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The Commission Form of Government for Municipalities
as an Agency for the Restoration of Integrity and Efficiency
of Government and the Termination of Corruption in City,
State, and Nation, and the Overthrow of the Undue Influ-
ence of Commercialism in Government.

SPEECH
OF
HON. ROBERT L. OWEN
OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE
SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

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SPEECH
OF
HON. ROBERT L. OWEN.

On the subject of municipal government.

Mr. OWEN said:

Mr. PRESIDENT: The progressive movement in this country has for its object the overthrow of commercialism in government and the restoration of equality of opportunity and of the rights of human beings in preference, where the choice must be made, to the rights merely of property accumulation. The chief purpose of the progressive movement is to overthrow the chief agency of commercialism in government, machine politics and the rule of the minority through corrupt practices, and to restore the rule of the majority through honest registration laws and election laws. This is to be accomplished by the passage of certain tried and tested statutes, including, particularly, the initiative, the referendum, and the recall, a thoroughgoing corrupt-practices act, complete publicity of all public business, and including the commission form of government for municipalities, or the short-ballot system. The commission form of government may be properly regarded as a very important auxiliary in the progressive movement.

The commission form of government has a national value and a direct bearing upon the integrity of the election of Senators and Congressmen, because it is an important agency in overthrowing corrupt machine politics in municipalities and cities. The proportion of inhabitants living in cities, as compared to the inhabitants of the United States, is 53.7 per cent, not counting towns of less than 2,500 inhabitants. **IF CORRUPT GOVERNMENT CAN BE TERMINATED IN CITIES, IT CAN NOT SURVIVE IN THE STATES OR IN THE NATION.**

The relative urban and suburban population of the different States I submit as Exhibit A.

Machine politics and their centers of activity are in the cities, and if corrupt political organization can be overthrown in cities it will go far toward establishing integrity of government throughout the States and throughout the Nation, as machine politics do not easily flourish among country people who are not so easily reached or so easily influenced by machine methods.

The commission form of government eliminates mere partisan politics in cities, towns, and villages in the government of such municipalities. The commission form of government usually carries with it the initiative, referendum, and recall, giving home government popular government, the people's rule enabling the citizens of each town to control the governing business in that town. It enables them, through the initiative, referendum, and recall, to initiate and pass any law they do want, including corrupt-practices prevention acts, and veto any law

they do not want, such as the granting of franchises of value without consideration, and enables them to recall inefficient or dishonest officials.

For these reasons I have thought it worth while to call to the attention of the Senate and of the country the importance of the commission form of city government as an agency in restoring integrity of government and overthrowing the corruption and inefficiency which have so seriously invaded the governing function under color of partisan zeal.

WHAT THE COMMISSION FORM OF CITY GOVERNMENT IS.

The commission form of government, as usually understood, may be illustrated with the system adopted in Des Moines, Iowa, under the act of the general assembly of that State (Exhibit B) and the charter of that city (Exhibit C).

The general plan is that the citizens by primary may nominate candidates for mayor and four commissioners, *who shall have complete charge of town business—legislative, executive, and judicial.* Any person can be nominated by a petition of 25 citizens. The 10 candidates having the highest vote at the primary two weeks later are submitted to the citizens for an election, and the 5 candidates having the highest votes at this election comprise the city council, with full powers—legislative, executive, and judicial. They manage the business as completely as the board of directors could manage the business of a bank. There are five departments, as follows:

First. A department of public affairs.

Second. A department of accounts and finance.

Third. A department of public safety.

Fourth. A department of streets and improvements.

Fifth. A department of parks and public property.

The mayor, by virtue of his office, has charge of the department of public affairs, with general supervision over the other departments, and receives a salary of \$3,500. The other commissioners receive a salary of \$3,000. *The council, by majority vote, appoints all other officials of the town—city clerk, solicitor, tax assessor, police judge, treasurer, auditor, civil engineer, city physician, marshal, chief of fire department, street commissioner, library trustees, and all other necessary officers and assistants. These selections are made under a board of civil service commissioners, who conduct examinations of a practical character to determine the fitness of applicants. Each commissioner appoints the subordinate employees in his own department and each commissioner is held responsible for the successful management of his department.*

Extreme pains are taken to prevent fraud in the elections. For instance, the fullest publicity is required of campaign funds. Both the source and the manner of expenditures are required to be reported under oath. No officer or employee is permitted to be interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract with the city or in any public-service corporation, or to accept any free service therefrom. All council meetings to which any person not a city officer is admitted must be open to the public.

“All franchises or right to use the streets, highways, or public places of the city can be granted, renewed, or extended only by ordinance, and every franchise or grant for interurban or

street railways, gas or water works, electric light or power plants, heating plants, telegraph or telephone systems, or public-service utilities *must be authorized or approved by a majority of the electors* voting thereon at a general or special election.

"Every motion, resolution, and ordinance of the council must be in writing, and the vote of every member of the council, for and against it, must be recorded. The council is required to print and effectively distribute each month, in pamphlet form, a detailed, itemized statement of all receipts and expenses and a summary of its proceedings during the preceding month. At the end of each year the council must cause a full and complete examination of all the books and accounts of the city to be made by competent accountants and publish the report in pamphlet form.

"Every ordinance or resolution appropriating money or ordering any street improvements or sewers, or making or authorizing any contract, or granting any franchises must be complete in its final form and remain on file with the city clerk for public inspection at least one week before its final passage or adoption, and must be at all times open to public inspection." (Hamilton.)

Nothing is permitted to be done in secrecy or in the dark. The public business is public.

PARTISANSHIP IN CITY BUSINESS ELIMINATED.

