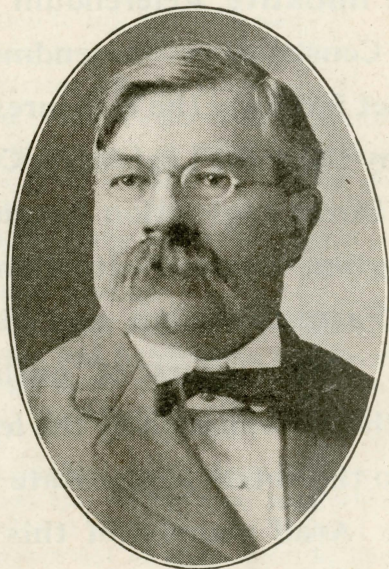


AN ADDRESS

ON THE

Initiative, Referendum and Recall Amendments



BY **GOVNOR TEATS**

Representative 36th District

TACOMA, - WASHINGTON

When You Have Read This Pamphlet, Pass It Along



The Initiative, Referendum and Recall Constitution Amendments herein set forth are the measures indorsed by the Joint Legislative Committee, Direct Legislation League of Washington, State Federation of Labor, Farmers Union and State Grange. After years of untiring efforts their submission by the legislature to the voters of the state was secured. Avail yourself of this opportunity to work and vote for these amendments in November, 1912.

AN ADDRESS BY GOV. TEATS.

TO THE VOTERS OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

I was elected to the Legislature at the general election of 1910, from the 36th Representative District in Pierce County on the platform of

Compensation to Injured Workmen,
Initiative and Referendum,
Recall of Elected Officers, and
The Supreme Court be placed back in the Primary.

When I took my oath of office I ceased to represent a district, I became a representative of all the people of the State of Washington.

We passed the compensation act, and it remains only to be properly administered to bring great good to our maimed and injured industrial workers.

The Supreme Court is back in the primaries.

The Initiative and Referendum and Recall will be submitted to the people at the next general election, but the people's right to initiate amendments to the Constitution was smothered in the Senate.

I want the privilege of initiating laws and amendments to the Constitution and voting upon laws which I believe to be for the best interest of all the people, and I want the privilege of voting a person out of office when he goes wrong whether he be a precinct constable or a chief justice of the Supreme Court. Now I want to tell you why.

WE ALL SAW THE CAT.

The right to initiate a law and an amendment to the Constitution, the right to require a law to be referred to their vote and the right to recall public officers has long been demanded by the people. We found from experience many years ago that legislators elected upon platforms and pledges when safely seated in the Legislature too often forgot the people, ignored their demands and the pledges they had made were



made only for the purpose of getting into office. The party whip cracked by the dictators in the party organizations doing the bidding of the interests and the politicians made it impossible for the people's rights to be recognized as they should be.

We saw in those early days that if we only had the right to frame a bill and have that bill submitted to the people we could at least have the bill passed upon by the people directly and receive their judgment at the polls. We saw further that if we were successful in enacting a law which would be against the interest of big business it might be declared unconstitutional by the courts which would require an amendment to the Constitution to protect the people's rights, and we want the right to initiate that amendment. We also saw that only such laws as would be of paramount interest to the whole people would be adopted by the people, for if the demand for the law was great enough the law would be passed, and if not it would fail.

DIRECT LEGISLATION WORKS MAGIC WITH PUBLIC SERVANTS.

We also believe that the power of legislation and recall given the people would bring public servants closer to the people and would have a tendency to destroy the influence of big interests upon officials and make our representative form of government more as it should be. These are not new ideas. They are the results from experiences in Switzerland and other countries where they are found to be practical in all the essentials in a democracy.

IT TAKES A LONG TIME BEFORE THE PEOPLE ARE RECOGNIZED.

