

Comrades,  
Work for your  
Own Press!

# ST. LOUIS LABOR

Official Organ of the Socialist Party of St. Louis, Mo.

THE FEARLESS CHAMPION OF ORGANIZED LABOR

Comrades,  
Work for your  
Own Party!

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## Labor United in Opposition to Corporation-Made Charter.

### A King-Mayor?

Shall the People of St. Louis Permit Corporations and Trusts to Establish Czar-Mayorism in the City Hall?

The new City Charter which the Board of Freeholders is trying to force on the people of St. Louis would concentrate all the power of the city in the hands of a single boss, "the Mayor," and in a plutocratic Council of fifteen members, with no check on them whatever when they combine against the people.

But they tell us a two-thirds majority in the Council will be able to remove "the Mayor."

This will make popular government a farce!

Are you going to allow a combine of ten politicians in a Council to remove a Mayor that 150,000 voters have elected?

Only the people who have elected him should have the power to remove him.

The Freeholders have pretended to put in a recall by the people in the new Charter. They did this by reconsidering their action at the last minute, after they had voted for eighteen months to leave it out.

They did this because they saw that their work was provoking a gathering storm of popular disapproval, and not because they wanted it or believed in it.

Hence the Recall they put in is not a genuine Recall. It is a fake and a fraud!

It provides that more than 35,000 qualified voters must sign the petition to invoke it, and each signature must be attested by oath. Such a thing is clearly impossible.

Furthermore, this proposed Recall could only be invoked at the November election, after the Mayor had served eighteen months. If he should be recalled, however, he would continue to hold office for six months longer, until his successor is elected at the succeeding spring election.

Could anybody imagine a more dangerous provision? Would anybody in his private business leave his money in charge of a dishonest cashier for six months after he had found him out and told him that was going to be discharged?

Scratch the "Yes!"

### Because Bribery Now Is Punishable Crime

The Big Cinch "Chartists" Now Favor the Abolition of the House of Delegates, Because a Repetition of Former-Day Bribery Work Might Lead Bribers to Penitentiary.

Some fifteen and twenty years ago the Big Cinch corporation grafters favored the House of Delegates. They never asked that the House be abolished.

To-day the same Big Cinch interests insist that the abolition of the House of Delegates has become a necessity.

Why this change of front?

Because bribery is no longer an unpunishable crime, as in former days.

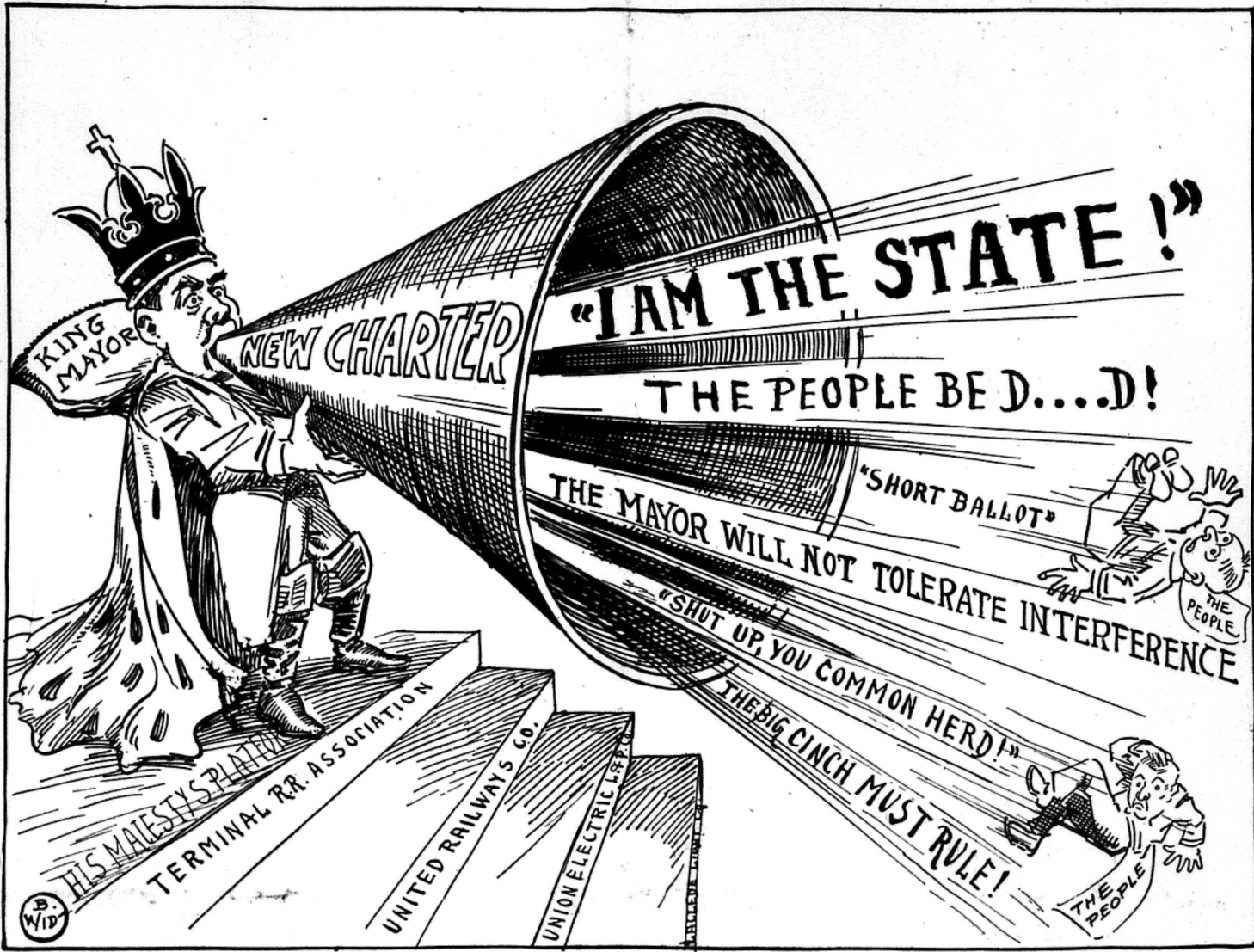
Because there is danger that not only the bribed but also the bribers might find their way to the Jefferson City penitentiary.

