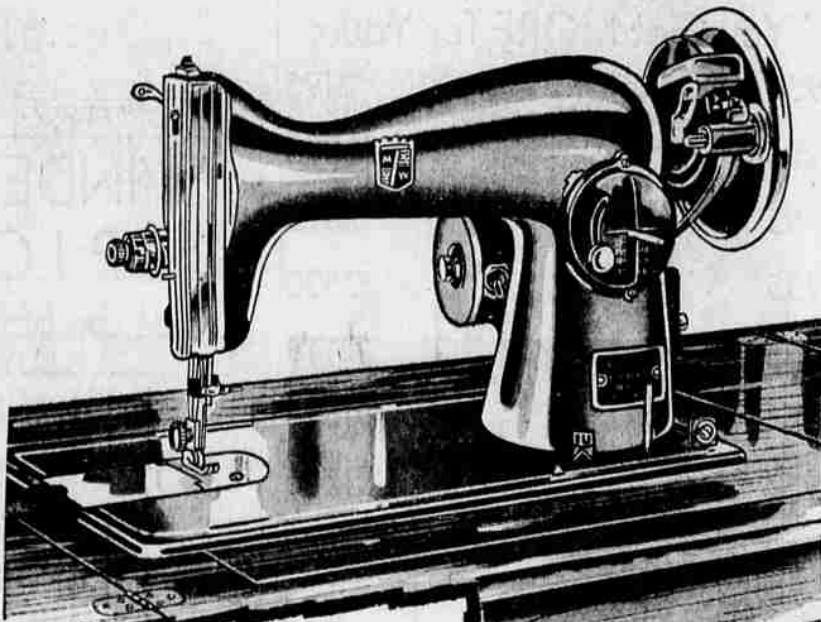
The other Republicans are State Sen. Mark Hatfield, Salem; State Rep. E. H. Mann, Medford; and Mrs. Frederic W. Young, Portland.



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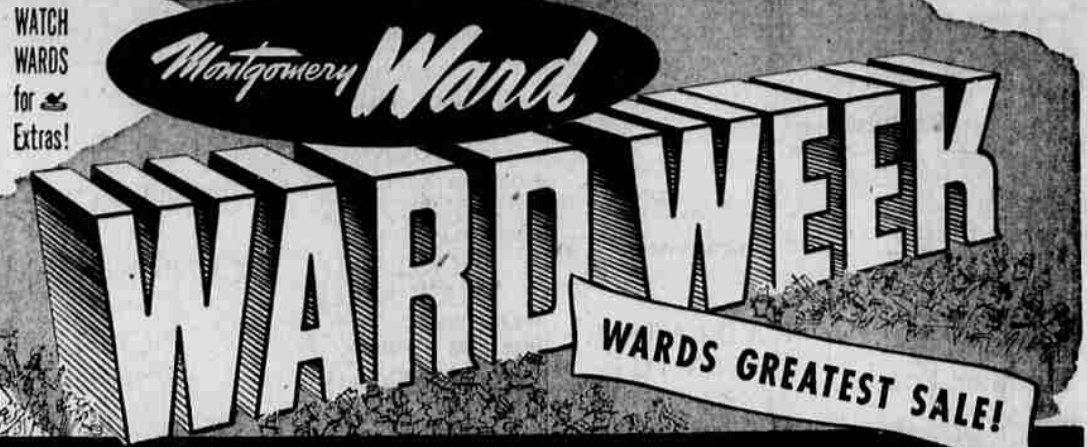
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Civic Group Plans Dance

FORT KLAMATH — The Civic Improvement Club met in the clubhouse the evening of October 5 with President Mrs. Harold Wimer conducting the business session. Introduced were two special out of town guests, Mrs. Eva Cook and Mrs. Josephine Kittredge of Klamath Falls.

Final plans were made for the United Fund-Red Cross benefit dance sponsored by the club to be held Saturday evening, October 13, in the clubhouse. The dance was postponed from October 5 because of deer season.

Mrs. Gene A. Page was appointed chairman of the club's part in the annual community Christmas program and tree. She and her committee will arrange to purchase treats for the children, furnish and decorate the tree, etc.

Refreshments were served during the social hour after the meeting. Hostesses for the evening were Mrs. Ernest Reese and Mrs. Earl Jackson, with Mrs. Eldon Brattain assisting.

Beginning this month, afternoon meetings will be resumed, the next meeting date on Friday, October 19, at 2 p.m.

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