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The Portland City Club Bulletin

-- HARMONY IN DIVERSITY

-- ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP --

Volume 19

PORTLAND, OREGON, OCTOBER 21, 1938

Number 25

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21

HOTEL BENSON, 12:10

CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR BILL REPORT

Printed in October 7 Issue and presented to Club October 14

ARTHUR M. CANNON

Committee Chairman

CITIZEN'S RETIREMENT ANNUITY BILL

A Report by the Section on Legislation printed October 14

W. K. NEWELL

Committee Chairman

THE TOWNSEND PLAN BILL

A Report by the Section on Legislation printed on page 77

GEORGE W. SCHOEFFEL

Committee Chairman

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS ACT

A Report by the Section on Legislation printed on page 76

H. A. FREEMAN

Committee Chairman

CIVIL SERVICE QUALIFICATIONS ACT

A Report by the Section on Legislation printed on page 78

PLEASE COME EARLY!

PLEASE BE PROMPT!

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CITY CLUB:

The City Club, as an organization which makes a factual study of each election measure, is influential in shaping public opinion for the November election. The Club has gained a reputation for its intelligent and fair-minded consideration of public matters, and the influence it exerts is predicated on a representative expression of opinion on committee reports by the entire membership.

It is the considered opinion of the Board of Governors, therefore, that a responsibility rests upon each member of this organization to attend the next two meetings of the Club at which action is to be taken on committee reports on controversial legislative measures to the end that the recorded judgment of the City Club may be truly representative of its entire membership.

George Mackenzie, President

PORTLAND CITY CLUB BULLETIN

Published each Friday by the
CITY CLUB OF PORTLAND

"To inform its members and the community in public matters and to arouse in them a realization of the obligations of citizenship."

C. Herald Campbell - Editor
City Club Office - 516 Oregon Building
Telephone - BRoadway 1443

Entered as second class matter at the Portland, Oregon, post office October 29, 1920, under act of March 3, 1879.

Subscription rate one dollar per year, included in annual dues.

City Club dues: Residents, age 28 and over, \$12.00 per year; Residents, age 27 and under, \$6.00 per year; Non-Residents, \$5.00 per year.

The regular Friday luncheon meetings are held in the Crystal Room of the Benson Hotel.

CITY CLUB BOARD OF GOVERNORS

GEORGE MACKENZIE President
ARTHUR A. GOLDSMITH First Vice-President
RICHARD SHERWOOD Second Vice-President
C. W. MORDEN Secretary
C. E. RAWLINSON Treasurer

QUINCY SCOTT
ALFRED F. PARKER
RANDALL S. JONES
HERBERT A. TEMPLETON
C. E. ZOLLINGER
EDWARD O. SISSON

C. HERALD CAMPBELL Executive Secretary

REPORTS ON EIGHT ELECTION MEASURES ACCEPTED

Eight committee reports on election measures to appear on the November ballot have been accepted by the Club membership.

By this action the Club has gone on record unanimously as recommending a "YES" vote on the Legislator's Compensation Constitutional Amendment, the Bank Stockholder's Liability Constitutional Amendment, the Governor's 20 Day Bill Consideration Amendment, The Examination for Marriage Bill, the Stream Purification Bill, and the Sewage Disposal Act.

The Club also, by action on other committee reports, recommends a "NO" vote on the Constitutional Amendment Legalizing Certain Lotteries, and the two measures Prohibiting Slot Machines, etc. These eight reports have been printed in successive issues of the "Bulletin" beginning with the September 16 issue.

A motion to adopt the report recommending a "NO" vote on the Alcoholic Liquor Bill was seconded at the meeting of October 14, and further discussion on the report and motion to adopt was carried over until the meeting of October 21.

Four other reports on election measures have now been printed and remain to be acted upon by the Club membership. These deal with the Citizens' Retirement Annuity Bill (October 14 issue), The Neighborhood Parks and Playgrounds Act, The Townsend Plan Bill, and the Civil Service Qualifications Act.

Three other election measures will be reported upon by Club committees in next week's issue. These measures are the Bill Regulating Picketing and Boycotting by Labor Organizations, The Housing Authority Act, and the Special County Tax Levy for Relief.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS AND PLAYFIELDS ACT**A Report by the Section on Legislation and Elections**

To the Board of Governors of the City Club:

The proposed charter amendment referred to this committee for review provides for a levy of 4/10 of a mill for the next ten years beginning with 1939 for the purpose of securing funds estimated to average \$112,000 annually for the purchase and equipment of property for playground and park purposes within the corporate limits of the City of Portland.

