

THE SHORT BALLOT

A Movement to Simplify Politics

I believe the Short Ballot is the key to the whole problem of the restoration of popular government in this country."

—WOODROW WILSON

1915

The National Short Ballot Organization
383 FOURTH AVENUE NEW YORK

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The Short Ballot Principle

As Officially Defined by
The National Short Ballot Organization

THE dangerously great power of politicians in our country is not due to any peculiar civic indifference of the people, but rests on the fact that we are living under a form of democracy that is so unworkable as to constitute in practice a pseudo-democracy. It is unworkable because—

First—It submits to popular election offices which are too unimportant to attract (or deserve) public attention, and,

Second—It submits to popular election so many offices at one time that many of them are inevitably crowded out from proper public attention, and,

Third—It submits to popular election so many offices at one time as to make the business of ticket-making too intricate for popular participation, whereupon some sort of private political machine becomes an indispensable instrument in electoral action.

Many officials, therefore, are elected without adequate public scrutiny, and owe their selection not to the people, but to the makers of the party ticket, who thus acquire an influence that is capable of great abuse.

The "SHORT BALLOT" principle is—

First—That only those offices should be elective which are important enough to attract (and deserve) public examination.

Second—That very few offices should be filled by election at one time, so as to permit adequate and unconfused public examination of the candidates, and so as to facilitate the free and intelligent making of original tickets by any voter for himself unaided by political specialists.

Obedience to this fundamental principle explains the comparative success of democratic government in the cities of Great Britain and other foreign democracies, as well as in Galveston, Des Moines and other American cities that are governed by "Commissions."

The application of this principle should be extended to all cities, counties and states.

The Short Ballot

A Movement to Simplify Politics

WE have in the United States a peculiar system of representative government and after patient trial for many generations it is under indictment and suspicion. It often fails to register the will of the people and in fact may brazenly and successfully defy the people on a given issue. In New York state both parties recently found it expedient to promise in their platforms to enact a direct primary system of nominations. The people elected a Republican legislature, then a Democratic one and finally a combination of a Republican Assembly and a Democratic Senate—but they didn't get direct primaries. Illinois has seen both parties declare for a reform and muster hardly a vote for it in the legislature. Oregon has seen its legislature scorn proposals which passed by an overwhelming popular vote when submitted to the people later by initiative. Congress knows well enough that the people would favor parcel post on a referendum, but it continues impassive and its members get little or no political punishment. The insubordination of our city governments to

popular wish is too commonplace to require review. Although the people may be ready to vote overwhelmingly for a measure, their nominal agents and servants in the representative system will frequently maintain a successful indifference or resistance election after election. Our governments are less anxious to please the people than they are to please the politicians who thus become an irresponsible ruling class with a vast and marketable influence. Our representative system is *mis*-representative. Many Americans, impatient with it, are demanding access to an additional and alternative system, namely, direct legislation by the Initiative and Referendum.

Nevertheless the representative system cannot be abandoned. Even with Initiative and Referendum there must still be an organization of public officials to interpret the will and execute the work of the people. Since it is to continue, it must be subdued and made a good and worthy servant.

Our insubordinate representative system is a unique American phenomenon. In other democracies the results of referenda would normally be parallel to the results of elections. What the results of a given referendum would be in England could readily be ascertained with reasonable accuracy by polling the House of Commons. If you would know the sentiment of the electorate of a foreign self-governing

city, get the City Council to vote—if it votes two-thirds against your proposal, you may be fairly sure that the electorate would vote about two-thirds against it also. Foreign representative systems are under the thumb of the people, are sensitive and obedient to the popular wish, are anxious to please the whole electorate and the individual representatives who fail to represent, disappear promptly and almost automatically from public life.

This unique ability of our governmental servants to disobey the people and survive to disobey again suggests that of the many peculiarities in our system of government some may be unsound and unworkable.

