

4 The Casper Tribune-Herald

Sunday, Feb. 18, 1951

EDITORIALS

Slow Progress of 22nd Amendment Points Up Wisdom of Founding Fathers

Last Monday Gov. Barrett signed House Joint Resolution No. 1 into law and Wyoming became the 29th state in the union to place its approval on the twenty-second amendment to the constitution, the amendment that would limit presidents of the United States to not more than two terms in that high office.

While the action of the Wyoming legislature brings the total number of states that have ratified the amendment to 29 it is still possible that the deadline for action, March 26, 1954, may come without two-thirds of the states having given the measure proper approval and the amendment will have been lost.

The matter of altering the Constitution of the United States can be a very slow thing and it is probably desirable that it cannot be amended in a hurry and on the basis of impassioned feeling fired up in haste. The amendment now awaiting approval by two-thirds of the states was drawn up and passed by the Republican 80th Congress. It was a measure framed by a group long out of power. That does not mean that it is a bad measure, in fact, there is much to said in favor of it, but it does indicate how the political workings of this nation can move. And the fact that the measure may now be receiving the slow and deliberate consideration that the 80th Congress may not have given to it, underscores again the wisdom of those who framed the Constitution

and placed limitations upon political bodies that might be disposed to change it.

The fathers of the Constitution left the ultimate decision on constitutional changes very close to the people and, in so doing, they probably guaranteed the survival of this republic as a republic. Had they not provided for constitutional amendments to be ratified by two-thirds of the states before they could become the law of the land it is conceivable that some of our Democratic congresses or our Republican congresses might have altered the Constitution in ways to serve the selfish interests of party with the result that the government of the United States might have been changed into something that was not a government of, by and for the people.

In the case of the 22nd amendment now receiving the consideration of the states, it is an amendment born of a fear that the existence of the republic as a republic may be endangered by the presence of any one man too long in the office of chief executive. Democrats may pooh-poo such thinking but they cannot argue with the process of checks-and-balances in our government that from time to time through history have given rise to such moves as the 22nd amendment.

It is not inconceivable that, should the amendment become law, the Democrats might find themselves in the position some years hence of being happy that it is on the books.