The act is similar to that reported upon to the City Club by this same committee in 1936, with the exception of two important changes, viz.:

1. Districts where the property is to be acquired are not mentioned specifically nor in the sequence of acquisition and improvement. The properties to be purchased and their order of acquisition will be decided by the City Council.

2. Purchase of proposed properties is not limited to purchase from the assessment collection fund. Properties may be purchased from this fund but it is not mandatory.

The special tax of 4/10 of a mill shall not be computed as a part of the revenue raised by taxation which is subject to the tax limitation of the constitution or the charter. It shall be in

addition to all other taxes which may be levied according to law.

The primary objection to the initiative act is the fact that the levy is above and beyond the 6 per cent limitation. But in this respect, the city is in the same position as a business corporation, which, being unable to finance plant expansion out of normal income, must find some other source of capital. The committee believes that the advantages to Portland of the additional parks and playgrounds as recreational areas more than outweigh the objections inherent in the method of raising the funds above and beyond the 6% limitation.

The committee has not devoted space in this report to review the basis of the following "CONCLUSIONS," because that factual background, based on a study by the City Planning Commission, was contained in the City Club report of October 23, 1936.

CONCLUSIONS

The committee is of the opinion that the objective outlined in this bill is desirable; that the time for attaining this objective is propitious; and that the method of securing the land and

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TOWNSEND PLAN BILL

A Report by the Section on Legislation and Elections

To the Board of Governors of the City Club:

Your committee appointed to study the proposed Townsend Plan Bill submits the following report:

The proposed measure was initiated by H. C. Epley of Salem and others. The bill authorizes and directs the State Legislature "to make application to the Congress of the United States not later than March 1, 1939, for the calling by Congress . . . of a national convention for proposing an amendment . . . to provide for the establishment and operation of the philosophy and principals of the Townsend National Recovery Plan . . ."

A complete study of the Townsend National Recovery Plan referred to in the initiative measure and specified as H. R. 4199, is beyond the scope of this report. The committee has studied H. R. 4199 but deems a discussion of this plan unnecessary in view of the fact that another committee of the Club, whose report was published last week, has made a complete analysis of the Citizens' Retirement Annuity Bill, a state adaptation of the Townsend National Recovery Plan. The Club report of October 14 effectively points out that such an old age pension scheme would be tremendous in cost, would not increase purchasing power of the population, would not increase employment and would increase the burden of relief and the cost of living.

This committee believes that the fallacies of the so-called Townsend National Recovery Plan have been effectively demonstrated by the report of October 14.

This committee also questions the legality of the proposed action contemplated in this bill. It has been held in the Oregon courts that the sections of the State Constitution dealing with the initiative and referendum "apply only to proposed laws and not to legislative resolutions, memorials and the like." The committee shares the view generally held that these sections of the Constitution were never intended for the method of action contemplated in this bill.

CONCLUSIONS

This committee believes that the Townsend National Recovery Plan, ultimate enactment of which into the Constitution of the United States is contemplated by the proposed bill, is a monumental economic fallacy, the claims of which "as to supposed beneficial effects on prosperity, employment and relief, are without merit."

RECOMMENDATION

Your committee therefore recommends a negative vote on the proposed Townsend Plan Bill.

Respectfully submitted,

H. H. Cake
 Frank Butchart
 Harry Lehrer
 Edwin D. Hicks
 W. K. Newell, Chairman

Accepted for submission to the Board of Governors by Fletcher Rockwood, Chairman, Section on Legislation and Elections.

Accepted by the Board of Governors October 17 and ordered printed and submitted to the membership for consideration and action.

improvements is in line with good practice. The City Planning Commission survey shows that Portland needs more parks and playgrounds. The city is far behind the standards maintained by other cities of comparable size in this respect. Recent per capita expenditures for parks in Portland are less than half the appropriation for similar purposes in other cities in Portland's class. At the present time the council has authority for the levying of this tax. Because of continued emergency conditions necessitous items have crowded out this particular appropriation.

RECOMMENDATION

The committee, therefore, recommends that the vote on the Neighborhood Parks and Playgrounds and Playfields Act be, "YES."

Respectfully submitted,

Howard Holman
 J. C. Plankinton
 George Schoeffel, Chairman

Accepted for submission to the Board of Governors by Fletcher Rockwood, Chairman, Section on Legislation and Elections.

Accepted by the Board of Governors October 17 and ordered printed and submitted to the membership for consideration and action.

