



League of Women Voters of Minnesota Records

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CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Minnesota's constitution is its fundamental law. It should:

- 1) set forth the principles of government; 2) delegate power between the 3 branches; 3) guide legislative action. The legislature passes laws to meet current needs of the state within the principles of the constitution.

MINNESOTA NEEDS A NEW CONSTITUTION BECAUSE:

1. It restricts the executive by not giving it adequate authority equal to the responsibility it bears for doing its job.
2. It limits the legislature by imposing 19th century procedures for a 20th century job.
3. It hinders speedy and equal justice by the courts (two amendments relating to the judiciary, submitted to the voters in 1954 and 1956 point to the need for overall examination of this part of the constitution).
4. It prevents local government from being truly local by making cities, towns, villages and counties come to the legislature for management of many of their affairs.
5. It imposes obstacles in the way of an efficient and economical fiscal policy for the state by its outmoded and restrictive provisions.
6. It instills in the people a disrespect for the constitution and law by the example of the legislature's refusal to carry out its constitutional duty to reapportion itself.

MINNESOTA'S CONSTITUTION SHOULD BE REVISED BY A CONVENTION BECAUSE:

1. In the United States the citizen is the constitution maker. This job cannot rightly, therefore, be done by the legislature, but must be done by Convention. Self government rests upon
 - a) the power to prescribe the basic law; b) the power to elect representatives to put it into effect. Loss or diminution of either of these prerogatives weakens self-government. The fact is that:
 - 1) The people have not had opportunity to review the constitution since drafted in 1857.
 - 2) As early as 1871 Gov. Austin declared it outmoded, inconsistent, inadequate, and

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

asked for a convention to rewrite it.

3) The last 3 governors (2 Republican and 1 Democratic-Farmer-Labor) have supported a constitutional convention bill.

4) The legislature has taken no action on reapportioning the state in 42 years. There are disparities in representation as large as one representative to 7,000 people, and one to 107,000 people.

2. The legislature provides the machinery for calling a convention; a constitutional commission does research and makes recommendations for constitutional changes; only the people through a convention can achieve a coordinated, integrated, and flexible constitution for Minnesota.

3. A convention attracts outstanding citizens to serve as delegates. Delegates to a Minnesota constitutional convention would be elected from the same districts, and in the same manner as are state representatives. Legislators may also serve as delegates. A convention is traditionally conservative.

4. A convention is less susceptible than a legislature to pressure groups. Its delegates will not be standing for reelection; they are aware that what they do will become history.

5. The Minnesota Constitutional Commission (composed of 18 legislators, a member of the Executive Department, a Supreme Court Justice, and 3 citizens) agreed unanimously upon the desirability of a convention, as opposed to the amendment process, for the comprehensive consideration of our complicated document.

6. The study, research and recommendations made by the Minnesota Constitutional Commission has laid the groundwork for a convention; this will lessen the work and time and, therefore, expense of a convention.

7. Amendments are slow, costly, cumbersome, compromising and difficult to understand in relation to the constitution as a whole. There have been 80 amendments in 99 years. Since the amending process was made more difficult (1899), only 1/3 of the amendments submitted to the voters have

passed. Forty amendments would be necessary if only the major changes in our constitution recommended by the Minnesota Constitutional Commission were submitted to the voters. If 4 amendments were submitted at each election (about average), it would take 10 elections. The Secretary of State estimates that 1/5 to 1/4 of total election costs are due to amendments; the amending process is expensive and less than satisfactory.

New Jersey's recent convention cost was paid for almost immediately by resultant court reorganization. Missouri officials estimate that reform in the new Department of Revenue only, brought about by its recent convention, saves more than \$1,000,000 annually.

The following 6-year sequence could evolve in Minnesota:
1957: question of constitutional convention submitted to the people;
1958: people vote "YES";
1959: legislature sets up machinery for convention;
1960: voters elect delegates to a convention;
1960-1: convention meets and frames a constitution;
1961: legislature sets up election for approval or rejection of document framed by convention;
1962: voters approve or reject this document.