ANALYSIS OF PRESENT CONDITIONS

Blind Voting

Starting at the broad base of our structure, the voters, we notice one unique phenomenon which is so familiar to us that we usually overlook it entirely—that is *our habit of voting blindly*. Of course intelligent citizens do not vote without knowing what they are doing. Oh, no! You, Mr. Reader, for instance, you vote intelligently always! Of course you do! But whom did you vote for for Surrogate last time? You don't know? Well, then, whom did you support for State Auditor? For State Treasurer? For Clerk of the Court? For Su-

preme Court Judge? And who is your Alderman? Who represents your district at the State Capitol? Name, please, all the candidates you voted for at the last election. Of course you know the President and the Gov-

Do you know the name of the new State Treasurer just elected? *Replied No—87%*

Do you know the name of the present State Treasurer? *Replied No—75%*

Do you know the name of the new State Assemblyman for this district? *Replied No—70%*

Do you know the name of the defeated candidate for Assemblyman in this district? *Replied No—80%*
(Knew both of above—16%)

Do you know the name of the Surrogate of this County? *Replied No—65%*

Do you know the name of your Alderman? *Replied No—85%*

Are you in active politics? *Replied No—96%*

AN EXHIBIT OF BLIND VOTING.

Some answers collected immediately after election in the most independent Assembly District in New York State (XII. A. D., Brooklyn).

ernor and the Mayor, but there was a long list of minor officers beside. Unless you are active in politics I fear you flunk this examination. If your ballot had by a printer's error omitted the "State Comptroller" entirely, you would

probably not have missed it. You ignored nine-tenths of your ballot, voting for those you did know about and casting a straight party ticket for the rest, not because of party loyalty, but because you did not know of anything better to do. You need not feel ashamed of it. Your neighbors all did the same; ex-President Eliot of Harvard, the "ideal citizen," confessed in a public address recently, that he did it, too. I have heard a Governor of one great state remark in private conversation that he had never voted intelligently in his life except for the head-of-the-ticket candidates. It is a typical and universal American attitude. We all vote blindly. Philadelphia has even elected imaginary men. The judgment of the community is not being applied to any of the minor offices on the ballot. The average American citizen never casts a completely intelligent vote. And a man who votes blindly is being bossed!

Should We Blame the Voters?

This is not all the fault of the voter. To cast a really intelligent ballot from a mere study of newspapers, campaign literature and speeches is impossible because practically nothing is ever published about the minor candidates. And this in turn is not always the fault of the press. In New York City the number of elective offices in state, city and county to

be filled by popular vote in a cycle of four years is nearly five hundred. In Chicago there were six thousand nominees in a single recent primary election. Philadelphia, although smaller than these cities, elects more officials than either. No newspaper can give publicity to so many candidates or examine properly into their relative merits. The most strenuous minor candidate cannot get a hearing amid such confusion. And the gossip around the local headquarters being too one-sided to be trusted by a casual inquirer, a deep working personal acquaintance with politics, involving years of experience and study, becomes necessary before a voter can obtain the data for casting a wholly intelligent ballot.

Plainly the voter is over-burdened with more questions than he will answer carefully, for it is certain that the average citizen cannot afford the time to fulfill such unreasonable requirements. Since the voters at the polls are the foundation of a democracy, this universal habit of voting blindly constitutes a huge break in that foundation which is serious enough to account for the toppling of the whole structure.

Let us see if we can trace out a connection between this as a cause and "misrepresentative government" as the effect.

Blind Voting Leads to Government by Politicians.

No one will deny that if nine-tenths of the citizens ignored politics and did not vote at all on election day, the remaining tenth would govern. And when practically all men vote in nine-tenths ineffectiveness, about the same delegation of power occurs. The remaining fraction who do give enough time to the subject to be politically effective, take control.

That fraction we call "politicians" in our unique American sense of the word. A "politician" is a political specialist. He is one who knows more about the voter's political business than does the voter himself. He knows that the coroner's term will expire in November, and contributes toward the discussion involved in nominating a successor, whereas the voter hardly knows that a coroner is being elected.

The politicians come from all classes and ranks and the higher intelligence of the community contributes its full quota. Although they are only a fraction of the electorate they are a fair average selection and they might give us exactly the kind of government we all want if only they could remain free and independent personal units. But the impulse to organize is irresistible. Convenience and efficiency require it and the "organization" springs up and cements them together. Good men who

see the organization go wrong on a nomination continue to stay in and lend their strength, not bolting unless moral conditions become intolerable. Were these men not bound by an organization with its social and other non-political ties, their revolt would be early, easy and effective and every bad nomination would receive its separate and proportionate punishment in the alienation of supporters.