Proposed for Membership and Approved by the Board of Governors

If no objections are received by the Executive Secretary prior to November 4, 1938, the following applicants will stand elected:

RUSSELL BARTHELL
 Assistant Director
 Bureau of Municipal Research and Service
 Recommended by Robert T. Platt and C. Herald Campbell

DR. MAC BETH A. MILNE
 Dentist
 829 Medical Arts Building
 Recommended by Dr. Lester T. Jones and Dr. M. C. Riddle

DOUGLAS LYNCH
 Artist
 1008 S.W. 6th Avenue
 Recommended by Laurence C. Rogers and C. Herald Campbell

CIVIL SERVICE QUALIFICATIONS ACT

A Report by the Section on Legislation and Elections

To the Board of Governors of the City Club:

Your committee appointed to study the Civil Service Qualifications act submits the following report:

The proposed act is an amendment of Section 102 of the City Charter and was referred to the voters by the City Council September 8. Section 102 as amended will read as follows: (words in **bold type** to be added by the amendment; words in brackets to be deleted):

"The Board shall, from time to time, hold public competitive examinations to ascertain the fitness of applicants for all offices, places and employments in the classified Civil Service. Said **entrance** examinations shall be confined to citizens of the United States who can read and write the English language and shall be open to all such citizens who possess such qualifications [as to residence, age, health, habits and moral character] as may, by rule, be prescribed by the Board . . . Such examinations shall be practical in their character, and shall relate only to those matters which may fairly test the relative fitness of the persons examined to discharge the duties of the positions for which they are applicants and shall include, when appropriate, tests of health and physical qualifications and of manual, clerical or professional skill. No question in any examination shall relate to political or religious opinions, affiliations, or services . . . All patrolmen shall be between the ages of twenty-one and thirty years on the date of their appointment. **All hosemen shall be between the ages of twenty-one and twenty-six years on the date of their appointment.**"

The eliminations were proposed by the Civil Service Board and have the approval of the City Council. At the time the amendment was before the Council the proposed additions were added and made a part of the amendment referred to the voters.

The second sentence of the Section as it now reads without amendment provides for certain specific qualifications, but no mention is made of others necessary to determine the particular fitness of an applicant as to educational background and vocational skill. There has been some feeling that the specifying of certain qualifications might have the effect of limiting the power of the Board to set other requirements and in order to clarify the wording of the Section the elimination of these specific qualifications was proposed. This gives the Board power to require applicants to "possess such qualifications as may, by rule, be prescribed by the Board" subject to such other limitations as are outlined in the balance of the Section.

Civil Service procedure has progressed to a great extent since the time it was originally established and years of experience has, in our opinion, made the Board capable of setting its own rules as to examination of applicants. Any system should be flexible to a certain degree and

this is true as regards Civil Service for it is conceivable that there might be times, as in case of labor shortage, war, etc., when it might be necessary to temporarily alter requirements for admissions to Civil Service. The opposite might also be true under other conditions. The Civil Service Board should always be in a position to secure the best services available among applicants. Our investigation has revealed no particular opposition to this change in the Section.

The addition of the word "entrance" to the second sentence of the Section does not in our opinion materially affect the law and its inclusion is not objectionable.

Section 102 provides an age limit for patrolmen at time of appointment and the addition of the last sentence to the Section will place firemen on a similar basis, with the exception that the maximum age at entrance is twenty-six instead of thirty. The fact that service in the fire department is quite exacting and calls for excellent physical condition is given as the reason for the reduction in the maximum age. While there might be periods when such a low limit might make it difficult to fill vacancies in the fire department, the committee feels that this is not of sufficient importance to warrant a change in our recommendation as concerns the proposed amendment.

The present condition of the retirement fund for firemen can also be improved over a period of years if the proposed age limit is enacted, as it will tend to reduce the average age of those eligible for participation in the benefits.

CONCLUSIONS

The committee believes that the proposed amendments to Section 102 Charter of the City of Portland will tend to clarify and improve the text of the Section and will enable the Civil Service Board to exercise better control and supervision in providing for the selection of employees for service under Civil Service.

RECOMMENDATION

The committee therefore recommends an affirmative vote on the Civil Service Qualifications Act amending Section 102 of the Charter of the City of Portland.

Respectfully submitted,

A. E. Clark
Burton M. Smith
Frank M. Warren, Jr.
Stewart J. Moore
H. A. Freeman, Chairman

Accepted for submission to the Board of Governors by Fletcher Rockwood, Chairman, Section on Legislation and Elections.

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