Hence they want the House of Delegates abolished, so they might have fewer people in public office to deal with and, with their help, rob the great mass of the people.

Let us remember these things and on January 31 let our battle cry be: "Scratch the 'Yes!'"

You'll Have to Have a License to Live.

Clause 18, on page 16, enables the Council to fine and put in jail any man, woman or child who works at anything whatever to make a living, unless he gets a license and pays any price they may see fit to impose. Is there any bottom to the silliness, knavery or despotism of this Charter?



## The Mayor Under the New Charter

### Vote It Down!

Corporation Lawyers and Political Bosses of the Big Cinch Variety Fixed Up the New Charter.

Who selected the Board of Freeholders?

The "Boss" of the Republican party selected six of them and placed himself among the number, and the "Boss" of the Democratic party selected the other six, and these twelve picked out the thirteenth.

Mr. Fred W. Lehmann, the former attorney of the Terminal Association and the United Railways Company and other franchise monopolies, was chosen as their chairman.

It is well known that these "Bosses" of the two big parties are the agents of the Big Franchise Monopolies, known as the Big Cinch.

Therefore a Board of Freeholders picked out by these bosses is merely a board picked out by the Big Cinch itself.

From a board so constituted you could only expect to get a plutocratic-oligarchic Charter.

This new corporation-made Charter is the most dangerous and insidious attack yet attempted on our American institutions.

It tries to substitute plutocratic bossism in the place of free, popular government.

It attempts to carry us back to the period in St. Louis of the single legislative house of malodorous fame, which was surnamed "the sweet sixteen," and the despotic Mayor in the palmy days of Overstolz and Mike Madden, when St. Louis had the worst, most corrupt and flagrantly inefficient government in all her history.

This new Charter, therefore, instead of being a progressive step, would take us back to the old things and worse from which we have escaped.

January 31 is the day of the Special election.

Vote it down! Bury it for good! Scratch the "Yes!"

### Lese Majeste and "Contempt of Court"

The Councilmen as Police, Judge and Jailer.

The Board of Freeholders should be exhibited in a Bowery dime museum. In Section 6 of Article III of the proposed new Charter we find the following passage:

"The Council . . . . . may arrest and punish by fine, not exceeding three hundred dollars, or by imprisonment not exceeding ten days, or by both such fine and imprisonment as may be provided by ordinance, any person not a member who shall be guilty of disrespect by the Council by any disorderly or contemptuous behavior in its presence during its sessions."

In England the King can no longer be offended, because the lese majeste laws were abolished many years ago. In Belgium and Scandinavia people are no longer prosecuted by lese majeste, and even the German Kaiser put a damper on the lese majeste laws.

Yet the Board of Freeholders put a lese majeste section into the proposed new Charter. Lese majeste and contempt of court in one law!

The Council under the new Charter may arrest, fine and imprison, without trial, any citizen who might get indignant at the Council's work and make a "disrespectful" remark. The Freeholders may defend their action by saying that this clause was in the old Charter.

Well, fifty or forty years ago people might have been excused for such despotic law making, but no excuse goes to-day.

Section 6 is a fine picture of the intellectual and moral calibre of the Charter bosses.

Scratch the "Yes!"

whom shall be appointed by the Mayor and one of them by the Board of Public Improvements.

The five members of the Board of Public Improvements are also to be appointed by the Mayor, and these five favorites of the Mayor would then select a favorite of the Mayor as the third member of the Civil Service Commission.

In other words: Scratch my back, I'll scratch your back, and then we'll make the people pay for our mutual back-scratching.