Partisanship is eliminated. No party emblems are permitted on the ticket, but the candidates are listed in serial order, without party designation, and are nominated and elected as far as possible on the ground of personal fitness. In this way partisanship is carefully and deliberately eliminated, as far as practicable.

Ward lines are abolished in the choice of city commissioners, so that each citizen votes for every commissioner, both in nominating and in electing him.

THE WARD SYSTEM ABOLISHED.

The abolition of the ward system is essential to the successful establishment of the commission form of government. The ward system in the past has been peculiarly injurious to good government because *"it perverts the political education of the electors and encourages a local selfishness destructive of the general and ultimately of the local interests as well.* The ward system leads to the nomination of a ward boss, who, under color of intense zeal for that ward and under color of being a great advocate of a political party and by petty ward politics, gets himself elected and tries to keep himself in power by getting things for that ward, more than it would be equitably entitled to and at the expense of the balance of the city. This policy leads to unscrupulous men making combinations in the council, trading with each other, and taking advantage of the portions of the city whose representatives are more scrupulous.

A city is best governed whose government deals with the city as a body unit and where its general interests are held paramount to local, private, or ward selfishness.

Citizens at large nominate men who would not be nominated by the ward system, and thus narrow or unscrupulous men

are prevented from so easily entering the council. It prevents wards trading in the council at the expense of the city. It prevents extravagance in wards by virtue of such trading.

The abolition of the ward system elevates the character of the officials of the city, and what is far more important, it elevates the electorate of the city by making the citizens feel that they have power to nominate and elect the entire governing board of the city.

We observe in New York City recently a ward boss giving away 7,000 pairs of shoes, apparently from pure benevolence, but more likely for the reason that he could by this process of commendable charity and open-hearted generosity control 7,000 votes in his ward and put himself in a position where he could indirectly recoup himself with usury at the expense of the taxpayers of that great municipality.

THE ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF THE COMMISSION FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

The essential value and features of the commission form of government are, roughly, as follows:

First. *Complete centralization and concentration of all power and responsibility in a small council or commission*, usually of five members, doing away with the separation of powers into the legislative, executive, and judicial. This is fundamental. The commission is thus directly charged with and responsible for the entire administration of the city's affairs.

Second. *The members of the commission must be elected at large and not by wards*, and therefore represent the city as a whole, not by subdivisions.

Third. *The members of the commission must be the only elective officers of the city*, and must have the power of appointing all subordinate administrative officials.

Fourth. The commission must have the power of removing subordinate administrative city officials at will.

Fifth. The commission should be subject to the initiative, the referendum, and the recall, so that if the commission fails to pass the laws the people do want, such laws can be passed by the initiative petition; and so that if the commission propose to pass any law the people do not want, they shall have the right of veto by referendum petition; and so that, if a commissioner proves to be inefficient or corrupt, his successor may be nominated and he may be recalled by a special or general election.

THE PROTEST.

A special provision of the Des Moines charter enables the citizens to prevent the council fastening objectionable legislation upon the city by a protest of 25 per cent of the number of electors previously voting for mayor. Upon the filing of this protest the council must either reconsider and repeal the ordinance objected to or submit it to a vote of the people for acceptance or rejection.

THE RESULTS.

The result of this system has been to abolish the corrupt ward system, with its mischievous waste, inefficiency, and dishonesty. It has eliminated partisanship, and no longer can a ward boss appeal to his fellow citizens to stand by him as the exponent of "the grand old party" of Lincoln, Grant, and McKinley, nor can he appeal to the disciples of Thomas Jeffer-

son with any better effect. His views on the tariff or currency are not regarded as of any importance, but his relation to the gamblers, the law-defying saloon keepers, the political jobbers, public-service corporation and municipal contractors, and his fitness to make a good municipal officer are closely scrutinized by the great body of the citizens of the municipality.

The direct and undivided responsibility and the full power placed in the hands of each commissioner obtains from him his best efforts and the best results.

This system has reestablished popular supremacy in the cities adopting it. There is no doubt that everything bad in city politics is the work of the few and not of the many, and that these few have been led by trained mercenaries, who have paid themselves out of the public treasury, directly or indirectly, for packing caucuses, padding registration lists, repeating, stealing or stuffing ballot boxes, perpetrating frauds in the casting of votes, and doing the thousand and one more or less disreputable things which in American cities have been counted as "helping the party."

The direct rule of the people has been established by the commission form of city government in lieu of all this. They have under this system the right of direct nomination (selection) and election of officials, freedom from fraud, complete publicity, and they have the right of the initiative, referendum, protest, and recall, compelling respect of the popular will, both affirmatively and negatively. In this manner the people are stimulated in a sense of civic righteousness and power and of personal civic responsibility. It has established the rule of the people in town government and has dethroned the city boss and terminated corrupt ward and municipal partisan politics.

Of course, no city can rise higher than the level of its citizenship, but whatever the intelligence and conscience of the citizens of a town are capable of may be attained through this improved method of governing municipalities.

Under this system the public business is conducted with efficiency, promptness, free from blackmail, and free from the petty rascalities, free from the "grand and petty larceny" that have heretofore characterized municipal councils. A request of the commission can be acted upon in an hour, and it is not necessary to run the gauntlet of a corrupt house and council of the old city legislatures, with the long delays and blackmail incident thereto.

Under the civil service, the city employees are chosen upon a basis of merit and actual worth and not as a reward for activity in helping the ward boss to keep himself in power.