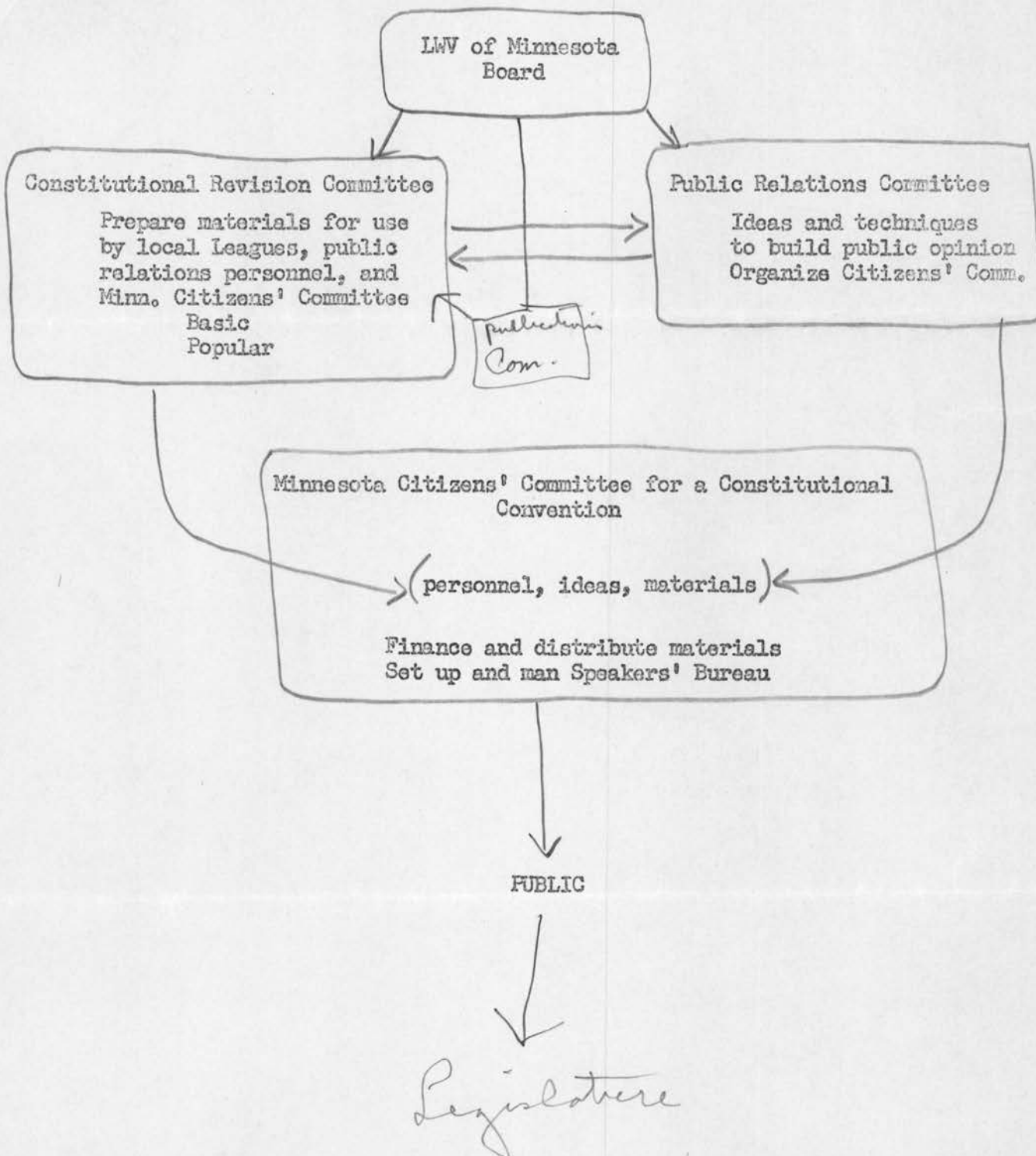
8. Constitutional conventions, attended by widespread public interest in the constitution, convention proceedings and results, have increased the understanding of governmental problems in other states. Because of an awakened and informed citizenry, constitutions produced by conventions have a higher record of voter approval than amendments have had in Minnesota.

The passage of Amendment 3 on November 2, 1954, was a mandate to the legislature from the people of Minnesota to pass a bill which will submit to the voters of Minnesota the question of whether they want a constitutional convention called to revise Minnesota's constitution. This mandate of the voters was not carried out in the 1955 legislative session.

The League of Women voters will during the 1957 legislative session:

Support a bill submitting to the voters the question of calling a constitutional convention.

ORGANIZATION FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION
CAMPAIGN

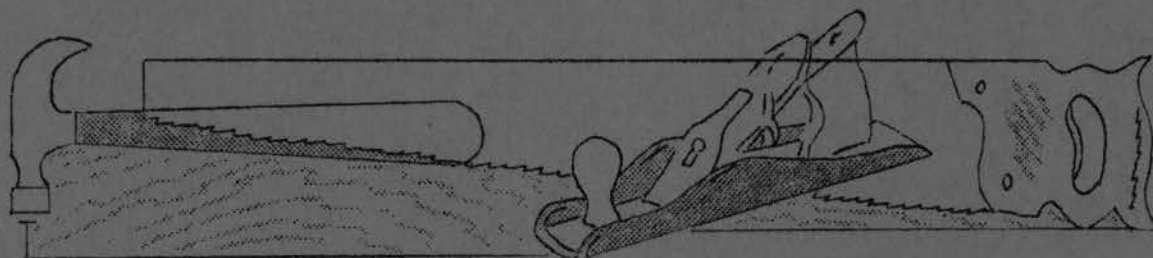


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MAR 23 1956



DO-IT-YOURSELF-KIT FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION



A PUBLIC RELATIONS MANUAL

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

University of Minnesota, TSMc, 15th & Washington Ave., S.E., Minneapolis 14, Minn.

Price 35¢

Federal 8-8791

December, 1955

PREFACE

We hope you will be able to incorporate some of these suggestions in your over-all plan for building public opinion in your own community for the calling of a CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION.

In the following pages you will find ideas used successfully in other parts of the country (a great many from Ohio), suggestions from your State Public Relations Committee for use-successful!- in Minnesota. Please use the ideas you think are suitable for your own community. Change them, improve them, devise new ideas and let us know about them, so that we can pass them on to other local Leagues.

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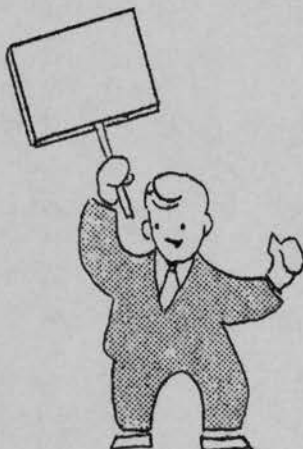
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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

University of Minnesota, TSMc, 15th & Washington Ave., S.E., Minneapolis 14, Minn.

Price _____ 1¢

December, 1955



CITIZENS
COMMITTEE

The Minnesota Citizens Constitutional Committee is launched! The first meetings called by the League of Women Voters of Minnesota have produced a Committee of organizations and individuals representing a true cross-section of the state. It is imperative that we get similar organizational support on a local level. You can expect support from local groups whose state organizations participate in the Citizens Committee. You will receive a list of participating organizations after Jan. 1. But remember, there are individuals in favor, although their organization may be opposed. Solicit their cooperation! Cooperate with groups who have taken no position and even those unalterably opposed, by having debates, distributing information, arranging panel discussions, etc. It is important that you contact and work with groups in your community having no state affiliation, such as study groups, social groups, church groups, fraternal organizations, and foreign language groups. Certainly you can think of many more!

