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Civil Servants Should Vote.

The Interests of the Community and Their Self-Respect Demand It.—No Question as to the Right to Do So.—United Action is Essential.

The obligations of citizenship demand that civil servants shall vote at the civic elections to be held on the 4th of January next.

Self-respect requires that by the exercise of the franchise they shall resent the dishonorable treatment received at the hands of this year's city council in connection with the assessment question.

"But," asks one of the doubtful ones, "has the civil servant, assessed on income, really a right to vote?" It seems almost childish, in the light of the conditions surrounding this matter, that such a doubt should exist. It is not to be denied, however, that to the minds of not a few this point is far from being clear. Let us first, then, deal very briefly with this phase of the subject:

The right to vote is not given because of taxes already paid. It is given because the individual has been assessed for taxes which he will be expected to pay. The man who paid taxes in 1908 will not be entitled to vote next January unless he has been assessed for taxes to be paid in 1909. The city has assessed the incomes of civil servants for the year 1909, and that fact alone gives them an absolute legal right to vote. The fact that the city will use every means in its power to enforce payment of the taxes assessed gives the civil servant an absolute moral right to exercise the franchise. The individual who does

not vote in January, because of a doubt as to his moral right to do so, will probably feel like kicking himself, if in November he is compelled to pay the income tax.

Let no one be deceived. The right of the civil servant to vote at the ensuing elections is incontestable.

The first duty of the civil servant, in voting, will be to the community, and he must see that his support is given to the candidates whose qualifications constitute a guarantee of faithful stewardship. If the eighteen hundred government officials who are entitled to vote will unite in this matter for the common good, their influence will be far-reaching and powerful enough to guarantee a city government for 1909 that will be much superior to any that we have had for many years.

The civil servant owes it to himself, however, to see that his vote is given only to the candidates who will undertake to see that the assessment question, in so far as it is affected by the city's agreement with the government, is dealt with in an honorable and straightforward manner. And in doing this he will be doing nothing—as will be demonstrated later—that is inconsistent with a desire to promote the best interests of the community.

Government officials have no quarrel with the community with reference to the assessment question.