City franchises are safeguarded under this new system. It is impossible for the council to sell a franchise by secret barter, or to deliver such a franchise if sold, and no corrupt interest can afford to buy or attempt to buy franchises under these conditions, where delivery is impossible and dangerous.

The causes of corruption are removed. The temptation to corruption is removed. Powerful safeguards against corruption are thus established.

The plan in actual operation has shown the most remarkable results in clean streets and alleys, improved sidewalks and paving, better administration of all public utilities, and freedom from favoritism; and justice and common sense are in control.

In Des Moines the old "red-light" district, which was owned and controlled by a social-evil trust of "appalling cruelty, greed, and wickedness," was turned into a respectable neighborhood by the vigor and vigilance of a well-directed police force. The city offices are filled by men expert and capable of rendering high-class services. The books and records have been brought up to date and are kept in intelligible condition.

I will observe here that the cities which have adopted this method have adopted in many cases a comparative uniformity of bookkeeping, by which the condition of various departments and services of municipalities are able to be compared one with another, so that a city finding a very high cost in some particular line as compared with other cities in the same department or service may make an inquiry into that particular branch of the service. In that way, by concentrating attention on defective services, they are able to eliminate the wastefulness by which their accounts have been run up in that special branch of the administration. An immense saving of money has been made, and the people are delighted with the splendid results of the new government.

The elections have worked admirably. "Not for a generation has so little money been spent and never have the citizens been able to give their attention so undividedly to the prime issues of a municipal campaign—the honesty, capacity, and fidelity of those seeking public place."

The success of the Des Moines system was due to the activity, first, of James H. Berryhill, of Des Moines, who had business interests in Galveston and who had seen the working of the commission government in that city. The Des Moines Register and Leader, the News, and the Capital, of which the Hon. Lafayette Young, our recent colleague in the Senate, was editor, are entitled to special credit, together with the Bar Association of the State of Iowa and the public debates which were held in this connection. It took the most resolute effort for several years to accomplish this result and get over the opposition of the old machine in Des Moines and Iowa and their influence with the legislature, but, thanks to the patriotic and good men of that State, the legislature gave the necessary authority.

I submit results of the commission form of government in Galveston and Houston, Tex., Leavenworth, Kans., Des Moines and Cedar Rapids, Iowa, as given by Hamilton. (Exhibit D.)

I submit also a list of over a hundred of the cities which have adopted this plan for the last two years. (Exhibit E.)

I expressly acknowledge indebtedness to John J. Hamilton and his excellent work on the "Dethronement of the City Boss" (Funk & Wagnalls); to Ford H. MacGregor, Bulletin No. 423 of the University of Wisconsin; to Prof. Frank Parsons's "The City of the People," published by C. F. Taylor, 1520 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa.; "The Digest of Short Ballot Charters," by Charles A. Beard, Ph. D., The Short Ballot Organization, 383 Fourth Avenue, New York; and Buffalo Conference for Good City Government, Clinton Rogers Woodruff, editor.

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The constitutionality of the Texas law giving municipalities the right of recall, rendered by the civil court of appeals, I submit as Exhibit F.

Seventy-four cities and towns in the State of New York, I am informed by the secretary of the Commission Government Association of Buffalo, are considering this method, and a large number of them have petitioned the New York Legislature for the right of home government for cities. Up to this time, in spite of promises, those in control of the governing business, including the bipartisan machine men in New York State, have denied them their just rights of local self-government, and it will require a pitched battle with the forces of machine politics to obtain this right for these cities, the chief of which is Buffalo, with over 400,000 inhabitants.

The Short Ballot Organization, of which the Hon. Woodrow Wilson, governor of New Jersey, is the president, has excited a very great interest throughout the Union, and it is easily applicable not only to cities, but also to counties and States, the purpose being to concentrate the attention of the electorate upon a few responsible men charged with the control of policies and administrative responsibility, so that the people may give their concentrated attention to these few officials and choose them wisely.

It is impossible to have the people choose wisely when they are called upon by the party bosses and party machines to vote on 200 or 300 names at a time. Tammany Hall, for example, has a committeeman for each 25 voters of New York City, a committee so large that Madison Square Garden could not hold it. Its primary ballot contains from 300 to a thousand names. The consequence is that democracy is defeated and "bossism" is enthroned.

Gov. Johnson, of California, put the matter in a nutshell in his last annual message, when he said:

It is time we stopped scolding the voters for their inattention to the offices at the foot of the ticket and cut the ballot down to the number of officials that they will take the trouble to select. The job of reforming the voter is too big. He has a living to make and has to have some fun as he goes along. But the job of reforming the ballot is simple. All that is needed is to cut out the offices that have to do merely with the routine and clerical work and call on the voter to elect only those that control policies.

Over 200 cities and towns have adopted some form of this improved method of city government within the last two years, the list submitted being incomplete and imperfect.

I submit a form of ballot used by Grand Junction, Colo., which is the most improved form of municipal ballot that has yet been adopted. The Grand Junction ballot gives the first, second, and third choice to each citizen for the members of the city council. If there are not a sufficient number of votes of the first choice to give a majority of the votes, then the first and second choices are added together. If that does not give a majority, then the first, second, and third choices are added together, which always results in a majority vote, so that it requires no nomination and subsequent election. One election is enough. At one election the public officials are both nominated and elected. It is economical and it is satisfactory in its results and operation.

OFFICIAL BALLOT.

GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION, CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION,
 COLO., NOVEMBER 2, A. D. 1909.