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December, 1955

UNIT
MEETINGS

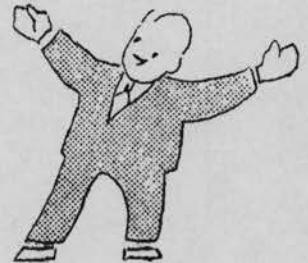
Your units could become workshops for learning to talk about the Constitutional Convention. Everyone should be able to speak for at least two minutes on the background and reasons for a Convention. Some will speak informally, to neighbors and friends in everyday conversation. As many as possible should form a corps of speakers to present the subject in two-minute talks before clubs to which they belong. Some of your unit members can form teams of actresses to present skits on the Constitution to groups and organizations.

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University of Minnesota, TSMc, 15th & Washington Ave., S.E., Minneapolis 14, Minn.
Price 1¢ December, 1955

SPEAKERS
AND
SPEECHES

A Speakers Bureau is one of the most effective means of reaching individuals and organizations. The purpose of a Speakers Bureau is to present the Constitutional Convention issue to people where they naturally gather in their own groups. The State League Resource Committee is preparing excellent tools - simple and geared to the man on the street - which will be available in March. Use them as background material for speeches. Here is a sample speech.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

University of Minnesota, TSMC, 15th & Washington Ave., S.E., Minneapolis 14, Minn.
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December, 1955

THE CASE FOR THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

(Suggested Speech Time: 20 min.)

There is little argument in Minnesota on the need for some kind of revision of our state constitution. The need became so acute in 1947 that the legislature appointed a commission to study the constitution and recommend changes. After 14 months of study, the commission recommended 112 changes in addition to 6 new sections, and its members voted unanimously that a constitutional convention would be the best way to accomplish revision. In 1950, a second commission, the popularly-called "Little Hoover Commission", pointed out the necessity for constitutional revision in order to modernize state government. In 1954, the legislature's interim tax study committee found constitutional changes essential for sound fiscal policies.

Yet, in spite of these extensive - and expensive - studies, complete revision of Minnesota's constitution is still being delayed. Why? Because fruitless controversy has been fostered in the legislature regarding the method of revision. In session after session, a small group of legislators argue that the job can be accomplished by the legislature through amendments, rather than by specially elected delegates assembled in a constitutional convention. This obstructive and untenable argument continues despite the fact that under Article I of the Constitution it is the people, not the legislature, who have the legal right to decide this question. But the people cannot decide it until the question is submitted to them at the polls. And this the legislature repeatedly refuses to do.

The gradual amendment method, under which the legislature proposes amendments for voter approval or disapproval, has been used since the very year the Constitution was ratified. It was on April 15, 1868, four weeks before Minnesota was officially declared a state, that the territorial assembly had to add an amendment to the newly written constitution. Since that time, 80 amendments have been added to Minnesota's Constitution, without the calling of a second, revising convention to

complete the task that the first early assemblage attempted with patriotic enthusiasm but a notable lack of knowledge of constitutional law. The result of this superimposing a multiplicity of amendments upon a faulty original document has been a compilation of laws so ambiguous, outmoded, and confusing that the only way the state can operate under some of the provisions is by ignoring them.

A Constitution is basic law. Its parts should function interrelatedly. Amendments function separately, and when there are too many of them, as in Minnesota, they cannot tie together with the whole. No document can be amended properly out of text in such length.

Here is one demonstration of this: Article IX of our Constitution, the Tax and Finance Article, has now been amended 19 times. What is the result? Let me read you the notation that follows the 1922 and 1950 amendments to Section 1:

"N.B. - Sections 2, 3, and 4 obsolete, because in 1906 there was adopted the section which now is Section I in this article. It supplanted Sections 1, 2, 3, and 4 and the unnumbered section of 1896. This amendment is sometimes called the wide open tax amendment. No amendments have been adopted to take the place of the old Sections 2, 3, and 4. There is therefore a gap in the numbering from 1 to 5."

Directly under this confusing but revealing notation comes Section V of Article IX which reads that state debts "shall never exceed \$250,000." The state debt as of October 1st, 1955, was \$84,010,691. In addition, the legislature of 1955 appropriated \$28,000,000 for state buildings, and added still further sums to the state debt for other purposes. The truly startling fact about the 1955 additions to the state debt was that no single legislator made public recognition of the fact that the appropriations were unconstitutional. Nor did the press comment upon it. Surely, it would be better to have no Constitution at all than to have one that must be disregarded in order to continue the normal functions of a growing state. Continuing the amendment method too long has produced cynicism, hypocrisy, and illegality in state affairs.

Let us turn now to the convention method. A constitutional convention is composed of delegates elected by the people from each legislative district. In an orderly, systematic fashion, the convention considers the Constitution as a whole

and proposes a revised Constitution for the voters' approval or disapproval. Soon after the 1947 Constitutional Commission voted unanimously that the convention method was the best method to revise Minnesota's Constitution, the League of Women Voters of Minnesota also came to the conclusion that the convention method is the best method. For four sessions of the legislature, the League of Women Voters has lobbied for a bill that would permit the people of Minnesota to vote on whether or not they wished a convention held to revise Minnesota's Constitution. For four sessions the bill has failed to receive the necessary two-thirds vote of both House and Senate. Legislative hostility to change has prevented favorable action.

This legislative reluctance has been played upon effectively by paid lobbyists for railroads and other segments of industry which oppose any possibility of change that might jeopardize their status under the present law. It is ironical that most of their fears are groundless. Constitutional conventions are traditionally conservative. Because their work must be approved by the electorate, they have a tendency to accept established patterns and procedures rather than to experiment with new ideas. Particularly have railroad lobbyists been shortsighted in their persistent lobbying in the legislature against a convention. Under the misconception that railroads might have to pay more taxes if Section 32, Article IV, of the Constitution were to be eliminated by a convention (which it surely would be) railroad lobbyists have opposed the convention. Yet, railroad taxes rose in Minnesota to an all-time high of over 14 million dollars in fiscal 1954. Many informed persons believe the railroads are over-taxed in Minnesota and that their own obstructive tactics in each legislative session have prevented tax relief rather than accomplished it. Because they cling stubbornly to outmoded practices and oppose any change in the status quo, the railroads have effectively blocked their own tax relief. The legislature's 1954 tax study report reads: "Very few states employ the gross earnings method in taxing any of the railroads (as Minnesota must do by Constitutional law), and Minnesota is the only state that provides for the exclusive use of this tax in lieu of all other taxes on railroads . . ."

