

Conditions in Indiana Cities Focus Attention on Home Rule

The bill that is to be presented at the next regular session of the Indiana General Assembly will provide for either the commission or city manager form of government and is adapted to Indiana municipalities. It differs from a number of similar laws in that it does not include the recall or civil service provisions.

A bill making the commission or commission-manager form of government optional with Indiana cities was presented at the last regular session of the Legislature. It passed the House, but failed to be reported out of committee in the Senate. While this bill was still before the Legislature, Dr. A. R. Hatton of Western Reserve university was invited to the city to redraft the measure, that it might be amended on the floor of the Senate, but since the bill never was considered by that body as a whole, nothing was accomplished. Dr. Hatton is a professor of political science, field director of the National Short Ballot Organization and a charter expert. The bill to be presented at the next session embodies his recommendations made two years ago.

Provisions of Bill.

The bill provides that at any time, not less than 30 days after the passage of the act, at least 10 per cent of those who voted at the last preceding general municipal election may file a petition with the city clerk asking that the question of adoption of either of the plans of government be submitted to the electors of the city. If the petition is found to obtain the required number of proper signatures, the city clerk within five days must certify the results of his examination to the legislative authority of the city at the next regular meeting. A special election shall then be ordered not less than thirty days, but more than 60 days after the following, for the day of election.

The board of election commissioners for any such election shall consist of the city clerk and two resident freeholders, one of them known to favor and one to be opposed to the proposed plan.

Although the bill provides for either the commission or city manager form of government, the tendency of American cities today is decidedly in favor of the latter plan and it is in this phase of the proposed legislation that the secretaries of the state Chambers of Commerce are especially interested. The bill in its present form provides that in cities adopting the city manager plan, the commission shall consist of nine members in cities of the first class, of seven members in cities of the second and third classes, and of five members in cities of the fourth and fifth classes.

Each commissioner shall receive a salary of not to exceed \$600 in cities of the first and second classes, of \$500 in cities of the third and fourth classes, and of \$300 in cities of the fifth class. In every city the mayor shall receive an additional salary

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Must Clean Up City, Says Army Officer in Coal Zone

(By Associated Press)

WILLIAMSON, W. Va., Dec. 2.—Col. Herman Hall, commanding the provisional battalion of federal troops called here for duty in the Mingo county coal strike zone today served notice on the civil authorities in Williamson that alleged immoral conditions in the city must be abated and the streets cleaned. Failure to comply with this request, Col. Hall said, would result in the military taking the work in hand.

O. W. Porter, mayor of Williamson, was sent to a Cincinnati hospital last Sunday seriously ill. The city commissioners have endeavored to select a mayor pro tem but so far have been unable to reach a decision. They will meet again tonight.

MANY ALIENS ARRIVE.

(By Associated Press)

WASHINGTON, Dec. 2.—Immigrants to the number of 339,857 arrived in this country during the ten months of this fiscal year which began last July 1, records at the department of labor show. During the same time, 214,703 emigrants left the United States, leaving a net increase in aliens in this country of 155,154 for that period.

dinarily proves of benefit to the city, conditioned, of course, upon the employment of a capable city manager, if the latter plan is adopted. In time, however, the commission is likely to become susceptible to political influences.

Dayton, O., of course, is the acknowledged leader among the cities which have adopted the city manager plan. Altogether there are approximately 130 cities which are being governed under one of the two systems. The city manager plan is distinctly the more popular and has proved much more efficient and business-like.

Politics in Commission Plan.

The human equation constitutes the chief disadvantage of the commission or city manager plan. In plain terms, this means the inability of the average citizen to refrain from playing politics. There is no state in the Union where politics flourishes so much as in Indiana, and the average Hoosier citizen is likely to resent an effort to take his politics away from him. It has become such an integral part of his make-up that he might prove unable to eliminate it entirely from his attitude toward municipal questions.

The commission plan particularly permits the injection of partisan politics and in cities where it has been adopted the politicians in time have exerted considerable influence over the members of the commission. It might not prove an exaggeration to say that the plan exemplifies a law of diminishing utility. In other words, the change from the old system to the commission or city manager plan or

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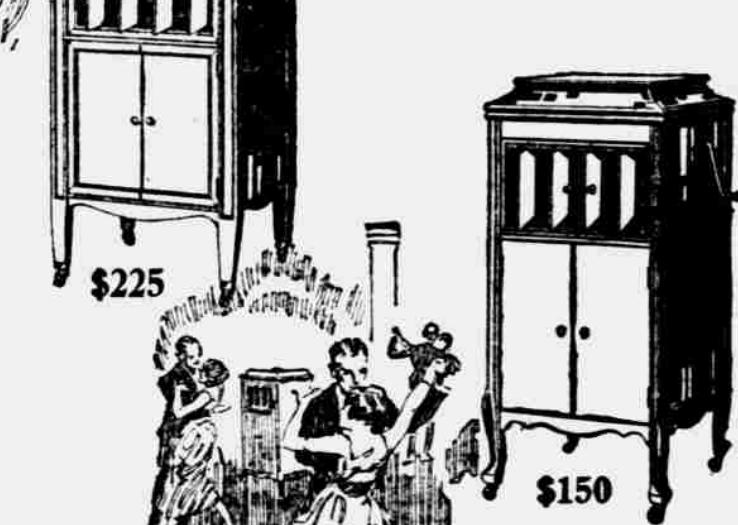
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