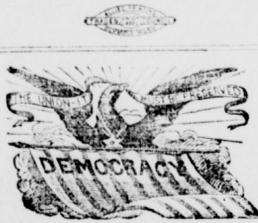


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COUNTY OFFICIAL PAPER.
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IS IT RIGHT, OR IS IT WRONG?

When you get a man backed up in the corner, away from all his friends and outside influences and free to speak his own mind, the chances are, if you ask him point-blank, he will agree with you that the sole question upon which all legislation should be enacted, the ideal basis, the proper basis for the best interests of the state, and that means all people of all parties, is the one question: is it right, or is it wrong?

To be sure, we do not always apply that test to our legislation in this country, in fact, the cases where the decision is not warped by some other influence than the honest answer to that question are exceedingly rare. This is not a phenomenon peculiar to Washington by any means, or to any other state—the enactment of party measures as such by the majority in a legislature or in congress is the prevailing rule, and when a political party because of its espousal of certain policies is given the reins of government, it is highly meet and proper that it should enact as party measures the laws proposed to carry out those policies. But, except in very rare cases, such popular instruction as to policies which is given the dominant party in our national legislature seldom reaches or attempts or cares to reach the party in control of a state legislature, to anywhere near the extent at least as it purposes to influence the national body.

In other words, the members of our state legislature are presumed to be neighbors, more or less, one of the other, to decide questions and to pass laws on a neighborly basis, applying the acid test of merit. Actually, of course, it is different, in that human nature is so constructed that those who have the power find it difficult to restrain the natural tendency for individual or group advancement, or temporary success, regardless of the views, opinions or desires of some other individuals or groups.

We see that tendency illustrated to the extreme in the present legislature, in the pronouncement that no bill introduced by a Democrat or Progressive will be allowed, by the Republican majority, to pass. In an abstract way it might be generally agreed there is a possibility that a Democrat or Progressive might present some measure that would be for the good of the whole state, but concretely that is a possibility the Republican organization will not for one minute consider. So far as the enacting machinery of the present session goes, Republican bills and Republican bills only are presumed to be meritorious.

It was at this condition that Governor Lister, in his speech at the Democratic banquet last week, directed his plea that partisanship be cast aside and that all questions before the legislature be decided on the basis of whether they are right or whether they are wrong, the keynote also of his advice that the Democratic contingent in the legislature abandon the unit rule, each member voting his own personal convictions on each measure, unlike the Republican legislative policy. Right now we have an idea that in the next two years the people of this state are going to hear more about this right of wrong policy so strongly advocated by the governor and that some who now ignore it because temporarily they have the power to ignore it, will be considerably discomfited.

For truly at the heart of it all, after everything else has been brushed aside, there is only this single question: is it right, or is it wrong?

ISN'T THIS REASONABLE?

Suppose a president of the United States is confronted with a situation which threatens to prevent the nation from reaping the greatest benefits of an unusual chain of circumstances, benefits which would rightly come to it if it had the proper facilities, isn't it reasonable to assume that, in proposing a remedy, he had the good sense to anticipate at least the most pronounced of the objections that could be made to it?

Take the federal ship purchase bill, personally advocated by President Wilson, to provide the means for this nation to extend its foreign trade

in the unusual opportunity now prevailing, isn't it reasonable to assume that, before he urged it, he had taken into account the possibility that some of the European nations now at war might object to the application of it, and found a satisfactory solution to that possibility? That is the one great objection the opponents of the bill have raised to it—isn't it reasonable to assume the president had sense enough, facing the situation and considering all the circumstances, to anticipate it? And therefore isn't it reasonable to make the final assumption that, having done so, the president selected the wisest and best course?

To us it seems reasonable to grant him at least that much foresight. To assume for one minute that a president of the United States, let alone so shrewd a reasoner and so cool-headed a statesman as the present executive, would openly advocate a policy that might place the United States in diplomatic conflict and strained political relations with at least four of the most powerful countries of the world, calls for a greater stretch of the imagination than any of which we are capable.

VIOLATING THE STATE CONSTITUTION.

The legislature of a state, above all individuals and all organizations, is presumed to follow the mandates of the state constitution; if it did not, there would be no need of having such a document. Yet the present is the third session of the state legislature since the federal census in 1910 and the express mandate of the constitution that the legislative districts shall be re-apportioned after each census upon the basis of population, has been flagrantly and purposely disregarded up to this time.