The initial step to achieve a constitutional convention is simplicity itself. All it requires is that the legislature pass a bill submitting to the voters the question "Shall a Constitutional Convention be called?" What would happen if the bill should pass at the next legislative session and the people vote yes? Delegates would have to be elected, and before the final document could be ratified, at least five years of successive steps would be required. The convention method is not a hasty one.

What are the advantages of the convention method?

First, a constitutional convention usually has a high caliber of membership. Experience in other states has shown that when citizens finally succeed in exercising their democratic prerogative of changing their basic law, they choose delegates carefully: judges, college presidents, experts in constitutional law, as well as many legislators. Citizens of high caliber are willing to serve because they appreciate the historic significance of what they do. It has been said that even quite ordinary men are touched with greatness when honored by this election; they feel the sense of extraordinary responsibility. In addition, because delegates are elected from all parts of the state, their representative character provides a solid base of public support.

Second, the convention has the advantage of time. Because it is assembled for the sole purpose of revising the constitution, the convention has time for necessary study and debate. Proponents of the amendment method would have us believe that the legislature has time for this monumental task. This is not true. Our legislature meets for 90 days every 2 years, during which limited period it struggles with an avalanche of bills. In the 1955 session, the bills numbered 3,507. Although nearly 30 constitutional amendments were proposed, few ever came to debate, and only 3 passed. How inconsistent it is that legislators who have proved they have no time for the job should keep insisting they alone should do it!

Also, as regards the time element, the convention lasts a few months and then is over, the job done. To revise Minnesota's constitution by the gradual amendment method-if we were to adopt the Constitutional Commission's recommendation-would take,

by conservative estimate, over 50 years. Remember, there would be 20 Articles to amend, with numerous Sections under each Article, and the electorate can ratify only once in two years.

Third, the convention has the advantage of economy. New Jersey, which had one of the most recent conventions, spent \$325,000 out of \$350,000 appropriated. The proponents of the amendment method would have us believe that gradual amending is costless. This, too, is not true. The State Auditor reports the cost of submitting the 1953 amendments to the people was over \$18,000, but this sum does not include costs of counting ballots, abstract of votes polled, stenographer and clerk hire, or interim committee costs. Nor does it take into account that two of the amendments were being re-submitted, thus doubling their costs. When one realizes that a single session of the legislature costs well over a million dollars (\$1,137,804 in 1955) one realizes how comparatively inexpensive a constitutional convention is.

Fourth, the convention has the advantage of sound and enduring results. The convention acts in an orderly, systematic fashion to build a structure that will be sound and reliable but have a practical resilience, that will deal with fundamental principles so that few amendments will later be necessary, and yet will be comprehensive enough as a document to live and to work. And it has the residual value of breaking deadlocks that often prevent needed reform of legislative procedures.

The fifth advantage is the very considerable education of the people in constitutional law that ensues from the total process of popular participation in constitution making. Conventions far more effectively focus public attention on the problems of state government than do legislatures in the submission of proposed amendments. The press, radio, and television would spotlight attention upon so historic an event. Minnesota's constitution would be publicly debated and talked about until it would become, truly, a handiwork of all the people.

We need this education. Minnesotans know so little about their constitution that a newspaper poll of November, 1954, showed only 30% had ever heard anything about proposals to revise the constitution. It was something of a miracle that 22% said they preferred the convention method. Why don't Minnesotans know their

constitution? Because it is not often taught in the schools. It would teach cynicism for law for teachers to say "Here is Minnesota's Constitution, but this section on a state census is ignored; this provision for reapportionment has not been observed since 1913; these parts are obsolete, and there were certain sections that were once here, here, and here that have been omitted from recent copies, though nobody knows by what authority they were omitted."

A few state legislators have told us that the convention method is dangerous and untried. But the truth is that the state constitutional convention is as traditional and as American as the Stars and Stripes. Indeed, it is an American invention. It has been called our greatest contribution to the art and science of government. It was born out of the burning belief, now written into law, that the people have the inalienable right to decide their own basic law and to alter and reform their government in such manner as they deem proper.

There have been 180 state constitutional conventions held in the United States since Massachusetts called the first one in 1779. Conventions have been held for many purposes: to write the original constitutions in 48 states and the territories, to amend, to revise, to write new documents. Only 18 states still try to operate under their original charters without calling a revising convention. Minnesota is one of the dwindling 18. The constitutional convention is not the untried process that its opponents would have us believe. It has worked to accomplish necessary revisions in other states. It will work here.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA
University of Minnesota TSMc, 15th & Washington Ave. S.E., Minneapolis 14, Minnesota
Price 3¢ Federal 8-8791 February, 1956

CASE FOR THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

(Suggested Speech Time: 5 Minutes)

Our state constitution is 100 years old. This does not make it automatically "bad" but only suggests that a systematic review of its contents might be in order. Why? This is a part of "keeping up-to-date." We do not expect the farmer to produce, using a hand-made plow; we do not expect the manufacturer to produce, using outmoded machinery - yet, we seem to expect state government to produce, using a hundred-year old basic charter.

Two sections of the state constitution give us the responsibility and opportunity for this review, to see if our mid-19th century document meets the requirements of mid-20th century government. The first article in the Bill of Rights declares our right to change, alter, modify or reform our government. In another section, the machinery is spelled out for the holding of a constitutional convention. A constitutional convention assembled for the specific purpose of examining our constitution and changing it, where changes are necessary, gives us the systematic, orderly review we seek. The constitutional convention is not a new-fangled idea; it can first be found in American history in the Massachusetts constitutional convention of 1779. Since that time, some 200 constitutional conventions have been held in the 48 states. The idea of the citizen as constitution-maker is one of the most significant contributions of the American people to the democratic form of government. We must not let this idea lag as we have in Minnesota for nearly 100 years.

