

## BRIEF

RESOLVED: *That a change to the thirteen-month calendar should be approved.*

### INTRODUCTION

- I. Action taken in the interests of a reformed calendar make its discussion a timely one.
  - A. The League of Nations has made recommendations for its world-wide study.
  - B. National organizations and individuals in our own and other countries are urging it.
  - C. Pressure is being brought for congressional action.
  - D. The possibility of an international conference in the near future makes it desirable that public opinion should be informed.
- II. The three main plans of change offered are:
  - A. The equalizing of quarters of the year.
  - B. The equalizing of quarters together with one zero day in ordinary years and two in leap years.
  - C. A thirteen-month calendar with intercalary or zero days as in plan "B".
    1. This is the plan most widely favored in America.
- III. The essential features of the thirteen-month calendar are:
  - A. Thirteen months of twenty-eight days, or four complete weeks, each.

- B. Intercalary days without week day name or date, to take care of the extra year day and leap year day.
1. This change would make it perpetual, a single month being the model for all future months and years.

IV. The issues are:

- A. Is it desirable to change the calendar at the present time?
- B. Is the thirteen-month scheme a desirable one?
- C. Is the thirteen-month plan the best and most practicable plan that can be devised?

AFFIRMATIVE

I. Reform of the calendar is called for.

- A. Our present Gregorian calendar has many serious defects.
  1. There are irrational variations in it.
    - a. The months are variable.
      - (1) They contain from 28 to 31 days.
        - (a) There is 11 per cent difference between February and March.
      - (2) They do not contain an equal number of weeks.
        - (a) Split weeks usually mark the beginning and end of each month.
    - b. There is lack of fixity in it.
      - (1) There is non-agreement of day names and dates.
      - (2) It is non-perpetual.
        - (a) It must be consulted for every new week and month.

- (b) An entirely new calendar is necessary every year.
  - (3) Easter and holidays wander.
    - (a) Easter ranges over a period of five weeks.
    - (b) Holidays and anniversaries wander through all the days of the weeks.
  - (4) Dates of periodical events can never be fixed with precision.
    - (a) Special decisions must be made each year.
- B. The demands of modern life call for a regularized and efficient calendar.
  - 1. The present cumbersome calendar is a standing source of confusion and misunderstanding.
  - 2. The need is felt to simplify and standardize units of time and other measurements in the most scientific and approved way consonant with modern advance.
  - 3. Increasing need is felt for more exact, accurate, and comparable statistics and records of all kinds.
    - a. Statistical records are becoming an increasingly important factor in social progress.
    - b. Business is becoming more and more dependant upon exact and accurate records.
  - 4. Modern life is becoming increasingly intricate and complex.
- C. Interest in calendar reform is widely shown.
  - 1. The League of Nations has recommended its serious study with a view to international action.

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2. National committees are taking up the subject.
  3. Extensive interest and approval has been manifested in economic, scientific, governmental and other groups, as well as among prominent individuals in industrial and public life.
  4. Effort has long been made to have a fixed Easter adopted by all Christian churches.
- D. There is no reason inherent in the calendar that should prevent change.
1. Its status is not sacrosanct.
    - a. It was developed in an arbitrary, capricious, and unscientific manner.
      - (1) It was partly due to superstitious and political considerations.
    - b. We retain it through force of custom and tradition.
    - c. The month has no relation to known facts.
      - (1) It has no relation to anything in astronomy or human experience.
      - (2) It has no religious significance.
      - (3) It has no relation to the weeks.
  2. There is ample precedent for a change in the divisions of time.
    - a. Many changes were made repeatedly in early calendars.
    - b. In modern times alone calendar changes have been widespread.
      - (1) In 1582 ten days were dropped from the calendar.
      - (2) In 1752 England and her colonies dropped eleven days.
      - (3) In countries abroad millions

of people have come under calendar change since the war.

- E. A change in the calendar would be simple, easily made, and feasible.
1. An Act of Congress could be passed stating that it would become effective on a certain date.
  2. It would be put into effect at a time that would cause the minimum of disturbance.
    - a. The first year not a leap year to begin on Sunday, which would be 1933.
      - (1) This would give ample time to prepare for the change.
  3. The change would not involve social or economic confusion.
    - a. The Act would include adjustment tables and provide that all dates of the old would be automatically changed to specified dates of the new calendar.
    - b. It would provide for the prorating of fixed changes of every kind based on the present division of the year.
    - c. The practical difficulties would be no greater than was connected with the adoption of standard time.
  4. Changing the dates of our anniversaries would mean little.
    - a. None of our present anniversaries which date back more than a century and a half now falls on the date on which the event originally occurred.
- II. The proposed thirteen-month calendar is a desirable plan.
- A. It would correct the outstanding defects of our calendar, and satisfy the main objects of reform.

