

Should the Poll Tax Be Abolished?

Answered by the Following Representative City and Town Collectors of Massachusetts:

<p>Mr Edmund A. Macdonald, City Collector of Boston.</p> <p>Mr Charles E. Shaw, Town Collector of Clinton.</p> <p>Mr Fred W. White, City Collector of Worcester.</p> <p>Mr Charles A. Raymond, Town Collector of Watertown.</p>	<p>Mr Wm. H. C. Augur, City Collector of Springfield.</p> <p>Mr Willard J. Dunbar, Town Collector of Weymouth.</p> <p>Mr Andrew G. Stiles, City Collector of Lowell.</p>
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AS A TOKEN OF ALLEGIANCE—
Mr Edmund A. Macdonald

I AM strongly of the opinion that the poll tax ought not to be abolished. If its collection has been attended by inconvenience and disappointment, that is hardly an argument against the tax itself. A large number of people may be indifferent to the tax at the present time, but if any public financial emergency arose the tax would be a convenient thing to have in existence, and I believe the number of delinquents in such a case would be comparatively few.

A poll tax may be commended on the ground that it represents the individual contribution to the support of his government. The payer of a poll tax, who is assessed in no other form, may feel that he is giving his proportion to the maintenance of the state.

It is, moreover, a very concrete token of allegiance to the government. Small though it be, it is the visible and direct expression of the individual citizen's loyal purpose to do so much, and if necessary much more, to safeguard the integrity of the state or the community. I have no doubt that there are many persons who regard the poll tax, not as in any sense a burden, but as an opportunity to make that direct contribution to the support of government which represents the spirit of eager personal allegiance.

Edmund A. Macdonald

WOULD CREATE NEW PROBLEMS—
Mr Charles E. Shaw

how small, is more fully appreciated. Also it is plainly evident that the larger part of the poll tax payers are not holders of any property and derive in many ways, to a large extent, all the benefits that persons of large holdings receive. It would seem from the value received that \$3 per annum (less than 1 cent a day) would not be a very heavy encumbrance on the larger proportion of those so assessed.

In Worcester there are over 21,000 who are assessed poll tax and nothing else, equivalent to \$62,000 if all collected. If the assessment were dropped, it would make an increase in the tax rate of about 50 cents, or it would mean to increase the personal and real estate value about \$4,000,000.

On the other hand, I fully realize that to some persons who have large families and a very small income, it is a hardship to pay even \$3, and it is many times evidenced to us during the 12 months. In many of these cases, if we could allow sympathy to enter in, we should not allow the collection. Aside from this, I cannot understand why the tax should be a burden.

Fred White

WOULD CREATE DEEFICIENCY—
Wm. H. C. Augur

I N answer to your query asking my opinion as to the question, "Should the poll tax be abolished?" I may say that the only class I find that make objection to paying a poll tax are those that object to

are paid promptly, but there are those that require a summons, which costs 20 cents, and some times a warrant is issued which makes an additional sum of \$1.50.

The agitation of this question, in my opinion, began with the professional politician, who has become weary of paying even the price of a poll tax for the vote he wishes to control.

I hope the poll tax will never be abolished.

Willard J. Dunbar

IT SHOULD BE ABOLISHED—
Mr Andrew J. Stiles

I BELIEVE the poll tax should be abolished. In Lowell, as in many other cities, many people are moving from place to place and it is hard to tell where is their legal residence. Greeks, Armenians, Poles and men from other foreign countries have come to Lowell in large numbers in recent years. It is hard work to collect a poll tax from many of them, as they are hard to find after taxes are assessed.

In the hundreds of names on the tax collector's lists are many of men who are blind and crippled, also of many who are receiving pensions, others are simple-minded, and there are a number who are receiving aid from the city or state. All have to be taxed under the law, and it places a mass of dead-wood on the tax collector's books. Then you have the poor, who are always

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