INSTRUCTIONS.—To vote for any person, make a cross (X) in ink in the square in the appropriate column according to your choice, at the right of the name voted for. Vote your first choice in the first column; vote your second choice in the second column; vote any other choice in the third column; vote only one first and only one second choice. Do not vote more than one choice for one person, as only one choice will count for any candidate by this ballot. Omit voting for one name for each office if more than one candidate therefor. All distinguishing marks make the ballot void. If you wrongly mark, tear, or deface this ballot, return it and obtain another.

For Commissioner of Public Affairs:	1st choice.	2d choice.	3d choice.	Totals.
D. W. AUPPERLE.....	465	143	145	753
W. H. BANNISTER.....	603	93	43	739
N. A. LOUGH.....	99	231	238	568
E. B. LUTES.....	41	114	88	243
EDWIN M. SLOCOMB.....	243	357	326	926
THOS. M. TODD.....	362	293	396	1,051

No. 769.

Official ballot for election precinct No. 16, in Grand Junction, Mesa County, Colo., Nov. 2, 1909.

H. F. VERBECK, *City Clerk.*

The following letter of Karl A. Bickel, Esq., of Grand Junction, Colo., explains its working:

STATE OF COLORADO,
 LEGAL DEPARTMENT, INHERITANCE TAX DIVISION.

Senator ROBERT L. OWEN,
Senate, Washington, D. C.

In re sample preferential ballot, with results in one set shown:
 Had the election been conducted under the old-style plan, as is common in 85 per cent of American cities, Bannister, the "old-gang" candidate, would have been elected. Had it been conducted along the cumbersome Des Moines system, the race would have been between Aupperle and Bannister. Yet when the people had fully and accurately expressed themselves on all the candidates and demonstrated their full choice, it was shown that Bannister was not within the first three of being the most desired man, and that Aupperle did not have within 196 votes of a majority of all votes cast, and that Todd was the only man of the six who did have the support of a majority of the voters—that is, a majority of the voters would rather have Todd elected than any other man, although a large number of those who voted for Todd had preferences above him. The preferential system keeps the whole people organized to smash the organized minority and prevents minority rule. There were not as many spoiled ballots as a result of the G. J. preferential election than usual in the Australian-ballot elections.

K. A. BICKEL.

Mr. President, I have submitted this matter because I regard it as having very great influence upon the integrity of the Government of the United States. This method has been found to work so well that, within the strict interpretation of what might be called a commission form of government, there are nearly 200 cities that have recently, within three years past, adopted this method of governing in 27 States, and if it would not weary the Senate I should like to call attention to some of them.

The two great cities of Alabama, for instance, Birmingham and Montgomery.

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In California, Santa Cruz, Berkeley, Modesto, Oakland, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Vallejo, and Monterey.

In Colorado, Colorado Springs, Grand Junction, and, I believe, Denver now has adopted it.

Idaho, Lewiston.

Illinois, Carbondale, Decatur, Dixon, Elgin, Hillsboro, Jacksonville, Kewanee, Moline, Ottawa, Pekin, Rochelle, Rock Island, Springfield, Spring Valley, Waukegan, and Clinton.

Iowa, Burlington, Cedar Rapids, Davenport, Des Moines, Fort Dodge, Keokuk, Marshalltown, and Sioux City.

Kansas, Anthony, Abilene, Coffeyville, Cherryvale, Caldwell, Council Grove, Dodge City, Emporia, Eureka, Girard, Hutchinson, Independence, Iola, Leavenworth, Kansas City, Marion, Newton, Neodesha, Parsons, Pittsburg, Topeka, Wichita, and Wellington.

Kentucky, Newport.

Louisiana, Shreveport.

Maryland, Cumberland.

Massachusetts, Gloucester, Haverhill, Lynn, and Taunton.

Michigan, Harbor Beach, Port Huron, Pontiac, and Wyandotte.

Mississippi, Clarksdale and Hattiesburg.

Minnesota, Faribault and Mankato.

New Mexico, Roswell.

North Carolina, Greensboro, High Point, and Wilmington.

North Dakota, Bismarck, Mandan, and Minot.

Oklahoma, Ardmore, Bartlesville, Duncan, El Reno, Enid,

Miami, McAlester, Muskogee, Purcell, Sapulpa, Tulsa, Wagoner, Guthrie, and Oklahoma City.

Oregon, Baker City.

South Carolina, Columbia.

South Dakota, Dell Rapids, Huron, Pierre, Rapid City, Sioux Falls, Vermillion, Yankton, Aberdeen, Canton, and Chamberlain.

Tennessee, Memphis.

Texas, Aransas Pass, Austin, Beaumont, Corpus Christi, Port Arthur, Dallas, Denison, Fort Worth, Galveston, Greenville, Houston, Kenedy, Marble Falls, Marshall, Palestine, Port Lavaca, and Sherman.

Utah, Salt Lake City.

Washington, Spokane and Tacoma.

West Virginia, Bluefield, Huntington, and Parkersburg.

Wisconsin, Eau Claire and Appleton.

In Texas, among the cities, I call attention to Dallas, the largest city in the State; to Houston, Fort Worth, Galveston, and a large number of others.

Mr. MARTINE of New Jersey. I will state in this connection that in New Jersey it has taken a strong hold of the people there. The city of Trenton, the capital of our State, has recently ratified it. It is now being agitated in the great city of Jersey City, in New Brunswick, Plainfield, and a number of other cities. It is taking a strong hold upon the people of New Jersey.