The people have been hammering on these lines since long before 1895. In the Legislature of 1895 a bill substantially the same as the one that is now to be submitted to the people giving the right to initiate and to vote upon laws was introduced by Mr. L. E. Rader, of Kitsap County, then a strong believer in direct legislation. The majority report of the Committee on Constitutional Revision reported that it be indefinitely postponed, and the House concurred. From that time similar bills were introduced at subsequent sessions of the

Legislature, most of which were indefinitely postponed in the House where they originated, or, if passed by the House, always received the "smothering process" adopted by the different committees of the Senate on all laws which the interests did not want and which the people demanded. Sentiment has been growing in every State in the Union. Every State admitted to the Union from the time of Oklahoma to the present time has incorporated the principles of direct legislation and the rights of the people to initiate amendments to the Constitution and their rights to recall public officers who have fallen by the wayside. Many older States have also taken up these progressive measures and adopted them in some phase or other, and the State of Oregon has established the system in all its details and on plans which work harmoniously and to the interest of all the people of the State.

HOUSE BILL 153 IS UP TO DATE.

In drafting House Bill No. 153, which provides for the initiative and referendum, we have modeled largely after the Oregon system, and have taken advantage of their experience. It seems to be the concensus of opinion of all who have studied these proposed amendments to the Constitution that they contain features which are improvements on the Oregon system.

IT RESERVES SOME POWERS IN THE PEOPLE.

Section 1 of Article II. of the Constitution provides, "That the legislative authority of the State of Washington shall be vested in the Legislature consisting of the Senate and House of Representatives which shall be called the Legislature of the State of Washington." We propose to amend this by adding, "But the people reserve to themselves the power to propose bills, laws and to enact or reject the same at the polls independent of the Legislature, and also reserve power, at their own option, to approve or reject at the polls any act, item, section or part of any bill, act or law passed by the Legislature." With these amendments we do not propose to abolish the Legislature, but to reserve that legislative power to the people in case they want to use it.

ALL THE POWER WE NOW HAVE IS TO "DEMAND"— "HOWL."

You have now the right to vote for members of the Legislature; to form a society or individually ask and demand of them

a written statement that he will favor certain laws, or that they will work and vote against certain laws, but experience has shown that demands and pledges are of little avail when legislators wish to violate pledges. In most cases they claim they are not violating the pledge; that they are in favor of the law you want, but when the law is being considered they work and vote for amendments you never dreamed of, and which will make the law ineffective. For instance, during the last session of the Legislature a number of those who had made pledges that they would work and vote for the initiative and referendum, wanted a percentage in the petition as high as 60 per cent.; wanted the initiative and referendum to apply only to certain laws; wanted the petition to contain the required percentage from every county, and not the people of the State at large. Those fellows banded themselves together to fight the initiative and referendum by making amendments that meant death to the cause. Such were the tactics pursued by a few legislators who had pledged themselves to the reform, and if they could have had their way in the last session the right of Direct Legislation would have received the same death knell as at former sessions.

YOU ARE ACCUSED OF NOT KNOWING ENOUGH TO VOTE ON LAWS.

About the only argument used by the enemies of pure democracy was that you, Mr. and Mrs. Voter, do not possess ability, do not have common sense and lack the required judgment to pass upon a law. And this, in face of the fact that the Constitution called the "fundamental law" and all amendments to the Constitution can not be enacted only by your direct vote. You are the sole legislator on our fundamental law.

While this proposed amendment gives the legislative power to the people, yet it is not the purpose that the people shall pass upon all laws, but only such laws as are deemed necessary or because the Legislature refuses to pass them or that the people do not want some certain laws the Legislature has passed.

We find in Oregon such laws are drafted with care by people who have the interest of the State at heart, and the laws the people have voted are generally better laws than the

laws that are formed in the hurry and scuffle of the Legislature except perhaps the laws drafted by corporation lawyers to assist and promote the interests of their clients. We find immediately after the election of the legislators they are banqueted and feasted and receive great attention from business interests and men thoroughly acquainted with their own wants while the people go on about their own business of bread winning. The people have not the time nor means for banquets and they must of necessity depend upon their elected legislators to protect their interests. I do not wonder that some legislators fail to make good to the people under these conditions. The history of all legislation up to the last session has been that corporate interests have been fully protected and that class of laws have been the predominate features of legislation and will continue until we have direct legislation.