Politicians Can't Exclude Public Enemies From Their Ranks.

The control of an active political organization will gravitate always toward a low level. The doors must be open to every voter—examination of his civic spirit is impossible—and greed and altruism enter together. Greed has most to gain in a factional dispute and is least scrupulous in choice of methods. The bad politician carries more weapons than the politician who hampers himself with a code of ethics one degree higher. Consequently corruption finally dominates any machine that is worth dominating and sinks it lower and lower as worse men displace better, until the limit of public toleration is reached and the machine receives a set-back at election. That causes its members to clean up, discredit the men who went too far, and restore a standard high enough to win—which standard immediately

begins to sag again by the operation of the same natural principle.

Reformers in our cities have given up the endeavor to maintain pure political organizations on the model of the regular party organizations. A typical experience is that of the Citizens' Union of New York, whose leaders have always been sincerely bent on improving the condition of politics. The Union acquired power enough to become an important factor in elections. After the first such election, small political organizations which had aided toward the victory rushed in, clamoring for plunder. For a term or two the reformers were able to resist the pressure. Nevertheless the possession of power by their party inevitably attracted the self-seekers; they found themselves accepting assistance from men who turned out to be in politics for what there was in it, men who wanted to use the power and patronage that lay at hand unutilized, and it was clear that those men would in time, working within the Union, depose the original heads of the party, and substitute "more practical" leaders of their own kind, until in time the Citizens' Union would itself need reforming. So the Union retired from the field as a party, broke up the district organizations which had yielded to corruption and adopted a less vulnerable type of internal

government in order to preserve its purity of purpose.

It is obvious that most political parties do not thus commit suicide to evade internal contamination and lapse of principle.

Theoretically there is always the threat of the minority party machine which stands ready to take advantage of every lapse, but as there is no debate between minor candidates, no adequate public scrutiny or comparison of personalities, the minority machine gets no credit for a superior nomination and often finds that it can more hopefully afford to cater to its own lowest elements. In fact, it may be only the dominant machine which can venture to affront the lowest elements of its membership and nominate the better candidate.

Misrepresentative Government the Normal Result of Government by Politicians.

The essence of our complaint against our government is that it represents these easily contaminated political organizations instead of the citizens. Naturally! When practically none but the politicians in his district are aware of his actions or even of his existence, the office-holder who refuses to bow to their will is committing political suicide.

Sometimes the interests of the politician and the people are parallel, but sometimes they are not and the office-holder is apt to diverge along

the path of politics. An appointment is made, partly at least, to strengthen the machine, since the appointee has a certain following. A bill is considered not on its simple merits but on the issue—"Who is behind it?" "If it is Boss Smith of Green County who wants it, whatever his reasons, we must placate him or risk disaffection in that district." So appointments and measures lose their original and proper significance and become mere pawns in the chess game of politics which aims to keep "our side" on top. The office-holders themselves may be upright, bribe-proof men—they usually are, in fact. But their failure to disregard all exigencies of machine politics constitutes misrepresentative government and Boss Smith of Green County can privately sell his influence if he chooses, whereby the public is in the end a heavy sufferer.

Summary of the Analysis.

Thus the connection between the long ballot and misrepresentative government is established: By voting the long ballot blindly, we entrust large governing power to easily-contaminated organizations of political specialists, and we must expect to get the kind of government that will naturally proceed from their trusteeship.

Every factor in this sequence is a unique American phenomenon. Our long ballot with

its variegated list of trivial offices is a freak among the nations. The English ballot never covers more than three offices, usually only one. In Canada the ballot is less commonly limited to a single office, but the number is never large. A Swiss would have to live a hundred years to vote upon as many men as an American undertakes to elect in one day. To any foreigner our long ballot is astonishing and our blind voting appalling. We, with our huge ballots, require our citizens to be twenty to fifty times as alert as foreign citizens in order to keep from electing men they don't really want. The politicians as a professional class, separate from popular leaders or office-holders, do not prevail in other lands and the very word "politician" has a special meaning in this country which foreigners do not attach to it. And government from behind the scenes by politicians, in endless opposition to government by public opinion, is the final unique American phenomenon in the long ballot's train of consequences.