Mr. OWEN. I have thought it proper to submit this matter to the Senate because I think it deserves to have the attention of the country called to it as an agency for bringing about a restoration of honest government in this country. Our municipalities, and especially our great municipalities, have been most

seriously afflicted by a partisan or bipartisan system of corrupt politics, of which the examples are too numerous to mention and some of them so egregious as to make it a serious humiliation to the American Republic. The condition which was exposed by Francis J. Heney and Rudolph Spreckels in San Francisco is a painful exhibition of it. Ben Linsay's disclosure of the conditions in Denver was equally bad. The disclosures of Joe Folk in St. Louis were just as striking and painful. In Pittsburg, where 116 men, including a large part of the city council, the legislative authority of that city, mercenaries who were engaged in a wholesale conspiracy to rob that city and the people of the city under the party and ward service in the governing business. The conditions in Harrisburg, Pa., the conditions in Philadelphia, in New York, in Albany, and in Boston furnish a like painful and sorrowful record.

I wish to say that this method of governing municipalities by the commission plan is not only adapted to villages and to towns, but to great cities, cities as large as New York City and Philadelphia, and the bigger the city the more efficient and valuable becomes the principle of governing the municipality by the commission plan, which concentrates power and makes those who exercise it responsible directly to the people under the initiative, referendum, and recall.

It is sufficient to call the attention of the country to the expediency of this method of administering the government of municipalities and its wonderful success where it has been tried, and I have done so for the purpose of promoting efficiency and honesty of government not only in cities, but in counties, States, and Nation. For it must be always remembered that a corrupt city boss uses his city machine to levy tribute on the county-machine managers, on the State-machine managers, and on the national-machine managers to demand public offices and legislative and administrative favor for himself and his commercial and political allies.

Mr. President, the great problem of the present time is the restoration of equality of opportunity, so that every man, every woman, and every child may receive and enjoy a fair return for labor honorably and faithfully performed; so that every human being can have an equal opportunity to enjoy the providences of God and the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.

The only way that this equality of opportunity can be established is through genuine, real self-government of the people, by the people, for the people. Under actual self-government when the majority of the people are in power—the majority of the people will always refuse to grant special privileges to the few at the expense of the many; refuse to grant to the few the right to tax the many for the benefit of the few at the cost of the many.

It will not do to say that the people have self-government when in reality they are actually governed by machine politics; when under the mechanism of party management their governors, Congressmen, and Presidents are nominated by the delegated delegates in State conventions of delegated delegates in county conventions sent by ward and precinct caucuses manipulated by local bosses and their henchmen; where the machine under the mechanism of party management can nominate all

public officials under a system which does not give to each citizen an equal opportunity, through the mandatory direct primary, safeguarded by law, to nominate public officers; where there is no thoroughgoing corrupt practices act to prevent the machine politicians from false registration, from stuffing the ballot box or stealing the elections, through a variety of fraudulent practices; where there is no system by which the people can recall crooked officials or veto laws which the people do not want, or initiate laws which the people do want, it is perfectly obvious to the most casual observer that the people do not rule, but are ruled by the mechanism of machine politics under the guidance of the so-called local, county, and State boss, because the machine is in control in a majority of States.

Of course in nominating the President or in nominating any other important officer, as a governor of a State, the machine will not dare to nominate a man who is incapable of standing a campaign. But it must always be remembered that all men, including public men, are influenced powerfully by their environment and political associations and affiliations, and that the great corporate monopolies of the country are fully aware of those whose predilections will enable them to be subjected to influences in the interest of big business.

It is not at all necessary to suggest that machine candidates are of necessity dishonest or even insincere. It is sufficient that they are subject to the domination or influence of special interests. In this event, the people are not in reality exercising the right to rule, but they are being ruled by nominees and candidates chosen against the interests of the people, and who would be greatly disliked by the people if the people really understood what to expect from them.

Self-government is through two main systems; either it is party government in combination with constitutional government or self-government solely through the constitutional form; that is, the direct rule of the people through constitutional forms, without having party government.

The great political problem of the age is, How can real self-government be reestablished in national affairs, and be reestablished in the States and in the towns and cities wherein as yet the people are still out of power?

The line of least resistance in reestablishing the self-government of the people is through the initiative and referendum by questioning candidates on this issue when the candidate is seeking votes. The ordinary candidate will not dare to refuse his promise to support the initiative and referendum when he is seeking to be nominated or elected, if vigorously questioned by organized bodies of voters. To do so is to ask the voters to support him as a lawmaker and at the same time to deny the people whose votes he solicits their right to initiate any law they do want or to veto any law they do not want. Few candidates have the hardihood to do this. No candidate can succeed in it where the people are in earnest in making the demand.

With the initiative and referendum established, so that the people can initiate any law they do want and veto any law they do not want, the next steps are easy—to establish a thoroughgoing, mandatory, direct primary, safeguarded by law, and to establish, also, a thoroughgoing corrupt-practices act that will

secure an honest registration law, faithfully administered, and will guarantee likewise elections free from bribery, coercion, and corruption. In this way self-government can be secured for the States as States.

For villages, towns, cities, and counties the answer is: Secure from the legislature the right to establish a system of government in which a small number of representatives—town or county commissioners—directly nominated, directly elected, and subject to recall, shall be directly chosen by the people, responsible to the people, and who shall be both the legislators and the executors of the public will. They will then conduct the governing business for the people. The name of the system is The Commission Form of Municipal Government. It may be easily adapted to counties and to States.

It completely establishes the self-government of the people, and will make it thoroughly efficient and honest.

COMMERCIALISM IN GOVERNMENT.

Commercialism has invaded the governing function. The administrative branches of the Government, the legislative branches of the Government, and even the judicial departments of Government are not free from its corrupting influence.

Commercialism has insinuated itself unfairly, unjustly, and corruptly into the governing function in counties, in towns, in cities, in States, and in the Nation.