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1. It would regularize the calendar in the most thorough way consonant with the fixed lengths of the year and day.
  - a. It would make the month an exact multiple of the week, and make each month exactly the same length.
    - (1) This change is one of the most marked advantages to be gained in the reform of the calendar.
  - b. It would synchronize dates and week days.
    - (1) The same day of the year would always occur on the same day of the week.
      - (a) The year would always begin on the same day.
      - (b) Holidays would always occur on the same day.
  - c. It would establish a perpetual calendar.
    - (1) The calendar for one month would be good for all succeeding months and years.
      - (a) Every month would be exactly like every other.
- B. It would bring many marked advantages and benefits.
  1. It would be of far-reaching advantage to business.
    - a. It would promote efficiency and economy.
      - (1) It would simplify accounting practices.
        - (a) Do away with laborious calculations, eliminate adjustments made necessary by present calendar in the

- rendering of reports, comparisons of unequal months, of unequal number or value of working days, etc.
- (b) Facilitate calculations of interest, business transactions, etc.
  - (c) Do away with confusion where income is on monthly and outgo on weekly basis or vice versa.
- (2) It would increase the value of statistical work.
- (a) Do away with inaccurate, misleading, confusing comparisons.
  - (b) Statistical work would probably be rendered 50 per cent more effective.
- (3) It would reduce expense.
- (a) Calculations and adjustments would be less costly.
    - x. Clerical work would be reduced.
  - (b) There would be faster turnover of money.
    - x. The same business could be handled with less money.
- (4) Its advantages have been recognized by many industries in America and Great Britain, which have already adopted a thirteen-month division of the

year for accounting and statistical work.

- (a) It has been in operation in at least two concerns over thirty years.
- b. The stabilization of Easter would be of far-reaching advantage to industries depending on the Easter trade.
- c. Only universal adoption would give all the benefits to business.
  - (1) The adoption of a thirteen-month calendar for business while maintaining a twelve-month calendar in civil life, brings the obvious disadvantage of using two calendars.
2. It would be of scientific advantage.
  - a. Would add greatly to the value of scientific studies and statistics.
  - b. Many scientists have evinced interest and approval in the proposed reform.
3. It would be of benefit to religion.
  - a. Would fix the date of Easter and other religious holidays.
  - b. Would establish uniform religious observance.
4. Important social advantages would accrue.
  - a. It would facilitate social activities and engagements.
    - (1) Facilitate the fixing of permanent dates for meetings, sessions, schedules, etc.
    - (2) Facilitate the recollection of dates.
  - b. It would make possible the fixing of holidays on Mondays of the week in which they occur.



- (1) This would extend the week end periods of rest and recreation to two and one-half or three days.
  - (2) It would be of far reaching benefit to health.
  - (3) It would do away with the inconvenience and disorganization of broken weeks both socially and industrially.
  - c. It would be financially beneficial.
    - (1) Would coordinate periods of earning and spending.
    - (2) Would simplify budgeting.
- C. A thirteen month calendar would be without serious disadvantage.
1. There is no valid objection to thirteen months in place of twelve.
    - a. The objection to the number thirteen is largely founded on superstition
      - (1) This is not sufficient ground for rejecting a reform.
    - b. A thirteen month year is sufficiently divisible for all practical purposes.
      - (1) Quarters and half-years are readily found.
        - (a) They would consist of 13 and 26 weeks respectively.
      - (2) Divisions of the year into large units are less important than months.
        - (a) Accounts and reports for quarters and half-years are less important and less frequent than for the months.
        - (b) Divisions into thirds and sixths of the year are of

- relatively small importance.
- c. That thirteen months is not a scientific division is not material.
    - (1) No exact division of the year is possible under the present year and week length.
    - (2) A change should in any case be practical rather than scientific.
2. There is no sound objection to intercalary days which would occasionally break the seven-day succession of Sabbaths.
- a. The observance of the seven-day week in Europe dates back only to Constantine the Great.
  - b. As indicated in Pamphlet "C" of the International Fixed Calendar League inserted days are sanctioned by Mosaic law.
  - c. The occasional observance of two Sundays in succession would not, to all practical purposes, break the seven-day succession of a day of rest.
  - d. From a scientific standpoint days are lost or gained in travel over the international date line.
  - e. The intercalary day principle has wide support.
    - (1) It has been suggested in most of submitted plans for reform.
    - (2) It is contained in two of the three plans retained by the League of Nations after its analysis of plans.
    - (3) It is largely preferred to the intercalary week principle, which would also establish a perpetual calendar.

