

DO YOU KNOW

The Provisions of the

Referendum Measures

and the

Constitutional Amendment

To Be Voted on November 7th by the
People of Washington?

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No clearer or more concise statement of the meaning of the Measures before the people November 7th has appeared than the address before the Harmony Club of Pomeroy by

Hon. Mack F. Gose

Former Associate Justice of the Washington Supreme
Court.

"Briefly stated, the proposed amendment to section 1 of article 6 of the constitution limits the right to vote upon the question of issuing public bonds and incurring public debts to those who pay taxes in the district or community where the debt is imposed. It does not fix the amount of taxes one must pay in order to vote on the question. It merely provides that the voter must pay some sort of tax, either real or personal. A tax is a first lien upon all property upon which it is imposed. There is no good reason why one who does not pay a tax may vote to impose the burden of a tax upon the property of his neighbor.

To Distinguish Between Measures.

"The distinction between an initiative and referendum measure is this: Under the constitution there are two law-making bodies in the state—the legislative body consisting of the senate and house of representatives, whose members are chosen by the people at a general election and the people themselves who may enact laws by means of initiative measures. The referendum is a veto power reserved to the people. When the legislature has enacted a law, it may, under the constitution, be referred to the people, who may approve or reject it. So we have two lawmaking bodies—the legislature and the people, and two powers which may exercise the veto, the governor and the people.

"It follows from what we have said that the seven referendum measures have been enacted into laws by the legislature and have been approved by the governor or have been passed over his veto by a two-thirds vote of both the senate and house of representatives. I think it is generally conceded that the state has never in its history had a stronger or better legislative body than it had at the last session,—the one that enacted the measures in question. The state was peculiarly fortunate in having in the last legislature many members of uncommon ability in both houses. That as a body both houses were devoted to the advancement of the public welfare no thoughtful or patriotic person will have the temerity to question. If the postulate is sound it follows that the voter should presume that all referendum measures are both wise and just and should vote to sustain them in the absence of some compelling reasons for voting against them.

No. 3 Prevents Fraud

"Referendum measure No. 3 was enacted by the legislature at the last session to facilitate the operation of the provisions of the constitution relating to the initiative and referendum and to prevent fraud, it requires all initiative and referendum petitions to be deposited with the registration officer of the city, town or precinct and provides that such petitions may be signed only at such offices. Its purpose is to guarantee the integrity of the petitions and the signatures and to prevent such fraud as was shown in the seven sisters cases which were before the supreme court and which may be found in 81 Wash. reports at page 623. In these cases the petitions were so honeycombed with fraudulent signatures, that with such signatures eliminated there were not sufficient names on the petitions to satisfy the mandate of the constitution and to authorize the secretary of state to place them on the ballot. The court held that inasmuch as the signatures had been certified, it had no power to purge them of their fraud and strike out the fraudulent names. To remedy the evil, this law was enacted.

Initiative and Referendum Value

"The initiative and referendum have become an integral point of our governmental system. It is of the utmost importance that before reasonable safeguards shall be placed before them to the end that every name on such a petition shall be signed by a voter. In no other way can we maintain the purity of our lawmaking and law-vetoes. Every voter in the state should have a majority and the dissenting opinions in the seven sisters cases. And I feel confident that after doing so there will arise in the mind of a large majority of the voters of the state a fixed purpose to vote for this measure in order that the fraud and iniquity there shown shall not be repeated. None but a registration officer has the data to check the signatures to such petitions. He has the detailed record of the voters and all opportunity to commit fraud will be eliminated if the registration officer does his duty.

"The law has another virtue: Unless the constitutional number of legal voters take sufficient interest in a measure to step into the proper registration office and sign a petition the taxpayer should not be burdened with the expense of having the measure placed upon the ballot.

"Referendum No. 4 was enacted for the same purpose as No. 3 last referred to and should be sustained for the same reason. The voter

who wishes to sustain a referendum measure should vote "for." Remember that a vote "for" sustains the law enacted by the legislature and that a vote "against" rejects, and nullifies it.

Referendum No. 5 Important

"Referendum No. 5 provides for holding county and state conventions. Its object and purpose is to authorize the holding of county and state conventions for the purpose of adopting a party platform. It requires a candidate for other than judicial office to declare in his declaration of candidacy that he accepts and endorses generally the platform of the party in whose name he files as adopted at its last state convention and binds him, if elected, to support the same generally and 'to endeavor to have enacted into law the principles' enunciated in the platform.