Many persons think of Minnesota's constitution as comparable to our federal constitution which has been changed only 22 times. History quickly tells us how far-fetched this comparison is. The Minnesota constitution was not written in an atmosphere of thoughtful deliberation. Instead, it was written in haste (in order to achieve statehood) by a convention, split in two by bitter partisan strife. A conference committee

of 10 men wrote our state constitution in 10 days. And then, two copies had to be made because the Republicans and Democrats would not sign the same document. There are over 300 differences in the two versions, and no one, even today, knows which is the correct one!

But that is past, and we are concerned with the present and the future. Why change Minnesota's constitution - why review it? It is hard to find anyone who has studied or worked closely with the constitution who does not agree that change is necessary. Not everyone agrees on all the same changes - but changes, lots of them, have been suggested. Our legislature can meet just 90 days every two years. Yet we expect it to raise and spend over 300 million dollars and give consideration to hundreds of bills which affect Minnesota citizens. We hold our chief executive, the governor, responsible for what is done during his term. Yet our state government, in reality, has six heads, all elected by the people -- Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Treasurer, Secretary of State and Auditor. Since they are all elected, they may have opposing beliefs, thus working at odds with each other. Our legislature should cut down on special legislation for local communities, and our local governments need broader provisions for adoption and amendment of their own charters. Minnesota needs a fair and enforceable apportionment of the legislature; a more workable method of amending our state constitution; an improved financial structure; and judicial reform. This is not the time to examine all the improvements which would occur to you and me but to suggest, "let's do it before it's too late!"

Perhaps the most compelling reason for constitutional review here and now is the one described in the report of President Eisenhower's Commission on Intergovernmental Relations:

"Early in its study, the Commission was confronted with the fact that many state constitutions restrict the scope, effectiveness, and adaptability of State and local action. These self-imposed

constitutional limitations make it difficult for many States to perform all the services their citizens require, and consequently have been the underlying cause of State and Municipal pleas for Federal assistance."

The report went on to say, "The Commission finds a very real and pressing need for States to improve their constitutions,"

The case for constitutional reform has solid support. The question remains one of method. Shall we do it by amendment or by convention? Amendments we have tried - we have patched and patched - some 80 times, but our difficult amending process defeats most amendments. Only a third of all amendments submitted to the voters in the last 58 years have been adopted. The L.W.V. believes a constitutional convention is the best method. It would consist of the same number of delegates as there are members of our House of Representatives. It would have the time required to consider thoughtfully all aspects of the constitution, as a whole. The document which it would write would be submitted to the people for their approval. It is the safe and sane method of revising the constitution. All we ask is - let the people say if they think it is the best way of doing the job.

The first step in the calling of a constitutional convention is for the legislature to pass a bill submitting the question of calling a constitutional convention to the people. Since 1949, the Minnesota Legislature has refused to pass this bill which would give us the right to answer this question. This is our right (as stated in Art. 1, Sec. 1 of our Constitution) - to determine the need for review of Minnesota's constitution. This decision will have a very direct effect on the future of our state.

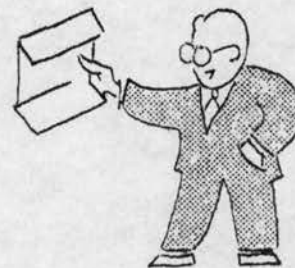
If you think you and your friends and neighbors should have the right to vote on whether or not you want a constitutional convention called, tell your legislator. Minnesota's future is in your hands!

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

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WHO'S TALKING???

Judges, attorneys, political science teachers, state senators, and representatives are among those interested and "talking." If you ask them to help you, remember to ask their point of view and preferred type of presentation.



Speakers listed by Citizens Committee.

Participants in Speakers' Workshops.

SPEAKERS' WORKSHOP

In your speeches you will be faced with a selling job. You, the speaker, are a SALESMAN; your CUSTOMERS are the voters; and your PRODUCT is, of course, a CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION.

YOU ARE THE SALESMAN. Get into the swing of things. Your attitude must be one of self-confidence. You have something to say which must be brought before the public, and if you don't present it, it may go unsaid. If you haven't had sales experience, here's your chance. Salesman (and speakers) are made - not born.

Put your best foot forward. Your appearance is your first point of contact with your audience, so it is important to look your best.

Speak up!! Make a special effort to speak distinctly. Decide against reading or memorizing your speech.

VOTERS ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS. Know your customers. Analyze your audience beforehand according to age and occupation, their knowledge of the subject, and prejudices they may have on the subject, and their degree of receptivity to new ideas.

Establish a personal contact with your customer. Base your approach on the needs of your particular audience. Be personal, be direct, and be yourself.

A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION IS THE PRODUCT. Make a general outline - then alter it to fit your audience and the time available.

The approach --- Engage the interest of your customer in your first sentence. Make your audience want to hear more.

The claim --- Bring out a few central ideas, arranged in logical sequence. Develop these one by one. Avoid meaningless generalizations.

The demonstration --- Use illustrations to bring home your point. Prove to the audience that you have something which it can use.

The sale --- Make definite and concise conclusions. Impel your audience to action.

Practice is essential. If possible, several group practice sessions should be held, giving each person a chance to speak before the entire group. At the conclusion of the Workshop, each participant should begin immediately to practice before her family, her friends, her dog, and her mirror.

Debate vs. discussion. A debate begins with a solution to a problem; a discussion begins with an analysis of a problem and works toward a solution. The question for debate must be so stated that it may be answered "yes" or "no".