HOW ABOUT THE ORDINARY LEGISLATOR?

The ordinary legislator is an ordinary man, and generally knows little about legislation before he gets well through the Legislature (and I was in that class), and what else can you expect but inefficiency. During the sixty days he is allotted he is flooded with rules, letters and petitions, books, pamphlets from all the departments of the State containing information he should have with bills falling on his desk every morning by the score dealing with subjects from "labels on cans of condensed milk" to a massive compensation act, insurance code or industrial commission, dealing with public utility corporations, etc. He can know very little about even a small percentage of the total number of bills placed before him for consideration. (I am speaking from experience as well as observation.)

AND HOW ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

Under direct legislation a bill presented to you will be in a pamphlet with arguments for and against as is done in Oregon. (The amendment to be submitted to you provides for this method.) You will place that pamphlet in your pocket and for about two months you can study and learn all about every feature of the bills, and, in the language of an Oregonian, "That pamphlet becomes your bible." You have a lim-

ited number of bills to consider and as a rule they are bills of paramount importance to you.

CAN'T YOU TRUST YOURSELF AND NEIGHBOR?

Don't you think you would like the privilege of voting on measures of paramount interest to you? And if you can trust yourself don't you think you can trust your neighbor having the same opportunity to investigate and talk to you about these things? If you can't trust your neighbor or yourself in voting upon the law submitted to you through the referendum, then you must be a politician of the old school and can trust only the commands of some corporation lawyer.

RULES COMMITTEE IS THE LEGISLATURE.

The House of Representatives of the last Legislature was progressive, but the Rules Committee appointed by the speaker was thoroughly standpat. This committee receives the bills after they have passed the second reading in the House. It has a calendar of its own consisting of figures, and the figures represent the number of each bill on this calendar. Column one represents the bill this committee is in favor of. Column two represents the bill they might consider. Column three represents the bills which they will not permit to be submitted to the House under any circumstance. In this way the Rules Committee absolutely governs the class of legislation the House must pass upon. This committee of course is limited in number and can be influenced, and is always influenced against measures the people want.

HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES.

House Bill No. 9, introduced by Mr. McQuesten of Pierce was an act to establish teachers' retirement fund. Similar laws are in force in every State in the Union and should be in this State. Would you not, Mr. and Mrs. School Teacher, like to have the option, at least, of initiating and voting upon such a law?

House Bill No. 44, introduced by myself for the purpose of protecting workmen on tall buildings, bridges, viaducts and similar structures. This law is similar to laws in all other States, and is for the purpose of protecting life and

limb. But the Rules Committee would not permit this bill to be considered by the House, on the plea that labor had received enough legislation at that session. If you are not working in that trade, whenever you see or read of the terrible accidents on our tall buildings, don't you feel as if you would like to help to initiate a law for the protection of these workmen?

House Bill No. 162, introduced by Mr. Dow of Pierce, for the protection of little children in our factories and industries. This is recommended by the child labor societies all over the United States. Would you not like the opportunity to initiate and vote upon such a bill?

House Bill No. 387, introduced by myself, for the protection of persons working in electric plants. A similar law was initiated and referred to the people in Oregon, November, 1910, and received 56,258 votes for and 38,943 against. Yet the Rules Committee would not permit it to be submitted to the House. Several other bills and measures could be mentioned, which are the crying need of our people. With direct legislation we can get them.

EUROPEANS PREDICT OUR DOWNFALL.

The people of Europe have watched the democracy of America. They have given it a limited duration. When they look into our legislative halls and see the people's interest disregarded and the interest of big business always provided for, they have further shortened its duration. There is only one way, there is only one method to continue our American democracy, and that is, the greater, simpler and purer democracy by the direct vote of the people. We must reach the heart and the soul of the individual voter. We must make it possible for the pulsation of the heart and soul of our people to be recorded in the formation of the laws of our country. The law that promotes the general welfare of all will receive the affirmative vote of the people and will do justice to all. It is possible to persuade some against their apparent interest, but you can't persuade the majority of the people against their interests. Legislators can be persuaded against their apparent interest, but such persuasion is ineffective with all the people.