Shows Further Provisions

"The act provides that every county convention shall select the number of delegates to the state convention fixed in the call of the state committee and that it shall select a member of a state advisory platform committee. It makes it the duty of the members of the advisory committee to meet in advance of the state fixed for holding the state convention to hold public hearings and submit to the state conventions an advisory platform. It requires each party that holds a convention to adopt a platform and to make a brief and concise statement of its principles and its general legislative program. The conventions are given power to elect state presidential electors, but are forbidden to endorse or declare a preference for any candidate for office and proxies are not allowed.

"The political party is the channel through which individual political opinion finds expression. The platform is an expression of a matured opinion of the majority of the members in attendance at the party convention. All organizations, whether political parties, social or commercial clubs, or fraternal societies are organized around a thought or principle or a group of thoughts or principles. Those who believe in these principles are eligible to membership. The law in question appears to me to be both timely and wise. If it is sustained the voter turns to the platforms of the several political parties, reads their declaration of principles and there learns their general legislative program.

"He knows that the candidate is pledged to

the program of his party. He then determines for himself the legislative program he deems the best and unless the candidate who stands upon these principles is undesirable he is ready to support him. Without this law, every candidate makes his own political chart, if he wishes, or he may and frequently does run without any chart.

To Protect Business and Industry

"Referendum No. 6 is an act which defines, prohibits and punishes picketing. Its purpose is to protect the business man who is conducting a lawful business in a lawful way and to protect the man who chooses to work for him. It punishes the man who will not work and who seeks to interfere with or intimidate those wishing to work. It defines picketing and makes it unlawful. It is essentially a peace statute. Picketing is not only subversive of the peace, but is both in principle and practice un-American. Every voter who believes that one should enjoy the right to run a lawful business in a lawful way and to employ labor of his own choosing should vote "for" the law. Those who believe that one who wishes to work for an employer, who desires to engage him in his service, and who believes that both should be free from threats and intimidations should vote "for" the law.

To Prevent Duplication

"Referendum No. 7 relates to public service properties. This law provides that no new public utility to render a service similar in character and location to the service rendered by an existing public utility shall be constructed or operated without first obtaining a certificate of public necessity and convenience from the public service commission. It provides for notice and hearing. The object of the law is to prevent duplication of public utilities in the same locality, because in the end it means a more expensive service to the public.

"Referendum No. 8 relates to Port districts. The law enlarges the port commission by adding four elective officers to the commission. It only effects the port of Seattle. Other sections of the state have only an indirect interest. Those who stand sponsor for the law believe that it will result in a better and more economic management of the business of the port."

[Note: The official book issued by the secretary of state to all voters contains extended arguments upon this measure and the reasons for the enactment of the law.]

To Improve Public Business

"Referendum No. 9 is known as the budget law. It requires the governing officers of a taxing district to propose and adopt a budget of the contemplated financial transactions of the respective taxing district for the ensuing fiscal year. It requires every officer of the taxing district in charge of an office or department to file with the chief auditing officer of the respective district an itemized state-

ment of all expenditures required by such office or department for the ensuing year. It requires that all estimated budgets shall be published in the official newspaper in the taxing district and provides for notice and hearing. It also provides for issuing emergency warrants. It should operate to bring the public business into a closer relation with the taxpayer and should be productive of a better and more economical business system."

EVERY VOTER IS A LEGISLATOR.

If you have read the calm and analytical statement by Judge Gose, it will be easily seen that every measure is a step forward—either for more efficient government, lower taxes or better industrial and business conditions. To avoid all errors on November 7th—

Mark Your Ballot

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|---|----------|
| Referendum No. 3 | |
| FOR Initiative and Referendum Act..... | X |
| Referendum No. 4. | |
| FOR Recall of Public Officers Measure..... | m ste |
| Referendum No. 5 | |
| FOR Political Conventions Measure..... | |
| Referendum No. 6 | |
| FOR Picketing Measure..... | |
| Referendum No. 7. | |
| FOR Public Service Utilities Measure..... | X |
| Referendum No. 8. | |
| FOR Port District Measure..... | X |
| Referendum No. 9. | |
| FOR Public Budget Measure..... | X |
| FOR the proposed Amendment of Section 1 of Article VI of the Constitution, relating to the qualification of voters..... | X |

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