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Subject: Re: Lex Cornelia de classibus et ordine equestri
From: El Jefe <eljefe3126@netscape.net>
Date: Sun, Dec 21, 2014 6:18 am
To: caninus@caninus.co

P. Porcius Licinus tribune M. Pompeio Canino praetori SPD

Thank you for that valuable information. It helps give me a truer picture of the situation.

40 votes out of 68 assidui is still 59% turnout. I am an election official where I live, and would envy such a turnout.

10 votes out of 978 Capite Censi is a turnout of just about exactly 1%.

I find it ironic that if we had properly distributed Centuries according to the Lex Cornelia de classibus et ordine equestri, each Century of the Third Class would have more active citizens than the Capite Censi Century (I consider paying taxes to be "active", even if the citizen chooses not to vote). However, if turnout is uniformly 59% among all assidui (another assumption), then a typical Third Class Century will have 6 or 7 voting citizens vs. 10 in Century XXXI, so perhaps that is still better.

I thank you for the insight you have given me, and look forward to the results of you search of old messages. Again, best wishes for the holiday season.

Optime vale!

P. Porcius Licinus
Tribune of the Plebs

-----Original Message-----

From: M. Pompeius Caninus <caninus@caninus.co>
To: El Jefe <eljefe3126@netscape.net>
Sent: Sun, Dec 21, 2014 7:01 am
Subject: RE: Lex Cornelia de classibus et ordine equestri

M. Pompeius Caninus praetor P. Porcio Licino tribuno salutem plurimam dicit.

Si vales, bene est, ego valeo.

My friend, you proceed from a false assumption. Those citizens in Century 31 are, in fact, active. Out of the 34 votes cast in the Comitia Centuriata election just held, 10 were cast by citizens in Century 31. If you ignore the Capite Censi or dismiss their contribution to the res publica then you do not fully represent the interests of the plebeians. When serving the res publica through elected office or any position of public responsibility one must take into consideration the needs of all the citizens, including those that have not paid taxes.

Fac valeas!

Marcus Pompeius Caninus

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Re: Lex Cornelia de classibus et ordine equestri

From: El Jefe <eljefe3126@netscape.net>
Date: Sat, December 20, 2014 4:22 pm
To: caninus@caninus.co

P. Porcius Licinus tribune M. Pompeio Canino praetori SPD

Io Saturnalia, and best wishes for you and yours.

Perhaps I should begin by stating that I have been taught that merely pointing out a problem does not discharge one's duty, but that one is obligated to suggest a solution to the problem to the best of his ability. The suggestion may be accepted or rejected as others see fit, but the obligation is to at least try to help solve the problem. It was in that spirit that I proposed several changes to the lex. I take no offense if somebody else finds a better solution than mine. Likewise, I have no objection to the problem being solved by multiple small changes or to it being solved by one large one. I see only to ensure that the rights of the Plebs are maintained, nothing more.

I do agree with you that part of the solution to this problem is for Censores to better assign Centuries. As I mentioned, I do plan to take that up with our incoming Censor, quite likely before the Kalends of January. But if I felt that this was only a matter of insisting that the Censores comply with the lex, I would not have brought this to your attention. There are inconsistencies and contradictions in our laws that make them impossible to enforce as written. I believe these inconsistencies not only complicate the job of the Censores, but encourage them to assign Centuries in a manner that is contrary to the goals of our res publica.

I believe any discussion of 1050 citizens is misplaced, as almost all of these are non-taxpaying Capite Censi. Indeed, by my count, we have 68 citizens in the first 30 centuries, and 978 in Century XXXI. The vast majority of Century XXXI are citizens who have lost interest in Nova Roma and ceased paying tax. Most other organizations would have dropped them from the membership rolls; it is only the unique nature of Nova Roma that considers them "citizens" rather than "former members" and allows them to vote at all.

Of the 68 assidui in Centuries I - XXX, 50 votes represents a turnout of 74%, which isn't bad for any organization. However, of those 68 assidui, 33 of them cast only 4 Century votes, whereas the other 35 cast 26 Century votes, which doesn't seem very equitable. You might say that 33 citizens were nearly as disenfranchised as the Capite Censi, whereas the other 35 at worst split a vote with one other citizen.

Regarding your question as to serving as to the qualifications for office, I believe the requirement to serve as an Apparitor is potentially a barrier to entry. One cannot become an Apparitor without an appointment, meaning that one would be dependent on the favor of someone who had already been elected to get a foot in the door. Even after serving as Tribune for a year, I will be ineligible to run for Curule Aedile. I would suggest removing the requirement to be an Apparitor for the qualifications for Questor and Plebian Aedile. After all, how much mischief can one do in one of those low offices? Now, as to specific problems with our laws. First, the Lex Cornelia de classibus et ordine equestri requires that Century I be composed of members of the Ordo Equester. I see no evidence in the Albm Civcm that Cn. Corneilius Lentulus is a member of the Ordo Equester. If this is the case, then we are not in compliance with the Lex Cornelia de classibus et ordine equestri.

Second, Section VIII of the Lex Cornelia de classibus et ordine equestri requires that 49% of Centuries be placed in Class I, 10% in Class II, 10% in Class III, 10% in Class IV, and 15% in Class V. These percentages add up to 94%, which makes it impossible for the Censores to comply with the Lex Cornelia de classibus et ordine equestri. Perhaps this is why Century XXX contains nemo.

Third, we have Centuries that contain citizens who should be in different Centuries because of their Census Points. This is not in compliance with the Lex Cornelia de classibus et ordine equestri. I regard this as a matter to be taken up with our new censor, and not in itself grounds for a change in the lex. However, this leads to my next point.

Fourth, if citizens are placed in Centuries according to the Lex Cornelia de classibus et ordine equestri, we will have 3 citizens in the Second Class at 1 to a Century, 34 Citizens in the Third Class at about 11

to a Century, and 8 Citizens in the Fourth Class at 2 or 3 to a Century. If this is the case, then I would request that any Census Points that I earn for being Tribune not be awarded, so that my vote will continue to count for 3 or 4 times as much as any Third Class Citizen's vote.

Fifth, all new citizens are relegated to the Capite Censi Century until they have been a Citizen of Nova Roma for 6 months, regardless of whether they pay dues or not. If that is the case, it will be my duty to inform new Plebian citizens that they should pay no tax until they have been a citizen for at least 6 months, since failing to become assidui will not diminish their vote in any way, and there is less chance of wasting money if they find out during that 6 months that they no longer wish to actively participate in Nova Roma.

I will certainly be on the lookout for citizens wishing to become part of the Consular staff, as I will also be looking out for 2 citizens to serve on my Tribunal staff. Perhaps between us, we can assist individuals in obtaining the prerequisites for the Cursus Honorum.

Di te incolumem custodiant!

P. Porcius Licinus
Tribune of the Plebs

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