Secret alliances have been entered into in innumerable counties, cities, and States between various special interests and the so-called partisan or bipartisan political machines.

These special interests have an infinite variety of forms. It may be a gas company desiring to monopolize the gas at a high rate in some city; it may be a traction company; it may be a water company; it may be a municipal-contract company dealing with the paving, sewerage, municipal buildings; it may be the Oil Trust, Tobacco Trust, or any of a thousand trusts in commerce, transportation, or public utilities; it may be any form of selfish interest or a combination of them.

It may be a combination of mere political mercenaries banded together to put themselves in office, inspired not by patriotism, not by desire to render public service, but banded together by the "cohesive power of public plunder."

The main point is that these special interests use the political machine as an agency through which they can promote their selfish interests at the expense of the general welfare.

CORRUPT MACHINE POLITICS MUST BE TERMINATED.

It is for this reason that machine politics must be overthrown and will be overthrown by the progressive movement, which stands for an honest registration act, an honest election law and secret ballot, a direct primary law, a thoroughgoing corrupt-practices prevention act, the initiative and referendum and recall, the commission form of government for cities, the publicity pamphlet, a strict civil service, for direct nomination of party delegates and of the presidential and vice presidential candidates, and so forth. By these processes the power of the political machine as an agency for corrupt government in the service of the special interests against the general welfare can be greatly abated and finally terminated.

It sometimes happens that even a political machine is in the hands of ambitious but upright men, who do not lose sight of honest government and may give the people a fairly satisfactory government, but the opportunities for corruption of government under this system is always open to the unscrupulous when men inspired alone by the general welfare grow weary, inattentive, and relax their vigilance. It is a bad system, defective, and full of pitfalls.

THE POLITICAL MACHINE.

Mr. President, legitimate organization of patriotic men to promote the policies of government in which they believe is highly commendable and meets with my cordial and warm approval. I have always been active myself in promoting and taking personal part in what I deemed legitimate political organization for patriotic purposes; but when legitimate party organization degenerates into a corrupt and corrupting political machine, led by mercenaries with sinister purposes, who get possession of the machinery of political organization, under color of intense devotion to the party service or of great zeal in promoting party doctrines, and resort to corrupt practices, it should be restrained and abated. When party knaves engage in false registration of voters, registering absentees, dead men, fictitious persons, and ghosts, and thereafter have such falsely registered electors impersonated at the polls and falsely vote them; when they stuff the ballot box with fictitious ballots; when their strikers mutilate the ballots of honest men to defeat the public will; when they make a false count of the registered votes; when they make false returns of the registered votes; when they steal the election by corrupt practices, coercing men who are unfortunate, poor, or dependent; when they bribe voters by the thousand, as they did in Adams and Scioto Counties, Ohio; and put unworthy allies into office and public power; when they enter into unholy alliance with sinister commercial interests to defeat the public will, to buy municipal councils, as they were exposed in doing in San Francisco, in Denver, in St. Louis, in Chicago, in Pittsburg, and in innumerable cities; when they and their office-holding allies enter into corrupt agreements with municipal contractors to defraud the people of the city in the building of streets, bridges, sewers, and waterworks; when they give away or convey for a trifling consideration valuable franchises belonging to the people of the cities, or the people of the States, or the people of the United States, through corrupt combinations of this character; when they nominate public officials, secretly pledged to serve special interests, by packing conventions in towns, cities, counties, and States; when these combinations nominate Members of Congress and procure the election of Senators by bribery and corrupt methods and practices as the servants of special interests, the time has come when an end shall be put to it by the people of the United States and the integrity of government be reestablished by the overthrow of such corrupt machines whether in city, State, or Nation.

The corrupt political machine is the chief agency through which special interests operate in the United States. Those desiring special privilege contribute large sums of money to the organized machine—to the local, the city, the State, or the national political "boss." They bring about the coercion

of employees of corporations by tens of thousands for the support of machine rule. They furnish the means for bribery and corrupt practices and are paid back their investment by the machine or the boss at public expense—by county contracts, by municipal contracts, by laws they desire passed or laws they desire defeated, by immunity from law, by the law's delay, or by the appointment of various officials who administer the law, prosecuting attorneys, and even of judges on the bench who will interpret the law favorably to them.

It is extremely difficult for the ordinary citizen to uncover, expose, and punish these corrupt and corrupting processes.

Corrupting special interests will not hesitate to spend money for the purchase of seats on the floor of the Senate and to use other corrupt processes to unfairly influence legislators in the choice of Senators. When a Senator is to be elected every available pull on the individual member of the legislature is taken advantage of through the ambition, the interest, the selfishness, the weakness, or the affections and obligations of the individual member of the general assembly. Any member of the general assembly whose house is mortgaged, who has serious debts he can not meet, is thus capable of being subjected to such unfair pressure. It is for these reasons that the people of the United States demand election of Senators by direct vote of the people. It is for these reasons that Oregon and other States are adopting the people's rule system and the presidential-preference voting system, so that the citizens may deal directly with the nomination of a President. It is for these reasons that the people of this country are demanding direct primaries, so that they can select all candidates and party delegates, and explains the demand for the initiative and referendum, so that they can initiate the laws they do want and veto the laws they do not want. By the initiative system alone can they force through thoroughgoing corrupt-practices prevention acts in the several States over the heads of legislatures controlled by corrupt machines. It is for these reasons that the short ballot has been so widely advocated and so largely adopted in municipalities. It is for these reasons the people demanded improved methods of administering the business of the House of Representatives and relieving that body from machine methods, and it is for these reasons that a commission form of government for municipalities is so desired and so necessary.

EXHIBIT D.

