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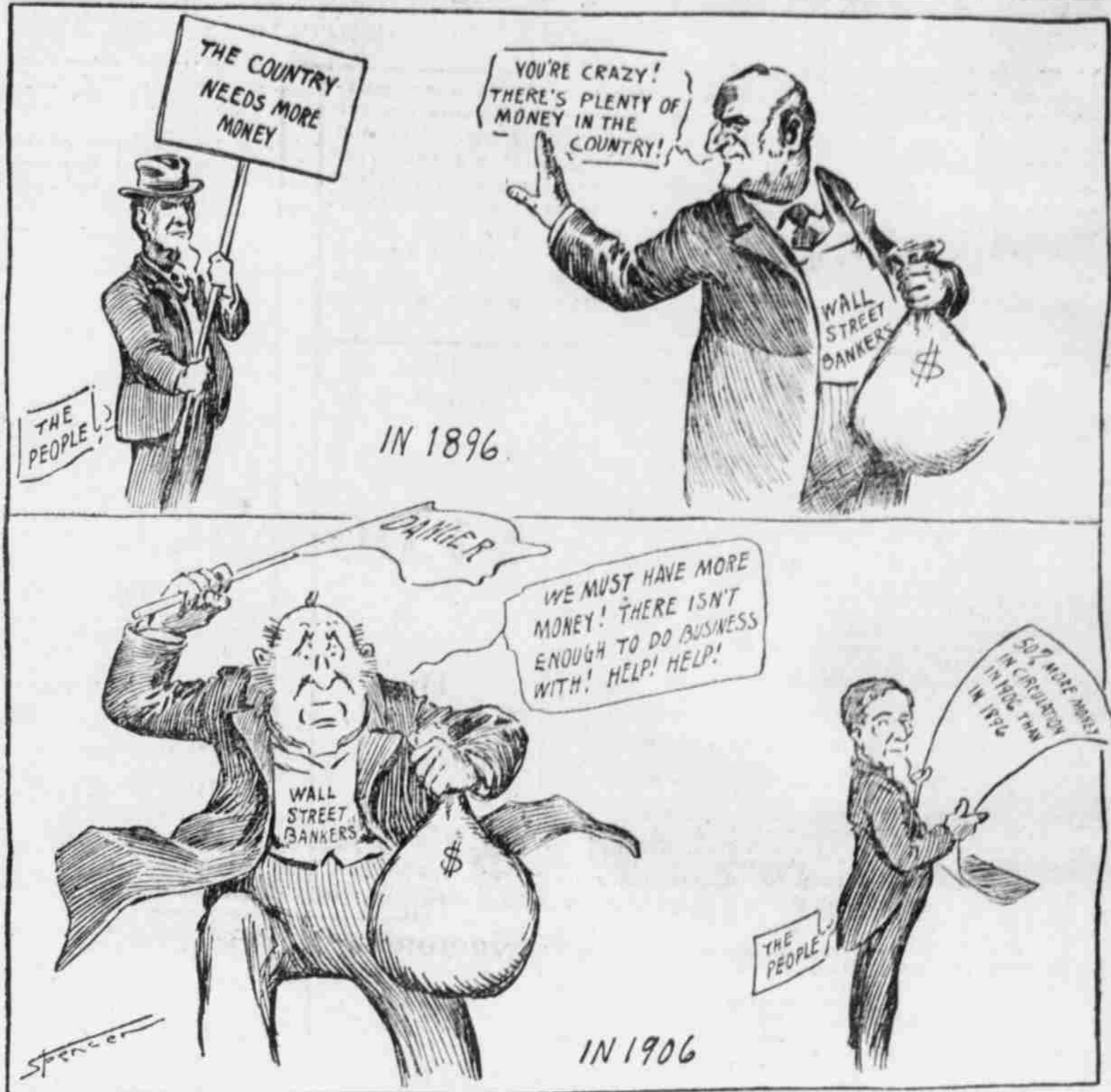
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SUGGESTIONS FOR OKLAHOMA'S CONSTITUTION

To the Members of the Constitutional Convention of Oklahoma—Gentlemen:

After expressing my grateful appreciation of the honor you do me in inviting me to address you, and my regret that circumstances prevent my acceptance, I beg to submit some suggestions in writing, in lieu of those which I would take pleasure in submitting orally if I could be present.

The task which the citizens of Oklahoma have, by their generous confidence, imposed upon you is a very honorable one as well as a very important one. The organic law of the state is more permanent than the statutes and, therefore, greater care should be exercised in framing it. You have, however, the advantage of the experience of other states, and should profit by the wisdom and the mistakes of those who have prepared former constitutions. It will be your own fault if you do not frame the best constitution ever written. The final draft of the document which you prepare will not be the work of one man or of a few men, but will rather be a composite production and reflect those ideas which you hold in common. Trusting that you will accept my suggestions in the spirit in which they are offered and adopt only such as commend themselves to your good judgment, I venture to speak to you freely.

Your bill of rights ought to secure to each individual, freedom of conscience, that he may worship God in his own way; freedom of speech and of the press, that he may communicate his

thought to others and share in the moulding of public opinion, responsible only to those whom he may injure by the uttering of falsehoods; freedom of assembly and debate, security in his person and property and opportunity to secure redress for injuries by speedy trial. The jury should be permitted in equity cases as well as in cases at law, if either party desires a jury, and the law should not require a unanimous verdict in civil cases. I would prefer a verdict by two-thirds, but argument may be made in favor of a verdict by a majority or by three-fourths. In a civil case the verdict follows the weight of testimony and there is no reason why the case should be continued until one side or the other can convince twelve men. The hung jury, and it is generally hung by one or two, furnishes the most popular argument against the system and those who believe most strongly in the value of the jury should be the most anxious to free it from every just criticism. When a question is appealed to a court where several judges sit together the decision is rendered by a majority and there is no good reason why two-thirds of a jury should not be permitted to render a verdict in civil suits.

While a jury should be composed of persons entirely disinterested, no one should be excluded from service in a case merely because he has read the details of a crime as published in the newspapers. The impression made by a newspaper account, while it may be the basis of an

CHRISTMAS, 1906

Ring merrily; ring cheerily,
Ye glad-toned Christmas bell,
Each note resound the world around,
A tale of joy to tell.
Tell how was born on Christmas morn
Within the manger low,
The King of Kings whose great love
brings
The peace all men shall know.
Ring forth His message—ring until
The world shall hear—Peace, and Good
Will!

Ring merrily; ring cheerily,
Ye bells of Christmas time,
Let love abound the world around,
In ev'ry land and clime,
Ring error's doom! Ring out the gloom
Of unrequited toil.
Ring in the light of truth and might,
Ring out war's fierce turmoil,
Ring forth His message—ring until
The world shall hear—Peace, and Good
Will!

Ring merrily; ring cheerily,
Ye bells of Christmas day,
From out your throats fling forth the
notes
Of love and joy alway.
O'er vales and hills the message thrills
Till all the world shall hear;
Till hearts bowed low with weight of woe
Grow light with Christmas cheer.
Ring forth His message—ring until
The world shall hear—Peace, and Good
Will!

Ring merrily; ring cheerily,
Ye sweet-toned Christmas bells,
A story sweet of love complete
Each ringing echo tells.
Whate'er betide yet shall abide
Love, heaven's brightest gem;
And men adore Thee, more and more,
Thou Babe of Bethlehem.
Ring forth His message—ring until
The world shall hear—Peace, and Good
Will.

—W. M. M.