- (a) An intercalary week would further throw the week out of balance.
  3. The inconvenience to be caused by a change should not operate against its adoption.
    - a. Any change in the calendar would cause inconvenience for a time in some quarter.
  4. Most of the objections to the thirteen month calendar are merely sentimental and would disappear if the plan were adopted.
- III. The thirteen-month calendar is the best available plan as a unit of the time measurement for the calendar.
- A. The equalizing of quarters scheme is not as acceptable as the thirteen-month plan.
    1. It is not sufficiently thorough.
      - a. It merely evens up quarter years so far as may be possible.
      - b. If a reform is considered at all it should be thorough and lasting.
    2. It does not establish equality between months.
      - a. Months of thirty and thirty-one days are provided.
    3. It does not establish an exact relation between weeks and months.
      - a. With one exception the months contain a few days over four full weeks.
      - b. First and last weeks may still be split weeks.
    4. It does not establish synchronization of days and dates, unless intercalary days are adopted in this scheme as in the thirteen month plan.

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- a. Even when the intercalary day plan is included, the correspondence is only between days and dates of the first, second, or third months of each quarter.
5. It has fewer advantages for statistical work and comparability.
6. It does not remedy certain disadvantages to business.
  - a. Split week payrolls and expenses.
  - b. The different number and value of specific days.
    - (1) Months of five Saturdays or five Sundays, etc.
7. It does not have such large support, especially in our country.
- B. No other plan will, at this time, meet the need for reform.
  1. No other has important support and approval.
  2. No more radical reform is desirable.
    - a. Changing the week length.
    - b. Changing the beginning or length of the year.
    - c. Changing the year into months of considerably different lengths.
  3. No minor reforms are worth disturbing chronology to attain.
- C. It is questionable whether any further plan will be devised which is better adapted to an improved calendar than the present scheme.
  1. The subject has already had wide and long study by persons most competent to judge it.

## NEGATIVE

- I. It is uncalled for and unwise to institute any radical reform of the calendar at the present time.
  - A. There are deep-seated reasons for retaining the present calendar unchanged.
    1. It is sanctified by tradition, long usage, and widespread establishment.
    2. It has met our needs for time measurement very well, with perhaps the exception of the February irregularity.
      - a. It has maintained the year at scientifically accurate length.
      - b. It has maintained the seasons in their proper relation to the year.
    3. Any change should be long and well-considered before being made.
      - a. It should be made only for the weightiest reasons and widespread benefits.
      - b. It should be made only after exhaustive study to determine conclusively the best change.
        - (1) When made, a change should be final for all time.
  - B. A change in the calendar would entail great inconvenience and confusion.
    1. It would dislocate world chronology.
      - a. For a time it would throw out all dates in relation to events and records.
        - (1) It would cause great practical difficulty in adjusting the new and the old.
    2. Other great complications and expense would be involved in making the change.

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- a. It would cause change and confusion in regard to all anniversary dates, birthdays, holidays, and other fixed events.
  - b. It would be necessary to use two calendars for a considerable time.
- C. A change would be neither simple nor feasible.
- 1. To be feasible it would have to be adopted simultaneously by all leading countries.
    - a. Any divergence would renew difficulties in international intercourse due to different chronological reckoning.
    - b. It is doubtful if those countries which have recently adopted calendar change would be disposed to make a second change in the near future.
  - 2. It would have to be acceptable to all important groups in our own country.
    - a. Religious, administrative, economic, scientific, etc.
  - 3. It would have to be approved by the various states in our country.
    - a. It is questionable whether the Federal government has the constitutional power to bind the states to a change of time.
  - 4. Any dissenting country, state, or group would make inevitable the confusion and drawback of the use of two calendars.
- D. A perfect calendar cannot be established.
- 1. There is no perfect correlation between a year, months, weeks, and days.
  - 2. The length of the year is fixed and cannot be changed.
    - a. It is based upon the relation of the sun to the equinox.