[Pages 169 to 181, inclusive, from "The Dethronement of the City Boss" (Funk & Wagnalls), by John J. Hamilton.]

RESULTS OF THE NEW SYSTEM IN FIVE TYPICAL CITIES.¹

1. IN GALVESTON, TEX.

A board of three eminent engineers was employed and paid to devise plans for the reconstruction of the city after the flood.

The emergency following the great storm was dealt with efficiently by the city acting independently and also jointly with the county and State.

The grade of the entire city was raised by the city with the assistance of the State; a great sea wall was constructed by the county; these improvements aggregating in cost \$4,000,000.

¹A majority of the cities operating under the new plan have adopted it within the year 1909, and many of these have not yet held their first elections under it.

Annual budgets exceeding the city's revenue by an average of about \$100,000 gave way to budgets kept strictly within the municipal revenues.

A floating debt of \$204,974.54 was paid off out of current revenues; bonds to the amount of \$482,000 were retired; new bond issues were restricted to permanent improvements; an agreement was reached with holders of city bonds whereby the interest was reduced from 5 to 2½ per cent for a period of five years.

The city hall and the waterworks pumping station wrecked by the flood were rebuilt.

The water system was extended and provision made for a duplicate main across the bay.

Three engine houses were built and others damaged by the storm were repaired.

The entire business section was repaved at a cost of \$183,027.07.

Rock and shell roads, costing \$181,064.04, were constructed.

The drainage system was extended at a cost of \$245,664.47.

Old judgments to the amount of \$18,026.65, inherited from former administrations, were paid off.

City employees were paid in cash instead of in scrip subject to heavy discounts.

City bonds quoted as low as 60 in the flood year were speedily brought to a premium.

A modern system of bookkeeping was introduced.

Interest was collected on city balances in depositories.

A plan of preparing the annual budget and strictly adhering to it was adopted.

The sanitation of the city was greatly improved.

The streets were kept cleaner and cleared of fruit stands and other obstructions.

Police regulations were more strictly enforced.

Saloons were excluded from the residence districts.

The policy evil and public gambling were abolished.

The city hall was transformed from a resort for loafers into a business office.

Political influence was eliminated in selecting heads of departments and employees; the merit system was established.

The city water service was metered.

Favoritism was done away with in all public services.

The services of men of the highest character and ability were secured for the municipality.

Public confidence in the city government was fully restored.

The city was emancipated from the long reign of strife, dissension, and jealousy; harmony and general prosperity were reestablished.

Notwithstanding the enormous extension of municipal activities and the increase of efficiency a tax rate of \$1.60 for city purposes, the lowest of any large city in Texas, was not increased.

2. IN HOUSTON, TEX.

City indebtedness to the amount of \$400,000 was retired.

The practice of issuing bonds to cover annual deficits was discontinued; expenditures were kept rigidly within the city's income.

Current obligations were promptly met; warrants, previously quoted at 75 to 80, became worth par.

The city credit was completely restored, following a period when bondholders had been threatening to sue on account of defaults.

Waterworks were purchased for \$901,000 with popular approval, showing confidence in the new government. The purchase was approved in 1906 by a vote of three to one, whereas it had been rejected in 1903.

The water service and fire protection were greatly improved.

The street railways were required to bear their share of public burdens and improve the service.

Three schoolhouses were built, at a cost of \$100,000.

A 15-acre park was purchased for \$55,000 cash.

Dangerous old bridges across the bayou, in the heart of the city, which the old government had refused to replace, except by bond issues, were replaced with new bridges, paid for out of current revenues.

Twelve other bridges were put in repair.

The city plumbing work and supplies were obtained at 15 to 25 per cent less cost by the adoption of business methods.

Good vitrified brick paving was substituted for inferior work.

A shipload of brick was imported from New York, and the brick combination was broken.

The cost of electric lights was reduced from \$80 to \$70 per arc per year.

The tax rate was reduced from \$2 to \$1.80. Graft, sinecurism, favoritism, and incompetency, which permeated every department of the old government, were done away with. Police and sanitary regulations were strictly enforced; the fostering of vice was discontinued.

Quarreling and dissensions disappeared; harmony was restored both in the city government and among citizens.

Business methods were adopted in all departments. Council sessions became short, businesslike, and devoid of speech making.

The confidence of citizens in the integrity of the city government was completely restored.

Growth and prosperity of the city were stimulated by improved civic conditions.

These good results were obtained simply from change of the system, members of the commission having been connected with the former government.

3. IN LEAVENWORTH, KANS.

Strict enforcement of law was substituted for the city's traditional policy of defiance of State prohibitory laws.

Bankruptcy and financial helplessness were succeeded by a thoroughly satisfactory condition of the city's finances.

Citizens of the highest standing were induced to accept office under the new régime, the politicians being driven from power by large majorities.

A period of decreasing population and stagnation in business and building was followed by one of rapid growth in all of these respects.

In 25 years under the old form of government the city paved 12 miles of streets. In the first 21 months under the new system $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles were paved.

City bonds to the amount of \$20,200 were paid off in two years.

The county indebtedness for which the city was responsible was paid off by the latter to the net amount of \$119,750 within two years.

Only \$27,000 of the new bonds were issued against these reductions; a net reduction of the bonded indebtedness of \$112,950 took place, while the new issues represented permanent improvements.

A new set of books was operated, and the city's business handled like that of "an up-to-date mercantile establishment."

All bills due from the city were paid before the 10th of each month.

Appointments were made on account of fitness, regardless of party affiliations.

Property values largely increased, and the volume of real estate transfers showed unprecedented growth of the city.