The Voting That is Not Blind.

The blind vote, of course, does not take in the whole ballot. Certain conspicuous offices engage our attention and we all vote for those with discrimination and care. We go to hear the speeches of the candidates for conspicuous

offices, those speeches are printed in the daily papers, and reviewed in the weeklies, the candidates are the theme of editorials, and the intelligent voter who takes no part in politics, votes with knowledge on certain important issues.

In an obscure contest on the blind end of the ballot, conformity with popular opinion has little political value, but in these conspicuous contests where we actually compare man and man, complete compliance is a definite asset to a nominee. Hence in the case of an obscure nomination, the tendency is automatically away from the people, but in a conspicuous nomination the tendency is toward the people.

Accordingly while we elect aldermen who do not represent us, and legislators who obey the influences of unseen powers, we are apt to do very well when it comes to the choice of a conspicuous officer like a president, a governor, or a mayor. For mayor, governor or president we are sure to secure a presentable figure, always honest and frequently our able and independent champion of the people against the very machine that nominated him. We are apt to re-elect such men, and the way we speed aside hostile politicians to do it shows how strong is our impulse to reward the faithful servant.

And so in these conspicuous offices—those for which we do *not* vote blindly—we secure

comparatively sensitive obedient government as a normal condition, considering that the organized and skillful opposition which always faces us occupies a position of great strategic advantage in possession of the nominating machinery.

THE REMEDY.

We cannot hope to teach or force the entire citizenship to scrutinize the long ballot and cease to vote blindly on most of it. The Mountain will not come to Mahomet; Mahomet then must go to the Mountain.

First.—We must *shorten the ballot* to a point where the average man will vote intelligently without giving to politics more attention than he does at present. That means making it very short, for if the number of these simultaneous elections is greater than the bulk of the citizens care to keep track of, then we have government by the remaining 40 per cent., or 20 per cent., of the citizens—and no matter whom we believe to be at fault, that plan in practice will have resulted in oligarchy and be a failure. The test for shortness is to inquire, when a given number of offices are filled by election, whether the people vote blindly or not on any one of them. For if they begin to require “tickets” ready-made for their convenience, they are sharing their power with the ticket-makers—and democracy is fled!

Second.—We must put on the elective list only offices that are naturally conspicuous. The petty offices must either go off the ballot and be consolidated under a responsible appointing power, no matter how awkwardly, or they must be increased in real public importance by added powers until they rise into such eminence as to be visible to all the people. The County Surveyor, for instance, must go, for the electorate will not bother with such trifles whether the ballot be short or not. Why indeed should 50,000 voters all be asked to pause for even a few minutes apiece to study the relative qualifications of Smith and Jones for the petty \$1,000-a-year post of County Surveyor? Any intelligent citizen may properly have bigger business on his hands!

And the Alderman—we can't abolish him perhaps, but we can increase his power by enlarging his district and lengthening his term and making his Board a small one. Till then how can we make people in Philadelphia agitate themselves over the choice of a Common Councilor who is only one-one-hundred-and-forty-ninth of one-half of the city legislature!

That candidates should be conspicuous is vital. The people must be able to see what they are doing; they must know the candidates—otherwise they are not in control of the situation, but are only going through the motions of controlling.

The Short Ballot Applied.

To be pictorial, let us see how a revised schedule of elections might look if we put into the realm of appointment (*i. e.*, consolidated) as many as possible of those offices which the people now ignore. Most county offices, many city positions and the tail of the State ticket would thus be disposed of. In Oregon the Peoples' Power League (which devised the Initiative, Referendum and Recall) aspires to capture the representative system for the people by an initiative petition to shorten the November ballots as follows:

<i>First Year.</i>	<i>Second Year.</i>	<i>Third Year.</i>	<i>Fourth Year.</i>
President and Vice-President four years.	Governor four years. <i>Appoints all state administration, and sheriffs and district attorneys.</i>	Congressman two years.	Judges.
Congressman two years.	State Auditor four years. State Representative four years. <i>(State Senate abolished.)</i>	3 County Directors four years. <i>Appoint all other county officers.</i>	

City elections in Oregon come at other times of the year and can easily be simplified and in some cases Short Ballot plans have already been adopted. There is endless room for discussion as to the details and many other ar-

rangements could be devised. This schedule provides for every office which must be kept within the realm of politics. It provides short ballots which every man would vote intelligently without calling a political specialist to come and guide the pencil for him.

