

HOME RULE FOR COUNTIES

The Present System Should Be Abolished.

A Taxpayer Proposes an Entirely New Method for Running County Affairs.

Local self-government was formerly one of the basic principles and tenets of the democratic party, and although all of the political parties in this country have lately deviated widely from their former principles, yet I think it is generally admitted that the deviation is for the worse instead of the better.

The democratic party formerly and to some extent still stands opposed to the concentration of power in the national government, it contends for the rights of the states to be supreme in all matters which pertain to the state alone, and that congress shall legislate only on those subjects which extend beyond the limits of any one state.

Now this is good principle and good doctrine, and if it is so why not apply the principle to counties and towns within a state as well as to states within the nation?

We are supposed to live in a country where the people govern themselves. Now what a parody on self-government is the spectacle of the legislature at Santa Fe saying what officers

sovereignty. But the electors should at all times have the power to call down any officer who is not doing their will.

But our organic law is as it is and we have not the power to change it. So if we must have dictators instead of public servants I am in favor of having as few of them as possible, and to fill as many offices as we can with as near public servants as may be.

This office holding oligarchy has been running the affairs of the counties into bankruptcy long enough. It is time the taxpayers exercise their power and demand that the next legislature allow us to govern ourselves as near as the organic act of our territory will permit.

Against the plan I would propose we may expect from the outset the opposition of the office holders. The office seekers and all those who are accustomed to suck pap from these sources it is beyond human nature to expect a man who is a dictator or a man who expects to be one, to favor any plan that will make him simply a public servant.

On the other hand I appeal to the great body of taxpayers, who have stood the brunt of this misrule for years. We have the power if we only have the cohesion and determination to right this matter.

Any one conversant with the city government of Silver City will realize what a vast improvement it was for the city when we got the law

society.

It would also be well to make it a crime punishable with fine and imprisonment for anyone running for commissioner to directly or indirectly promise an office to anyone.

At the first election two commissioners should be elected for four years and two commissioners and the chairman be elected for two years; at each election thereafter two commissioners would be elected for four years and the chairman for two years.

In that way the people could change the complexion of the board at each election, and still there would always be men of experience on the board.

Under this form of county government the expense of running the county would not be more than half what it will be under the new law that comes into effect next year, and not more than one-fourth the expense under the present law, and we would have far more efficient officers.

As I understand it, the improved law passed by the last legislature was forced principally by the agitation of the subject in this county before the last election and the pledging of our representatives in its favor.

Now if the plan herein outlined meets the approval of the taxpayers, we should instruct all the delegates to the

local
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power on the part of
assume such functions.

The evils of such methods of government are apparent at a glance. Nearly every county in the territory has become virtually bankrupt. The people have been taxed exorbitantly, and this not being enough, have had enormous county debts piled on their shoulders without anything to show for it. It has all gone to pay princely salaries to, as a rule, very inefficient officers. The trouble lies in the fact that instead of the people governing themselves, we are governed to death from the outside.

Of course our form of government is radically wrong. Under our constitution when an elector votes for an officer he gives up his sovereignty to that officer for the duration of the term of the official and to the extent of the powers of the office, and instead of making a public servant of that officer we make a limited dictator of him. And then we find ourselves governed by these limited dictators all the way from president down to dog pelter.

Under a true democratic form of government a man should never give up his

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debts and
this was all
ourselves of a single dictator
a public servant in his place.

The fact is to have good government we must have the power all located in one place. But when we elect men to fill all the offices we simply create so many dictators who are virtually amenable to nobody.

I would suggest that the next session of the legislature pass a law giving the counties five commissioners and putting the business of the county in their hands, allowing them reasonable pay for their services.

These then would be the only elective county officers.

A county commissionership would then be an office of power, of honor and of trust. To hold it would be worthy of the ambition of our best citizens. It would not be especially an office of profit. It would not pay to buy an election and thus cater to the worst elements of our

limited. The McKin-
duty of 11 and 12 cents
the first and second
cent. on wool of the

Corea is about two-thirds
the area of New Mexico and the people,
for the most part are miserably poor.
Gold, silver and various other metals
are found there but gold mining is
strictly prohibited. Several hostile acts
were committed by Coreans toward
Americans during the three years fol-
lowing 1867, but Admiral Rogers of our
navy finally ended the trouble by bom-
barding one of their forts and capturing
several hundred pieces of artillery.

SILVER. Exports of gold from this
country this year have reached more
than \$82,000,000 which is a much larger
amount than was exported last year.

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TARY PUBLIC.

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SILVER CITY, NEW MEXICO.