3. There is no likelihood that the week can be changed.
    - a. Custom, antiquity, and religious practice are too firmly against it.
  4. The length of the day cannot be changed.
- E. The extent of sentiment for a change is doubtful.
1. There is as yet no definite public demand for it.
    - a. Public opinion in the mass in our own and other countries is probably little cognizant of the problem and its merits or demerits.
    - b. Few groups relatively have expressed themselves.
  2. The support given the movement is preponderantly commercial and economic.
  3. The fact that many organizations and individuals have registered approval of it indicates little.
    - a. Resolutions of approval may be dictated by a minority in control, or without proper canvas of membership.
    - b. Approval may register mere opinion rather than sound study.
  4. Propaganda has influenced much of the discussion.
- II. The proposed thirteen month calendar is not a wise or desirable scheme.
- A. There are serious objections to a thirteen month division of the year.
1. From the practical standpoint thirteen is a prime number and not divisible.
    - a. The year would be divisible only by broken months.

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- (1) Halves, quarters, thirds and sixths would be  $6\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $3\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $4\frac{1}{3}$ , and  $2\frac{1}{6}$  months respectively.
  - b. By even weeks it is divisible only into the half and quarter year.
    - (1) Twenty-six and 13 weeks would constitute a half and a quarter year.
    - (2) A third of the year would be  $17\frac{1}{3}$  weeks and a sixth would be  $8\frac{2}{3}$  weeks.
  - c. Such a principle of division is entirely foreign to our practice in constructing tables of interrelated units.
2. There would be appreciable prejudice against the proposed division.
    - a. The number thirteen is subject to more or less widespread superstition.
      - (1) However irrational to modern thought this opposition could not be overlooked.
      - (2) In addition to thirteen months under the proposed plan, Friday the 13th would occur every month.
- B. There are serious objections to a calendar which would contain one or more intercalary or blank days.
1. It would be a radical and unwarranted change.
    - a. It would invalidate the prime reason for which a calendar exists.
      - (1) It would interrupt the continuity and accuracy of time reckoning.
        - (a) We can have no exact date unless we include these omitted days.



- b. The blank day principle would break time-honored and unbroken succession of the seven-day week.
  - (1) In all past changes of the calendar the seven-day sequence of the week has been religiously maintained.
    - (a) Changes in the month have been made to correct the length of the year, but they have not altered the week.
- 2. It would be an unwarranted interference with religious practices.
  - a. All who hold to a strict observance of a seventh day Sabbath or a seven-day week from Sunday to Sunday would have their observance still further complicated.
    - (1) In the course of the years the true Sabbath would wander through every day of the week.
  - b. Any attempt to introduce intercalary days without the practical concurrence of religionists would result in confusion.
    - (1) It would bring about divisions in the church between those who strictly interpret the seven-day week and those who do not.
- C. The intercalary week as a substitute for intercalary days would be objectionable.
  - 1. It would throw the calendar further out of position with relation to the tropical year.
    - a. Under the intercalated week the range over a small number of years would be a week, and over a large

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number of years would be eleven days.

- (1) With the present calendar this range for any one year is a day only, and for even a long period of years is less than two days.
  - b. The odd week would complicate matters and create confusion far more than would the extra day.
- D. The beneficial effects of the proposed thirteen month calendar are exaggerated.
1. The so-called benefits of a perpetual calendar are overrated.
    - a. Synchronization of day and date are in no way essential.
      - (1) It answers every social need to consult the calendar or fix the approximate time or date.
    - b. A perpetual calendar would in any case not be attained if we are always dropping out dates for intercalary days.
  2. It is not essential to have months multiples of weeks.
    - a. What is mainly sought is to have as nearly equal units as possible and invariability in time reckoning.
  3. The advantages to business are overrated.
    - a. Efficiency and economy are overrated.
      - (1) There would be thirteen accounting and settlement periods, with their added expense.
      - (2) In general a greater number of adjustments would be required in comparing past statistics and dates than under the present calendar.

