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The People Speak

Dicta Editorial Board

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DICTA

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THE PEOPLE SPEAK

A NOTHER instance of conquest over *stare decisis* by enlightened thought is the adoption of the Amendment to the Constitution, restoring to the Legislature the power to fix the salaries of the Judges and the Governor and his Secretary, which successfully concluded a purposeful and worthwhile undertaking.

In 1924 the proposal failed by an overwhelming majority of more than 60,000 votes; in 1926 it lost by only 9,000 votes; it was adopted in 1928 by a majority in excess of 17,000 votes.

This final result was due to ceaseless and apparently well calculated campaigns of education. The sponsors for the Amendment correctly appraised the difficulties attendant upon any effort to change fundamental law, and directed all activities accordingly. The steady progress made in the two last campaigns illustrates the persistency of effort and emphasizes the significance of the final vote.

In 1883 the people themselves fixed the salaries of these officials at standards which were fair and reasonable for that day, and consistent with the population of the State and its stage of development at that time. In these recent campaigns of education, the people were brought to realize that changed conditions and increased costs of living, together with the lessened purchasing power of the dollar, which attended the passing of forty-five years, had resulted in an actual and material reduction in the salaries of those officials.

The adoption of the Amendment plainly expresses the deliberate and maturely considered judgment of the people and signifies nothing else than their mandate to the General Assembly. Dicta believes, not only that the General Assembly will regard that mandate, but that it will be sincerely pleased to do so and will lay aside political bias in seeing to it that the Judiciary of Colorado is placed upon the plane of com-

penation which the importance and character of its public service so justly merits.

It would be altogether unfair to recognize the passage of this Amendment and yet fail to recognize the faithful services of those largely responsible for that result. To the tireless and efficient work of George P. Steele, who controlled and directed the work throughout the entire state, must be attributed in no small degree the accomplishment of the task. No detail has been too small nor any duty too arduous for his personal attention. In like measure credit is due his associates and willing helpers who, both in official capacities and as individual workers, have given most unselfishly of their time and efforts.

Nor can the able conduct of the work in Denver under the control of the Chairman of our Association's Committee on Judicial Salaries, Hamlet J. Barry, and his faithful band of fiery orators be overlooked. Also the Bar Associations of the State in general deserve great credit for their efficient work and co-operation in the campaign: The efficiency of their efforts is shown in many instances by complete reversals of the adverse votes of two years ago.

In conclusion, Dicta lifts its editorial hat in a gesture of appreciation to the Press of Denver, and in general throughout the State, for their sincere and friendly espousal of the cause, without which the task would have been rendered doubly difficult.