It may be objected that to take the minor offices off the state ticket, for instance, and make them appointive by the Governor would be giving too much power to the Governor. Well, somebody, we rarely know who, practically appoints them now. To have them appointed by a recognized legally-constituted authority is surely better than to have them selected by a self-established, unofficial, unknown and irresponsible coterie of politicians. There is no great peril in unifying power, provided we can watch what is done with it. (Suppose we were electing by popular vote not only the President and Vice-President of the United States, but the cabinet, the supreme court and the other federal judges, the federal marshals, district-attorneys, foreign ambassadors and postmasters! Can you see how our superficial doctrinaires would resist the adoption of the present unified and bossless plan?)

The History of the Long Ballot.

In the early days of the republic the activities of the state and municipal governments were small and there were few offices. Little

by little new offices were created and for haphazard reasons were frequently made elective. At the same time we were changing from a nation of villages to a nation of cities. The likelihood that the voters would personally know the candidates was steadily diminishing. The voters became more and more dependent on hearsay evidence. Newspaper space was limited, and not every candidate could get enough of it to make himself known to the people. The number of elective officials was thus increasing while the practicability of electing them all was diminishing. The public was becoming bigger and clumsier but its political work was becoming more delicate and intricate. Perhaps if it had all come suddenly we would have seen that the long ballot was an expert's ballot and led infallibly toward practical oligarchy, whereas a short, simple ballot was the people's ballot and led toward practical democracy. But the long ballot came slowly and looked like a friend. Every time it grew longer a few more voters began to vote blindly till to-day (outside of rural elections, perhaps) everybody but a few political specialists votes blindly on part of his ballot. So we have to-day not democracy but government by political specialists—a ruling class—a self-created aristocracy of political insiders—and that is oligarchy! The fact that it was honestly intended to be a democracy is not

enough to make it one. If it doesn't 'democ,' it isn't democracy!

The Short Ballot in Operation.

Fighting government-by-politicians now is like fighting the wind. If the government is to be brought within the sure control of the people, the ballot must be brought within the sure control of the individual voter. We must get on a basis where the real intentions of the average voter find intelligent expression on the entire ballot so as to produce normally the kind of government the voters want, whether that kind be good or bad. It will in fact be good—not as good as the most enlightened of the populace may desire, but better than what the politicians can be expected to purvey. At any rate the right route to reform is via democracy and politics without any politicians at all. Impossible in this country? No! Galveston has it with its government by a Commission of Five. This Commission has without scandal carried through tremendous public improvements (raising the ground level to prevent another flood), and at the same time has reduced the public debt and the tax rate. That is good administration. More than that, it gets re-elected by overwhelming majorities and has not been in peril at any election. The "old crowd" which misgoverned the city for years,

holds only 20 per cent. of the vote now. And the total campaign expenses of electing the right men are only \$350.

From the hundreds of cities that have followed Galveston come similar reports the gist of which is that these conspicuous commissioners have been seeking to please the people (not the politicians) by giving progressive economical government.

It has been thought that this was the fruit of correct organization, analogous to a business corporation with its board of directors. But there are many other elected commissions and boards in the United States—"County Commissions," "Boards of Education," "Trustees of the Sanitary District," "Boards of Assessors," etc.—and they are not conspicuously successful, but in fact such organization often serves only to scatter responsibility and shelter corruption. Their obscurity and insignificance conceal them from public oversight as effectively as if publicity were forbidden by a censorship and in consequence those parts of our government are utterly beyond popular control. No! Popular government as distinguished from politicians' government is a matter of electing the people's men in the first place. To elect the people's men is first of all a matter of arranging for the maximum amount of concentrated public scrutiny at the election. The way for the peo-

ple to keep popular enemies out of office is to refrain from electing them. And the way to refrain from electing them is to arrange to get a good look at every one of them at election time.