New factories were built, which give employment to 300 men.

All of these improved conditions were brought about without increased taxation, despite a loss of \$80,000 a year from illegal saloon licenses.

4. IN DES MOINES, IOWA.

The city's net loss in the last year of the old government was \$134,510.62; the net gain in the first year under the new charter was \$48,430.10, a total relative saving of \$182,940.65.

The tax levy for city purposes in the last year of the old charter was 33.7 mills (on the 25 per cent valuation established by law); the first year under the new charter it was 36.4 mills.

Public improvements to the value of \$357,755.50 were made during the first year under the new system.

Contractors were held strictly to the specifications, and claims for extras, which had grown into a crying abuse, were firmly rejected; the quality of all public work visibly improved.

Several carloads of inferior creosote paving blocks were rejected.

A modern bookkeeping system was installed.

Municipal expenditures were held strictly within the city's revenues, ending the practice of piling up yearly deficits, to which almost the entire city bonded debt was due.

Numerous leaks were stopped; all the licenses collected were turned into the treasury.

Street lights, formerly costing \$75 to \$95, were reduced to a uniform rate of \$65 per arc per year, and the moonlight schedule abolished, insuring better service.

Incandescent lights were reduced from \$24 to \$17 in some cases and the all-night schedule was substituted for a moonlight schedule in others, at the same price, \$17.

All public work was promptly done; complaints were given immediate attention.

The streets were kept noticeably cleaner; the alleys in business sections, never before cleaned at all, were now thoroughly cleaned.

Street signs were put up throughout the city, years of clamor for it having failed to induce the old government to make this improvement.

The wages of men with teams were increased from \$3.50 to \$4.50; those of day laborers from \$2 to \$2.25; much better service was required.

The quality of public service in all departments was noticeably bettered.

The cost of cleaning catch basins was reduced from \$1.40 to \$1.12.

Uniform cement walks were laid throughout the business section.

Bridge paving under the old system cost \$4.74 per yard by contract; under the new system it was done by day labor for \$4.09.

Culverts costing \$17.61 per cubic yard under the old plan were built for \$12.63 under the new.

Mowing in the parks was done at 75 per cent of the old cost.

Work done by contract was let to the lowest bidders, without manipulation.

The "red-light" district, operated under the corrupt and unlawful monthly fining system, was entirely abolished.

Bond sharks, who owned the segregated "red-light" district and oppressed the inmates of disorderly houses, were driven from business.

Public gambling houses, previously operated under police protection, were closed.

Petty gambling devices, such as slot machines, formerly protected, were effectually prohibited.

Ordinances regulating saloons were strictly and uniformly enforced. Friendly, but mutually self-respecting, relations between the city government and public-service corporations were established.

City politics were entirely divorced from State and national politics.

Private enterprise and public spirit were remarkably stimulated. Over \$400,000 was raised for public purposes by citizens in two years.

A great coliseum, new Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. buildings were provided, etc.

The city, formerly notorious for "divisive strife," became notably harmonious.

The confidence of citizens in the representative character of the city government was fully reestablished.

Following is a comparative statement of working funds in Des Moines in 1907 and 1908:

Cash on hand Apr. 1, 1907-----	\$70,396.63	
Claims outstanding-----	55,085.83	
Excess cash over claims-----		\$15,310.80
Cash on hand Apr. 1, 1908-----	\$72,790.11	
Claims outstanding-----	191,989.93	
Excess claims over cash-----		119,199.82
Loss, 1907 (last year under old charter)-----		\$134,510.62
Claims outstanding Apr. 1, 1908-----	\$181,989.93	
Claims paid by bond issue-----	175,616.07	
Claims that were not paid by bond issue-----	16,373.86	
Cash on hand Apr. 1, 1908-----	72,790.11	
Excess cash over claims that were not paid by bond issue-----		56,416.25
Cash on hand Apr. 1, 1909-----	\$164,352.05	
Claims outstanding-----	59,496.77	
Excess cash over claims-----		104,855.28
Gain, 1908 (first year under new charter)-----		48,439.03
Gain, 1908 over 1907-----		182,949.65

5. IN CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA.

Bonds were retired and interest paid thereon amounting to a total of \$61,980.

Extensive park improvements were made.

Additional park property was acquired.

A new fire station was erected. All city buildings were put in good repair.

The island in Cedar River, formerly a dumping ground, was purchased by the city and turned into a beautiful civic center.

The services of Charles Mulford Robinson, the civic improvement expert, were secured, and, following his advice, streets were extended, street signs were erected, waste paper receptacles provided, etc.

Public works of all kinds were done on a large scale, and well done. The receipts from the police court increased from \$75 to \$700 per month without an increase of arrests.

License taxes were impartially collected.

Milk and meat inspection laws were enforced.

Five patrolmen were added to the city police force.

Gamblers were driven from the city.

The social evil was segregated and put under severe restrictions.

Defective paving was rejected; contractors were held to the specifications.

Cash discount was taken on all city bills.

Interest was collected on city balances in banks.

The city's credit was established at the highest standard.

Business methods were introduced in all departments of the city government.

Complaints from citizens were given immediate attention. Civic pride was awakened.

The growth of the city was largely accelerated.

For the following exhibits see CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of July 13, 1911:

Exhibit A.—Census Office report of city and county population;

Exhibit B.—The Iowa law;

Exhibit C.—Ordinance under which the first administration of Des Moines, Iowa, was organized;

Exhibit E.—List of cities having commission form of government in some form; and

Exhibit F.—“Texas recall upheld by higher court;” “Dallas City Charter held to be valid.” Text of opinion.

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