Wash. Comment

President Asks For Change In **Electoral College**

Washington, D. C .- President Johnson's proposal that this session take initial action to change the electoral college system of electing Presidents has greatly increased chances that some constitutional reform may be effected.

The electoral college was originally intended to be a decision-making group, to represent the elite of the population, which could utilize its collective talent and intelligence to select the best men to be President and Vice Presi-

But almost from the beginning the college became a mere formality. Yet the existence of it has produced certain undemocratic features in American presidential elections. For example, under the present system a President who received fewer votes than his opponent can be elected. That has happened several times.

An election can also be thrown into the House of Representatives, where each state delegation constitutes a single vote. Thus the vote of Alaska would be as significant as the vote of populous California.

President Johnson has proposed that the candidate who received the most votes in a state automatically be given the electoral votes of that state. But that would not eliminate one of the major flaws in the present system, which allows a candidate with fewer total votes than his opponent to be elected.

The famous Lodge-Gossett bill of 1959 (named for Sena tor Henry Lodge, then a Massachusetts Republican Senator. and Representative Ed Gossett, then a Texas Democrat) was the overall solution which came nearest passage. The Senate passed the constitutional amendment but the House rejected it.

That bill would have divided each state's electoral vote on the basis of popular vote totals, thus giving each candidate his fair share of the electoral college vote as figured by the popular vote. There is sentiment in Congress at present in favor of this approach, in preference to the President's proposal.

Another proposal which currently has some backing in Congress is the proposal to place the presidential election on a purely popular vote basis. Either change would insure that the choice of the majority became President.

President Johnson's proposal, if accepted, would mean, primarily, that presidential elections could no longer be thrown into the House in case no candidate received a majority of electoral votes cast, eliminating the independence of elec-

If the Constitution is to be amended, a vast number of editors and solons believe it should be carefully amended to provide for truly democratic elections, and it seems the President's limited proposal is not likely to be enough to satisfy Congress.

Know The Weather

BY E. H. SIMS Which is heavier - snow,

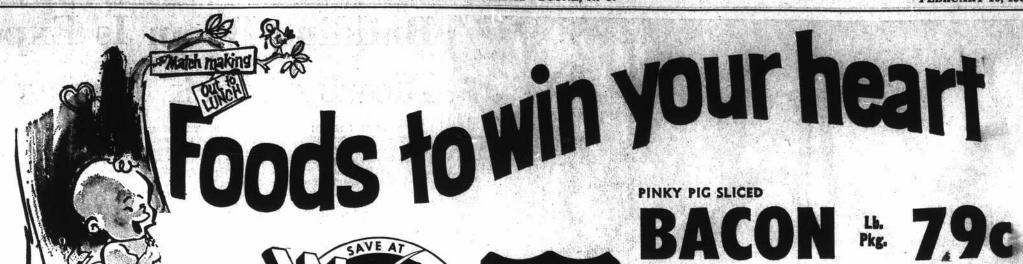
sleet or rain? Snow is the lightest of the three kinds of precipitation. Sleet is next and is much heavier than snow. Rain is the heaviest of the three.

Some people do not realize that a foot or two of snow is not an unusually heavy fall. Snow is so light that a fraction of an inch of rain is ofen the equivalent to more than a foot of snow?

Sleet is the most damaging and most dangerous of the three types of precipitation, causing slippery highways, foli-age damage and adding exces-sive weight to wires, etc.

One can actually keep warm in snow, if he burrows down deep and takes advantage of its insulation—in very cold cli-

ecretary of Defense Robert McNamara described Ameri-planned strategic offensive as far more than adequ-o cope with any Soviet strike. He said manned ers will be retained inde-





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