Pattern of debate. Both sides, called the "affirmative" and the "negative", are given equal time to persuade the audience that their solution is correct. Each side presents constructive arguments, the affirmative speaking first. Then each side is given an opportunity, called rebuttal, to answer its opponent. Note that the affirmative has the disadvantage of speaking first, and the advantage of speaking last (rebuttal). Insist that this standard procedure be followed.

A LITTLE PSYCHOLOGY: A speech to be a good one has to have a definite plan and specific evidence. Examples and illustrations are helpful. Put everything together with a good final argument.

Use clear language without jargon and unfamiliar technical terms. Most of the listeners will know very little about the Constitutional Convention. Don't over-estimate their knowledge; don't under-estimate their intelligence.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

University of Minnesota, TSMC, 15th & Washington Ave., S.E., Minneapolis 14, Minn.
Price 6¢ December, 1955

VISUAL AND DRAMATIC PRESENTATIONS

The purpose is to create a favorable attitude toward a CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION. Why don't you try some of these techniques on different groups. (Incidentally, don't forget our hit production of a few years ago. "Alterations 1957" is still available from the state office.)

SKITS: Try to arrange your time so that you can have a question period following the skit. This will help to bring home to your audience some of the impressions they received from the skit. The following is a sample skit which may be read:

"BRINGING UP FATHER"

Cast

Mr. David Warren (Father)
Sally Warren (Daughter)
Mrs. Warren (Mother)

Costumes

FATHER, Man's coat or tailored woman's jacket worn over a tailored shirt with tie, hair brushed back, perhaps a pipe
DAUGHTER, Blue jeans, shirt tail out, or Bermuda shorts and knee-high socks and loafers
MOTHER, Regular clothes with a coat for entrance.



Properties

Table - at least three by five feet
2 chairs - one at each end of table
Telephone - on table left
Notebooks and schoolbooks for Sally
Letters, telephone pad, and newspaper for Mr. Warren

(Sally could set stage and sit down to study, or be studying, at table right. After a few moments, Mr. Warren comes into the room, from right, pats Sally on shoulder, and as he walks behind table to mail lying by phone on table left says:)

FATHER: Hi, dear! Where's your mother?
DAUGHTER: She went to a meeting at Mrs. Scott's. She said she'd be home early. Have you had dinner, Dad?
FATHER: Yes, thanks. (looking over mail) Any calls?
DAUGHTER: There's a number on the pad. He seemed anxious to talk to you. Something about a committee to demand CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION.

FATHER:

(Dials and then goes around chair left and sits!)

Mr. Anderson, this is Dave Warren - - - - - Oh,
yes - - - - - a Minnesota CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION?
That's not up my alley at all. Whatever made you
think of me? - - - - - Oh, I know we should all be
interested, but it seems to me we should leave that
up to the experts. - - - - - Of course I want good
government - - - - - and economy - - - but that's
just my point. A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION would be
too expensive. Why not amend the things that are
wrong? - - - - - (laughing) Eighty amendments al-
ready? You're kidding! Well, it ought to be nearly
perfect now. But seriously, it seems to me that amend-
ments couldn't be as expensive as a CONVENTION. - -
- - - Yes, well perhaps you're right. - - - - - You've
proved your point there, but even if piecemeal amend-
ments are more expensive in the long run than a
CONVENTION, isn't it a possibility that a bunch of
theorists and radical thinkers might be chosen to
draw up a new one? - - - - - (holding phone away from
his ear) - - - Now, don't get so excited. Naturally,
I think I'M capable of voting. I've voted in every
election since - - - - - what I mean is - - - Perhaps
I do know enough to vote intelligently but there are
an awful lot of crackpots around who might get in
some pretty strange items - - - - - Well, I see your
point in a way, but hardly feel that my serving on
a publicity committee would help. - - - - - Certainly,
I'll think it over, but don't count on me - - - - - Not
at all - - - - - Goodbye. (Hangs up phone) That sounds

like a waste of good time. (Opens a letter and reads it) What's this, Sally?

SALLY: (Who has been half studying, half listening) What's what?

FATHER: A letter from your school saying the children are not cooperating very well on school rules, and asking us parents to talk to you.

DAUGHTER: We mind the ones we think are sensible.

FATHER: I think as long as you are in school, you should mind them all.

DAUGHTER: Oh, some of them are so silly. They are positively archaic. Most of them were written ages ago when it was a little tiny school.

FATHER: But, Sally, they are still the rules and they are there to be obeyed.

SALLY: That's crazy, Daddy. Nobody pays attention to a bunch of stuff like that. Even the teachers think some of them are a bunch of malarky.

FATHER: If they are not good, sound guides for your behavior, they should be changed.

DAUGHTER: Just like the Minnesota Constitution.

FATHER: (laughing) What do you know about that?

DAUGHTER: Not too much, but we're having a unit on the Federal Constitution in Social Studies, and our teacher says we won't even try to study our state one because it is so confused and full of trunk highways and borders and - - - - -

FATHER: Now, wait a minute. We've gotten by for a good long time, almost 100 years, and the state hasn't gone to pieces.

DAUGHTER:

-4-

But Daddy, did you know that outside of school and library elections, women can't vote in Minnesota? And that it says in the constitution that the legislature shall elect U. S. Senators?

FATHER:

Say, have you read it?

DAUGHTER:

Heavens, no, it's 25,000 words long. Have you read it?

FATHER:

Well, No - - - - -

DAUGHTER:

Our teacher says that not many people have. (looking at notes) There is supposed to be a debt limit of \$250,000

FATHER:

Why, the Minnesota debt is over \$100,000,000 right now! (Glances at letter in his hand) Listen, young lady, how did you get me so far off the subject? We were discussing your infractions at school.

DAUGHTER:

(Looking at wrist watch, and as she rises and gathers up books) Oh, Dad, it's after my bed-time, or maybe we should cover the clock, the way they do in the legislature, so they can pretend they're minding the rules!

FATHER:

We'll have a conference with your mother in the morning. It is late --- and I suppose the pin-curl routine must be observed. God night, Sally.

