



Wanted: One set of rules

John Sherman, younger brother of the famed Civil War general, chose the national Congress as his battlefield, serving as legislator and cabinet member. An enduring stamp of his influence was passage of our first major Anti-Trust laws in 1890.

Sherman was, from all accounts, a fair-minded man. If he had visualized the growing scope of the organized labor movement, he certainly would have built into the law a set of safeguards to protect the nation from the excesses of Big Labor, as well as Big Business.

Volumes of testimony prove that a union boss can use threats, economic pressure and outright "goon" tactics to deprive laborers of the right to run their own organizations. Yet legislators fear to enact strong laws safeguarding citizens' rights.

In labor disputes the proper function of the federal government is that of a referee. It certainly should have a single set of rules for all the players.

Ernest G. Swigert.
President



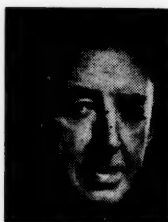
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Perspective

The Disfranchised

by Raymond Moley

IN THE midst of all the hand-on-heart declarations of politicians concerning the Negroes who are prevented from voting and the boasts that the right to vote has been extended by Federal law to enfranchise those people, to my knowledge nothing has been said or done by either party for 8 million voters who were unable to vote on Nov. 8. These are American citizens who have moved from state to state. This number would be enough to swing the Presidential balance in a number of states in a close election. In *NEWSWEEK's* own organization I know a considerable number of executive, sales, and editorial personnel who lost their 1960 votes because of being shifted from state to state. As we turn to much larger business enterprises, the numbers run very high.

Great corporations engaged in manufacturing or oil production and distribution or chain stores must of necessity shift managers, salesmen, and other executives constantly. Each such shift made within a year disfranchises in most cases at least two votes and in some cases more. There is no rational reason why these people should not be permitted to vote for President and Vice President. The bar to voting in 35 of the states is the requirement of one year's residence for eligibility. Three states require two years. Others require six months. Perhaps reasons may be offered why relative strangers in a community or state should not participate in electing state and local officials, since their familiarity with local conditions may be inadequate to justify a voice in such choices. But that does not apply to the election of the President and Vice President, who are nationally known and who must serve all the people in all the 50 states.

CORRECTION BY LAW

This injustice could, of course, be corrected by legislation in the states. According to the American Heritage Foundation, a nonpartisan organization which has done a splendid job in getting out the vote for several years, three states have made such changes in their voting requirements. California has fixed the residence requirement at 54 days; Missouri at

60 days, and Ohio at 40 days.

But such changes in state laws take a long time. Voting qualifications are embedded in many state constitutions. It seems to me that Federal legislation might be held constitutional which would permit every qualified American citizen to cast a vote for President and Vice President where he has lived for 30 days. I have not studied the cases on this, but I invite lawyers and election officials who may read this to write and give me their opinions. Perhaps such liberalization should not apply to voting for members of the Senate and House of Representatives, because under our system these are selected not only to make laws to apply to all, but to represent in Congress the interests of their states.

TWO-DAY ELECTIONS

According to the American Heritage Foundation's statement, three other groups were disfranchised for no substantial reason. There were 7.6 million who were business travelers or sick and hospitalized who lost their votes because of the variations of requirements among the states for absentee ballots. There are also the 600,000 disfranchised in the District of Columbia. Barring the latter rests upon reasons which have long since lost any rational meaning.

Eight hundred thousand illiterates are barred, which is proper despite the radical proposal of the Democratic platform to abolish all literacy tests.

There are millions more who are barred because of moving about within states and who do not understand the complicated process of new registration. Changes of registration take time and knowledge.

Another suggestion would be to provide two days for elections. This is allowed in some European countries. When we are selecting people to serve us for two or four years, two days for voting would not be too long for making the momentous choices.

The low percentage of voting among those who are eligible has been and remains a blot on our national conscience, but that low percentage could be raised by a reconsideration and simplification of our absurd and obsolete electoral system.