- (3) Accounting by months is more important than by groups of weeks.
  - (a) Many business obligations are made to run for three, six, or nine months.
  - (b) Interest and dividends are frequently payable quarterly, semi-annually, or even six times a year.
- b. The disturbance of statistical accuracy is not obviated.
  - (1) Extra-calendar days would still upset exact comparisons.
    - (a) A vast amount of activity would go on notwithstanding the implied blankness.
    - (b) The zero days must be reflected in one month or another, which is thus thrown out of exact comparability with others.
  - (2) Holidays would continue to affect comparability.
    - (a) They would occur in some months and weeks but not in others.
  - (3) Confusion caused by floating Sabbaths would still further complicate records.
    - (a) They would be observed to a more or less extent in various localities.
  - (4) Statistics are frequently non-comparable in units of less than a year in any case.

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- (a) There are important variations in the months and through the seasons, which tend to average themselves only in the course of the year.
  - c. Other business disturbances would be brought about.
    - (1) Litigation over dates and settlements.
  - d. The proposed change would merely carry standardization in business to a fault.
4. The importance of the proposed calendar to science is exaggerated.
- a. Only a relatively few scientists have expressed themselves definitely in favor of reform.
  - b. Those who consider the desirability of reform are interested primarily in a regularized calendar.
    - (1) They desire accurate statistics.
    - (2) There is no general agreement upon a specific plan by which it is to be attained.
      - (a) They are willing to accept the thirteen month calendar if it is the best regularized calendar that can be put over.
5. The social and general advantages are overrated.
- a. There would be little or no appreciable gain in correlating social life with exact periods of the calendar.
  - b. The fixing of holidays on Mondays has no essential relation to the thir-

teen month plan that could not be brought about under the present calendar.

(1) We could, if we felt the change called for, establish holidays on Mondays of the weeks in which they occur, just as holidays now falling on Sunday are frequently observed on Monday.

6. The fixing of Easter is relatively unimportant.
  - a. It is of concern mainly to churchmen and the Easter trade.

III. The thirteen month calendar is not the best devisable calendar scheme.

A. The present calendar has many advantages.

1. It has every advantage of wide and uniform use.
2. It is as astronomically correct as is devisable under the present year, day and week length.

B. If any changes are desired they can be attained without the widespread inconvenience and confusion that will result from the change to thirteen months with minimum change and upheaval.

1. The restoring of February to its original length would tend to equalize the months and do away with the great outstanding objection to the variability of the months.
2. A more thorough change could be attained by equalizing the quarters.
  - a. The months in each quarter could be uniformly 30, 30, 31 days, or 31, 30, 30 days.

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- (1) The extra year day and leap year day can be distributed so as to equalize the half years in leap year, and in ordinary years would make merely a day's difference.
  - (a) This difference cannot be disregarded in any calendar, since even intercalated days must be considered in all practical affairs.
  - b. The equalizing of quarters would stand a better chance of adoption both at home and abroad.
    - (1) Less opposition would be encountered.
      - (a) It is less radical.
      - (2) It is more favored abroad than the thirteen month calendar.
- C. All the essential objects of reform can be attained under the present calendar, or with the above suggested changes.
  1. More exact comparability of statistics and uniform records.
    - a. It is absurd to indicate that records are not reasonably comparable.
      - (1) Trends are readily apparent to experts.
- D. If other objects of reform are desired they can be attained under the twelve month division.
  1. A perpetual calendar can be attained.
    - a. Intercalary days have been suggested under the equal quarter plan exactly as under the thirteen month plan.

- (1) Under this a quarter year would be a model for all subsequent quarters.
- b. A perpetual and synchronized calendar could be attained with intercalary weeks every five or six years.
  - (1) This would do away with objections to zero days and the breaking of the seven-day week.
2. A fixed Easter can be included under the twelve month plan as well as under thirteen months.
  - a. It could be fixed for the second Sunday of April, or any more desirable time.
  - b. It is an ecclesiastical and not a civil question and in any case would have to be settled independently by the churches.
3. A special subsidiary calendar could be used purely for purposes of industry and statistics, where felt desirable.
  - a. This is done at the present time.
  - b. The use of a special statistical calendar apart from the civil calendar causes little practical inconvenience.
  - c. It is illogical to assume that world chronology should be upset merely for the convenience of statistics and business.
4. The only thing that cannot be attained under the twelve month calendar as well as under the thirteenth month is to have a single month the model for all months, and the month an exact multiple of weeks, uniformly.

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- E. Many suggestions for other changes have been submitted that at any rate should have adequate publicity and thorough discussion before being eliminated, if a change should be thought desirable.
1. That the League Committee eliminated other plans is not conclusive.
    - a. A calendar change is too important a step to be determined by the findings of a small committee.