Scratch the "Yes!"

UNDER THE PROPOSED NEW CHARTER considerable attention is given to the establishment and maintenance of boulevards. The Board of Public Improvements may plant trees, shrubs and flowers on such boulevards, at the city's expense, of course. But what about the tenement house districts and the resident districts of the workingmen and small business people? These districts may supply the taxes necessary to pay for the establishment and maintenance of the West End boulevards.

### Why this Change?

The City Treasury Would be Deprived of the Sound Safeguards.

The proposed new City Charter, for which some of the subsidized newspapers are now working so hard, proposes to abolish the most important and indispensable office of Auditor, which has given St. Louis the best control over its accounts of any city in the United States, so acknowledged by City Counselor Bates.

The City of Washington, D. C., tried the experiment of abolishing its auditor about twelve years ago, and in less than nine months its accounts ran behind \$360,000, and the Auditor, J. S. Petty, was quickly reinstated to save the city from bankruptcy.

Why this proposed change?

This new Lehmann Charter proposes that the Mayor shall appoint the Board of Public Improvements and other city officials that are now elected by the people, in spite of the fact that under the present old Charter these officials have always ranked higher in moral integrity than many of the Mayors. The political parties always nominated the best men they could find for Auditor, etc., so as to help elect "the Mayor," whom they relied on to distribute the political pie.

Under this new Charter he would have all the pie to distribute. Will he select superior men for his subordinates or will he reward his political henchmen and pie hunters? Will you get better or worse officials by that change?

Vote the new Charter down! Scratch the "Yes!"

One Thing the Legislative Branch May Do.

The Council is graciously permitted to spend as much of the people's money and to borrow as much of the Big Cinch's money as they see fit. See Art. III, Sec. 23, clause 2, on page 13, and Art. XXVIII, p. 116.

This is another reason why every citizen who has the welfare of the people at heart will, on January 31, stick to the popular battle-cry: Scratch the "Yes!"

### Why Unconstitutional?

Attorney Fauntleroy Discusses the Constitutionality of Direct Legislation for St. Louis — Sound Argument.

Mr. Charles W. Bates, attorney for the Board of Freeholders, rendered that body a careful and thoughtful opinion, in which he stated that a provision for the initiative in the proposed new Charter would be unconstitutional. This opinion was concurred in by Mr. F. N. Judson.

While this opinion is certainly entitled to respect, I beg leave to differ from it. Their argument is brief. It is this: The power of the city to frame its charter is derived from the Constitution of the state, and the Constitution grants the city the right to frame any charter it pleases, except that such charter must provide for a chief executive, and at least one house of legislation, and that such charter shall be in harmony with the Constitution and the laws of the State. By the "laws of the state" is meant, of course, the statutory law enacted by the Legislature, because the modern political right and function of the initiative was unknown to common law. Mr. Bates says, correctly, that there is no statutory provision which prevents the city of St. Louis from providing in its charter for the initiative, therefore, the only limitation upon the right of the city to provide for the initiative in the new Charter is the limitation contained in the constitutional provision, that such charter must be in harmony with the State Constitution. Mr. Bates further says: "I am of the opinion that the Charter cannot lawfully provide for the initiative in the sense above used, for this would be vesting, otherwise that in the legislative body provided for by the Constitution, the legislative power of the city."

The Constitution of the State of Missouri is as binding on the people at large in the state as it is upon that portion of them contained within the limits of the city of St. Louis. It provides in the plainest and most mandatory form that the power of legislation shall be vested in a General Assembly, composed of Senate and House of Representatives, which shall be a co-ordinate branch with the other remaining departments of the state government, the executive and judicial; yet the Constitution has lately been amended so as to provide for the enactment of laws, under the initiative, by the people at large, entirely independent of the General Assembly. In other words, the whole body of qualified voters when exercising the initiative in the state, constitutes now, with the General Assembly, a concurrent and independent lawmaking body. It would, therefore, be in entire harmony with the Constitution to provide in the new Charter for the initiative, thus constituting the whole body of registered and qualified voters of the city of St. Louis a concurrent, though independent, legislative body with the Council. A charter providing for the initiative would, therefore, be in pari materia with the State Constitution, and in no wise repugnant to it.

While the Constitution states that any charter must provide for at least one legislative body, it, nevertheless, does not limit the number of legislative bodies. The registered and qualified voters of the city, therefore, can constitute one legislative body, when exercising the extraordinary power of the initiative, while the Council can exercise, under delegated power, the ordinary right of enacting the usual local laws, or ordinances, provided the same be in harmony with the Constitution and laws of the state.

Quoting Mr. Bates again: "The manner of providing for the election, of course, is a matter distinct from the subjects considered in this opinion. It seems sufficient to say that the Charter may provide for calling such an election, but that, when held, it must be held under the state law applicable to elections in St. Louis." CORNELIUS H. FAUNTLEROY.