Were it otherwise, we would find misgovernment in British cities which, except for this feature, are ideally organized from an American grafter's point of view. The British city authorities are hampered most unjustly by a hostile House of Lords, their machinery of government is ancient and complicated, and their big councils with committees exercising executive management over the departments, with ample opportunity for concealment of wrongdoing, with no restraining civil service examinations, with one-tenth of the laboring population on the municipal payrolls would apparently provide an impregnable paradise for the American politician of the lowest type. But the ballot for an English municipal election can be covered by the palm of the hand. It contains usually the names of two candidates for one office, member of the Council for the ward. (The Council elects the Mayor, the Aldermen and all other city officers.) Blind voting on so short a ballot is hardly conceivable. Every voter is a complete politician in our sense of the word. The entire intelligence of the community is in harness, pulling, of course, toward good government. An Ameri-

can ward politician in this barren environment, unaided by any vast blind vote, could only win by corrupting a plurality of the whole electorate, a thing that is easily suppressed by law even if it were not otherwise a manifest impossibility. So there are no ward politicians in England, no profession of politics, and misgovernment is abnormal. The number of elective offices in English cities, by the way, is nevertheless greater than in ours, for there are many wards and those councils are consequently large. Don't think that the Short Ballots necessarily means few elective offices.

Similarly Galveston concentrated the attention of the voters sharply upon candidates for only five offices, all very important. The press could give adequate attention to every one and in consequence every intelligent voter in his easy chair at home formed opinions on the whole five and had a definite notion of the personality of the candidates. In such a situation the ward politician had no function. There was no ignorant *laissez-faire*, no mesh of detail for him to trade upon. He became no more powerful than any other citizen, and his only strength lay in whatever genuine leadership he possessed. Moreover, if he nominated men who could stand the fierce limelight and get elected, they would *ipso facto*, probably be men who would resist his attempt to control them afterward. Or if they did cater to him,

BALLOT PAPER

1	NETTLEFOLD. (John Sutton Nettlefold, Winter- bourn, Edgbaston Park Road, Edgbaston, Gentleman.)	
2	TUNBRIDGE. (William Stephen Tunbridge, Rock- lands, Woodbourne Road, Edg- baston, Solicitor.)	

This is a typical official ballot (actual size) for an English election. It shows the names of two candidates for a single office—Councillor from the ward. The people in each ward simply make one choice, and accordingly know just what they are doing on election day. The scrutiny of the people thus concentrated bars out unfit candidates almost automatically.

it would be difficult to do his bidding right in the concentrated glare of publicity where the responsibility could be and, what is much more vital, would be, correctly placed by every voter. And so the profession of politics went out of existence in Galveston and the ward politician who had for generations misgoverned the city for his own and his friends' benefit went snarling into oblivion.

"Politics," seeking re-entrance into Galveston, would make department heads, etc., separately elective ("make them directly responsible to the people and let the pee-pul rule"). Suppose that they should increase the Commission to thirty members elected "at large" with variegated powers and functions. Straightway tickets, cooked up by "leaders," would reappear, and the voter, facing a huge list of names, most of which he had hardly heard of, would impotently "take program" and concede control to a little but active minority, the politicians.

But suppose again that the enlarged commission be elected not "at large," but by wards, one member to a ward. The voter then has only one decision to make. Newspaper publicity is weakened by division, but this weakness is now repaired by neighborhood acquaintance and the candidate's opportunity to make himself personally known to a large proportion of his constituency. Once more the voter regis-

ters an opinion instead of blindly ratifying the work of a party organization. The politician is again left without a function. His popularity may avail in certain wards and he may thus elect some of the commission, but he will not have from any citizen who is intelligent enough to do his own thinking that blind acquiescence which in other conditions had been the bedrock of his power.

Conclusion.

Just how we are to get rid of the great undigested part of our long ballot is a small matter so long as we get rid of it somehow. Govern a city by a Big Board of Aldermen, if you like, or by a Commission as small as you dare make it. Readjust State constitutions in any way you please. Terms of office can be lengthened. Many officers, now elected, can be appointed by those we do elect. But manage somehow to get our eggs into the baskets that we watch!