THE PEOPLE VOTE RIGHT.

There is a fundamental truth which I believe in and which we have found from experience, and that is that when the people vote upon a law, as the Constitution or its amendments, that vote is right and you can't say that of the Legislature. The Legislature of 1909 through a trick of a few politicians took the nomination of judges of the Supreme Court out of the primaries and placed them back into the old obsolete plan of nomination by convention; if the initiative and referendum had been in force we are sure that the law would have been referred to the people before it went into effect. Don't you think you would have enjoyed the opportunity of voting against that law on the referendum? That is one instance where the politician would have been checkmated by your vote. Don't you believe that you would like to be in a position to do likewise when necessity requires in the future? If you do, then vote for this amendment to the Constitution at the next general election.

DIRECT LEGISLATION IS AN EDUCATOR.

Class A of this proposed amendment provides for a petition containing 10 per cent., and in no case more than 50,000 of the legal voters to propose any measure or bill. This percentage is a little high when you come to figure the matter of obtaining the petition of 40,000 voters. The circulation of such a petition is educational and will have a tendency to form public opinion in the right direction by it for or against the proposed law. This is the first step towards purer democracy. It creates public interest and public sentiment, and the consideration of a proposed bill creates more interest and more sentiment when submitted as proposed which will be similar to the Oregon method.

THIS EDUCATIONAL FACTOR IS WORTH DIRECT LEGISLATING.

This interest alone is worth the adoption of the initiative and referendum because a democracy requires the individual interest of every sovereign voter. We need more interest in our public affairs, and it is not so much in the man we are

going to elect as in the measure we are going to adopt. This interest promotes progressiveness and creates new thoughts to meet our onward march of intellectual and economic development. We are living in a new age where the individual intellectuality counts. We have been preparing the individual through our public schools and through a practical education in our industries in order to raise the sources of our democracy to a higher plane, that we may meet the greater problems of the democracy of the future. Democracy in its simplified form must prevail, if you and I and our children and our children's children are to properly share in the wealth they produce in this new age. Without this democracy the houses of Rockefeller and Morgan will completely own, not only the sources of all wealth, but manipulate and control our government so that in time the old slave condition of Rome will prevail. If Rome could have had our public school system and prepared its people for a pure democracy the struggle of the few advanced thinkers of that age would have been the struggle of all the people and the preservation of their nation. We have great problems to meet for the purpose of maintaining our rights individually and collectively to the wealth we produce. Those problems can be met only as you appreciate the force of your sovereign right and bring together the people under a system that will enable them to crystalize into law the will of all the people directly and positively as the will of each individual is recorded in the ballot box.

IF DIRECT LEGISLATION FAILS OUR RIGHTS ARE LOST.

When you comprehend the plans and schemes of the monetary commission at Washington (the head of which, Mr. Aldrich, the keenest, sharpest of all Wall Street), which means the dethronement of the rights of the people in our financial affairs, don't you say that our fight for pure democracy has certainly been delayed too long? And when you realize that you can scarcely make a move in the whole nation which requires the spending of any money from the sending of a telegram to the transportation of yourself or any article of the consumption of the majority of articles we use, but what you pay a cash tribute to those two great interests, then

do you not see the necessity of your own individual vote to undo the wrongs of the past, to destroy the system of the present, which is but a dragnet that reaches into the pockets of every person in the nation and takes his coin to the coffers of these two houses and to build a system that will destroy that dragnet that will give to the people the wealth they produce?

This can't be accomplished in one day or in many years, perhaps, but it can be accomplished through the establishment of the purer democracy—the rights of the people to vote their say in laws and governmental affairs,—the establishment of a system that will give the people the right to govern as they directly choose. If you want that right let us start now to talk direct legislation, then in November, 1912, and vote to a voter for the Initiative and Referendum and Recall.

Respectfully submitted,

GOVNOR TEATS.

N. B. These amendments will be voted on at the state election to be held in November, 1912. Work and vote for their adoption.