It is possible that the fact that such a re-districting would eliminate either Sims or McArdle has had something to do with this defiant and flaunted violation of the constitution, for it was an open secret two years ago that they prevented a re-apportionment at that session and McArdle is now credited with having enough pledges to prevent such action at this session.

The mere matter of a state constitution, apparently, does not bother McArdle, so long as the violation of it is useful to him.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

He stands before us today as the ideal of a man who made good in a crisis. He is pictured to us as one who saw a duty to do and did it, being influenced not at all by expediency, deciding all on the question of what was right and what was wrong. Many stories have been told of his homely, clean humor, his sympathetic heart-interest, his many acts of kindness, of reprieve and pity, the stalwart nature of his character, his Christian fidelity, his fortitude in times of great trial, his essential democracy and humaneness. He was a great man, a lonely man, a "man of sorrows," a man who, leading a nation to the heights of victory for an ideal, was himself plunged into death by the act of an unfortunate. To him, as the years have gone by, we have accustomed ourselves to look as the greatest president, accomplishing for his country in the trying years from 1861 to 1865 that which the later judgment of North and South and East and West alike now approves. He came to us when we needed him; today we do him honor.

Into the legislative hopper this week there was dumped a measure proposing to substitute a unicameral legislature of 15 members for the present house and senate of 139 members, but the sad part of it is that it was introduced by a Progressive and, therefore, under the rules of the house organization, doesn't stand a ghost of a show.

While we're having so much fun checking up on Lister's appointees, suppose we vary the program long enough to count up the number of office changes made by Republicans succeeding Republicans, when, in the past, one Republican state administration has succeeded another. Then, as Governor Lister said in a recent speech, we would unearth the peculiar coincidence that the ratio of changes then was greater than what Lister has made.

True to the hand that leads them, the Republicans of the house last week refused to adopt the amendment to the McArdle tax board bill, proposed by Democratic Floor Leader Frank Reeves, prohibiting any member of the legislature from taking a job created by the measure, after McArdle has spoken against it. Apparently the legislature thinks that inasmuch as McArdle framed up the job he ought to have it, the spirit of the constitution notwithstanding. He'll probably take it, too, if he can get it.

What President Wilson said to the business men of the country in his speech to the annual convention of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States last week, hit the nail on the head. If the business men of this nation will quit trying to influence legislation by the "gum-shoe" method and by paid lobbyists and will come out into the open and by advice and counsel will help shape proper legislation, they not only will have less cause of complaint but will be doing the nation a vast service, too.

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EVERYTHING TO WEAR FOR MEN AND BOYS

WHAT HAPPENED IN OLYMPIA AND STATE TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

From The Washington Standard for February 15, 1900. Vol. XXXI. No. 12.

"The Czar" is the title given Speaker Reed since he, in accordance with his threats, ruled that a visible quorum is a constitutional quorum. Never has greater indignation been expressed by the Democrats of the house than was contained in the vigorous protests of Messrs. Carlisle, Crisp, Breckenridge and others against this revolutionary proceeding on the part of Mr. Reed, and never was the house in greater uproar than when it was seen that the rights of the minority were being so ruthlessly taken from them. (Washington Correspondence, dated January 31, 1890.)

The Bucoda Enterprise wants a public meeting called and steps taken to incorporate the town.

Judge Hanford, after a delay that has caused much dissatisfaction and loss, has received the appointment of United States district judge for this state.

Real estate is on the go and a large number of our citizens are buying property on Fourth street.

It is confidently asserted by those who are in a position to know, that within six weeks Northern Pacific cars will be running to Olympia, and the narrow gauge will be "among the things that were, but are not."

Judge Irwin has decided that the city of Olympia has no right to establish fire limits.

The filing of articles of incorporation of the Olympia, Sherman Valley & Gray's Harbor Railroad & Lumber company by some of our public-spirited citizens, marks the beginning of an important enterprise that will prove of great and immediate benefit to a wide scope of country. The capital stock of the organization is \$1,000,000, and the incorporators are Geo. D. Shannon, Benj. Turner, Frank I. Blodgett and C. F. Leavenworth. The primary object is to operate a general lumbering business, the route passing through a belt of 200,000,000 feet of the best timber in the state. A secondary object is a general freight and passenger business, as the road extends to Gray's Harbor.

Stella Cole was this week granted a divorce from Ray Cole on the grounds of non-support. They were married in September, 1913.

The petition of Roy Whitcomb for a re-hearing of his suit against Hanson Sager and wife, involving a deal in land near Rochester, has been denied by the supreme court. The original suit was recently decided against Whitcomb.

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Thomas P. Horn

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