DAUGHTER:

G'night, Dad (Goes off left)

FATHER:

(Puts down letter and picks up newspaper, turns to editorial page, and reads a few moments) Re-apportionment, now that's something I'd be interested in pushing.

MOTHER:

(Mrs. Warren comes bustling in from right to back of table, very excited) I've just had the most stimulating evening. Mabel Scott asked me to her League of Women Voters meeting. Oh, darling, did you get any dinner? (Taking off coat, stands behind left chair.)

FATHER: Yes, I ate down town. Look, dear, we've got to discuss Sally. We have a note - - - -

MOTHER: (Sits in chair left) Did you realize that we aren't being allowed to vote on whether we want a CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION?

FATHER: Oh, no, not you, too!!

MOTHER: I don't mean just me, I mean not anyone in the state, not you, either!

FATHER: (laughing) No, I mean are you going to heckle me about our constitution, too? First, a phone call from Ted Anderson, then Sally, and now you.

MOTHER: Ted Anderson, what did he want?

FATHER: Oh, he wanted me to be on some committee to advocate a CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION. But, I refused.

MOTHER: Well, I do think we should learn a lot more about it. It's terrible if we can't vote on something so vital to all of us.

FATHER: Wasn't there some sort of a commission back in 1947 to study our constitution?

MOTHER: There certainly was. They suggested 112 changes and six whole new sections.

FATHER: There, you see, our legislature is pretty good. They're working on it.

MOTHER: But that's just it! A few are interested but the majority have voted against their own recommendations ever since. Until people get aroused about things, nothing is accomplished.

FATHER: I can think of a lot of things to get aroused about before constitutional revision. Re-apportionment, for instance. I was just reading an editorial in the paper about it.

MOTHER: They talked about that at the meeting, too. We aren't going to get fair representation until we get a re-apportionment law with some teeth in it.

FATHER: CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION again, eh?

MOTHER: You're right! And there's the matter of home rule, and clearly fixed executive responsibility, and - - -

FATHER: Lock, dear, I'm rather tired. Let's go to bed. (Rising, notices letter about Sally on table) Oh, I forgot to tell you all about this letter concerning a problem at the high-school. Wait a minute - - - (reading it to himself, his face brightens) Do you know, I've been awfully dense.

MOTHER: (Rising) Oh, not you, dear!

FATHER: With all that's been told me about the constitution tonight, Sally made the real point, that we can't teach our children respect for law and order when we are so casual about it. Here - - - where's that number? I'm going to call Ted Anderson and see what I can do. (Dials) Hello, Ted - - - Dave Warren - - - could you have lunch with me tomorrow? - - Fine, 1:00 at the club. - - - Well, I'm not sure how much help I'll be, but if you have any trouble getting a committee together, I have a couple of awfully convincing females handy. (While he is saying this, Sally with hair in pin curls and wearing a bath-robe, puts her head in door left. She and Mrs. Warren give each other a good luck sign. Mr. Warren hangs up, and all go off left.)

CHARTS: Illustrated charts can make your speeches more effective, providing they:

1. Are large enough to be seen easily by your entire audience.
2. Are simple enough to be grasped by the audience without lengthy explanation by the speaker.
3. Are used as illustrations for the talk, rather than as a substitute for the talk.
4. Have large letters and strong colors. (If they are clear enough, they can be used on TV.)
5. Are mounted on an easel-like frame for easy manipulation.

FLANNELGRAPH: It is a very simple illustrated talk - easy to assemble, easy to use: equally popular with school children, club women, businessmen. It is presented on a board covered with flannel. Professionally made boards can be purchased from religious supply houses. Cut from flannel, paper, or lightweight cardboard, figures or forms to illustrate the high points of your talk. If you use paper or cardboard, glue a piece of flannel on the back. Mount these figures on the board as you talk. Colorful pictures cut from magazines and flannel-backed can be very effective in your flannelgraph.

Types of Presentation:

1. Built-up picture - Mount parts as your talk progresses, ending with one complete picture, e.g. a house built gradually from foundation to roof.
2. Built-up scene - Figures or forms to represent a scene, building it up as you talk. You can use figures of people and move them about your scene at will.
3. Series of poster-like presentations - Construct simple graphs or pictures. One can be taken down and the next built in its place as you progress from idea to idea.

Hints on Using a Flannelgraph:

1. Be sure to contrast bright pieces of flannel against a dark background if using built-up pictures or scenes.
2. If using cut-outs from magazine pictures, try to secure large, colorful ones.
3. Unless your board is quite large, confine your talk to small audiences, 25, or so.
4. Use your own originality to build a unique talk.
5. An outstanding word or phrase can be hand printed on paper, flannel-backed, and used at the right point of your talk.
6. Try to limit your flannelgraph to 15 minutes.

7. Don't be afraid that you are being too elementary with your illustrations. Sometimes the simplest can be the most effective.
8. Suggest to civics teachers that their class make a flannelgraph as a project, using the CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION issue as the theme.

Sample Flannelgraph:

Story: Describe and demonstrate the building of a house, as symbolic of building the structure of state government - the Constitution.

Symbols: Foundation stones - Bill of Rights. Four Walls - Legislative, executive and judicial branches, and home rule for local government. Roof - Taxation. Has to fit the structure, must have no leaks. If too small, structure has no protection; if too big, it means waste. Additions - such as rooms, porches, doors, chimneys - amendments. Needed to adapt house to growing family; should follow a plan, not just stuck on at any angle; shouldn't cut off light to other rooms, or force roof out of line. Gadgets - such as cupola, gingerbread, porch railing, a dormer on top of a dormer - legislative material in Constitution.