For remember—we are not governed by public opinion but by public-opinion-as-expressed-through-the-pencil-point-of-the-Average-Voter-in-his-election-booth. And that may be a vastly different thing! Public opinion can only work in broad masses, clumsily but with tremendous force. To make a multitude of delicate decisions is beyond its blunt powers.

It can't play the tune it has in mind upon our complicated political instrument. But give it a keyboard simple enough for its huge, slow hands, and it will thump out the right notes with precision!

There is nothing the matter with Americans. We are by far the most intelligent electorate in the world. We are not apathetic. Apathy is a purely relative matter depending on how much is asked. Ask much of the people and you will see more apathy than if you ask little. If the people of Glasgow were asked to attend caucuses, primaries, conventions and rallies in support of the best candidate for Coroner, they too would stay home by their firesides and let the worst man have it. If they had our long ballot they would be in a worse mess than we are with it. And if we, on the other hand, could get their handy short ballot, we too would use it creditably. For our human nature is no worse than theirs. The Scotch immigrant in our midst is no more active a citizen than the rest of us. We are not indifferent. We do want good government. And we can win back our final freedom on a Short Ballot basis!

A Few of Many Notable Endorsements :

“I believe the short ballot is the key to the whole problem of the restoration of popular government in this country.”

—**Woodrow Wilson**, Governor of New Jersey.

“In the first place, I believe in the short ballot. You cannot get good service from the public servant if you cannot see him, and there is no more effective way of hiding him than by mixing him up with a multitude of others so that they are none of them important enough to catch the eye of the average workaday citizen.”

—**Theodore Roosevelt**, Address before Ohio Constitutional Convention, 1912.

“I have the fullest sympathy with every reform in governmental and election machinery which shall facilitate the expression of the popular will, such as the Short Ballot and the reduction in elective offices.”

—**William H. Taft**, Speech of Acceptance, 1912.

“The most advanced thought in our nation has reached the conclusion that we can best avoid blind voting and best obtain discrimination of the electorate by a short ballot.”

—**Hiram W. Johnson**, Governor of California, Inaugural Address, Jan. 4, 1911.

“I am in favor of as few elective offices as may be consistent with proper accountability to the people, and a Short Ballot.”

—**Governor Chas. E. Hughes** of New York in his Annual Message to the Legislature, Jan. 4, 1910.

“The long ballot is the ‘jungle,’ of which I have been writing.”

—**Judge Ben. B. Lindsey** of Denver.

“I am heartily in favor of the Short Ballot principle and look for its early and general adoption.”

—**John Mitchell.**

The short ballot principle has been endorsed by every living American writer on Political Science and is being taught in the political science classes of over 100 colleges and universities.

THE NATIONAL SHORT BALLOT ORGANIZATION

Organized to explain the Short Ballot principle to the American people.

Membership—The Secretary will be pleased to enroll any citizen who approves of the Short Ballot principle. No dues or obligations. Members receive occasional bulletins regarding the progress of the movement, are informed of opportunities to help, and receive publications free. 13,000 now enrolled.

Supported entirely by voluntary contributions.

Other publications obtainable from the Secretary:
BOOK, "SHORT BALLOT PRINCIPLES," by Richard S. Childs. A complete outline of the doctrine and the problems of application. 170 pp., postpaid, \$1.10 net. Also obtainable at book stores. Published by Houghton Mifflin Co., 1911.

PAMPHLET, "THE STORY OF THE SHORT BALLOT CITIES," an explanation of the success of the Commission plan. 32 pp., free. In quantities for use in local campaigns for the adoption of the commission-city-manager forms of municipal government eminent at \$10.00 per thousand.

"BEARD'S LOOSE-LEAF DIGEST OF SHORT BALLOT CHARTERS," a living cyclopedia of Commission government documents (500 large pages), \$5.00. Expressage extra.

The Secretary's office is the national clearing house for information on the subject of Commission Government. It has its own paid correspondents in the principal commission-governed cities.

"THE SHORT BALLOT BULLETIN" published bi-monthly to report the news and progress of the Short Ballot movement. Subscription 25 cents per year.

College and high school professors are entitled to requisition this pamphlet from us for their pupils without charge.

**THE NATIONAL
SHORT BALLOT ORGANIZATION**

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