Demonstration:

1. Build up main outline of house, explaining symbolism.
2. Add amendments, some necessary, some incongruous, out of place. Make structure look messy, rickety, unplanned.
3. Show a whole group of changes made by amendments.
4. Show how it might be remodeled, using CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION method. First, the family has to agree to modernize, decide that the expense would be good insurance for the future of the house and family. Then they call in the architects who present plans which must be approved by the family. Strip some of the gadgets from the house. Show what modernization could do. Add a garage, a gas furnace, a television antenna, etc. The foundation stones are solid, some quaintly designed. But perhaps new ones must be added to support a new wing.
5. Leave the house looking like a sound structure with classic lines, and end with a positive statement as to the best method of making any structure fit the needs of the people who use it.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

University of Minnesota, TSMc, 15th and Washington Ave., S.E., Minneapolis 14, Minn.
Price 1¢

December, 1955

POSTERS

Depict certain laws or amendments and how ridiculous they seem now. Use period costumes of the times the law was passed, i.e. the then and now aspect. A poster with attachments, such as a small envelope labeled "Take One" can be used to distribute more information. Be COLORFUL and SIMPLE, to the point. Say only one specific thing on a poster, and make the type BIG. CARTOONS and CARICATURES are the best eye-appeal methods.



WINDOW DISPLAYS

Use the same general ideas as on posters, and be BOLD and SIMPLE. Store mannequins dressed in period costumes are eye-catching. The use of live animals such as rabbits, ducklings, chicks and puppies draw considerable attention. Use a catchy phrase or main theme to draw attention to the antiquated amendments. A frosted window with peep-hole is an old but effective stunt.

BOOTHS

Use posters here with colorful bunting, balloons, or streamers - the more colorful, the better attention getter. Set up booths in grocery stores, schools, churches, banks or any large gathering place. Have plenty of material to give out. Both workers could be in period costumes representing the time our Constitution was written. Use children in costumes also. Use your most attractive women as booth workers (husband's idea).

The children in our schools offer an excellent way in which to disseminate information. Children's skits in period costumes plus poster work of their own ideas can be brought home to their parents. The schools should cooperate in educational matters relating to the Constitution.

BILLBOARDS

The State League of Women Voters and the Minnesota Citizens Constitutional Committee are planning a billboard campaign pointing up the need for the calling of a CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION. Billboard space will be donated at times when the boards of individual companies are not being used. This is being done through a State Billboard Association. However, we suggest that you contact billboard advertising companies in your area to request that they donate a board. This is common practice and you will find that they will be happy to cooperate when you have convinced them that the cause is a worthy one. Let's have a billboard in every League community!

MISCELLANEOUS

Spotlights in centralized location where traffic passes with appropriate display.

Airplane trailers - on weekends when more families are at home.

Banners or posters on public vehicles such as busses, cabs, newspaper trucks, express trucks, etc.

Overhead banners on main streets such as Xmas decorations.

Sound trucks.

Car stickers.

Car cards (used in bus advertising)

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STATE FAIR

The League of Women Voters plans to have a booth at the State Fair! This is the opportunity we have been waiting for - to reach a cross-section of Minnesota citizens - to teach them something - sell them something - give them something!

We have sensational plans, but we need you. League members will man the booth at all times. Will your League volunteer to man the booth for part or all of one day?

We hope to have important Minnesota citizens from the Governor and chairman of the political parties to labor leaders and business men who will speak for a Convention from our booth. They will autograph League material for fair-goers. We hope to give these speeches statewide press, radio, and TV coverage. This will not only be an excellent way of selling the League program, but also the League, itself. Perhaps we can increase our membership and build our finance drive prospect list at the same time.

We hope to give away something for the children, and something for the adults that will be a reminder to push a convention.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

University of Minnesota, TSMc, 15th and Washington Ave., S.E., Minneapolis 14, Minn.
Price 1¢ December, 1955

COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS

Here is a ready-made crowd! Most communities have an annual celebration such as the Minneapolis Aquatennial, St. Paul Winter Carnival, Hopkins Raspberry Festival, etc. Take advantage of these occasions to publicize the League program.

Participate in the Parade - For example: antique car and new car with appropriate slogans (outmoded Constitution vs. streamlined Constitution).

Girls dressed in 1857 costumes passing out literature.

GIVE - AWAYS

Everyone likes to get something free!! Here are some suggestions for useful give-aways ----things that people will hold on to. Be sure they have a message on them - a slogan - a catch-phrase, or such!

1. Match folders
2. Shopping bags
3. Emery boards
4. Balloons



Halena
(we ordered 200 of these)

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS IN BRIEF— to be voted on November 8, 1960

Amendment No. 1 — Extension of Legislative Session; Introduction of Bills; Legislators and Elective Offices

- Retains the 90-day biennial legislative session, but allows any regular session to extend the next regular session by no more than 30 days. (Presently only the Governor may add to a legislative period, by calling a special session.)
- Requires new bills introduced after the 70th legislative day to be authorized by joint House and Senate rules. (Presently such new bills require permission of the Governor.)
- Allows a senator or representative, if otherwise qualified, to run for any elective office, provided he resigns his legislative post if elected. (Presently a legislator may not resign to run for any office during his term; and he must wait one year after his term before holding a state office, if the position was created or the salary raised by the session during which he served.)

Amendment No. 2 — Reapportionment

- Authorizes the legislature to reapportion itself after the 1970 census, and every ten years thereafter.
 - ... House of Representatives shall be on the basis of "equality according to population." (The same as at present.)
 - ... Senate is to be on the basis of "fair representation to all parts of the state." The five counties including and adjacent to Ramsey County, having 35% or more of the state's population, are to have 35% of the senators. (Presently the Constitution states that Senate apportionment should be based on population.)
- Enforces reapportionment by requiring that if the legislature fails to reapportion in the first regular session after each Federal census, it shall sit in special session immediately after the end of that session, without pay, for the purpose of reapportionment only, until the purpose is accomplished. (There are no enforcement provisions at present.)
- Limits the size of the legislature to 67 senators and 135 representatives. (There is now no limit on legislative size, although the present figures are 67 and 131.)

Amendment No. 3 — Continuity of Government

- Authorizes the legislature to provide for succession to the offices of Governor and Lieutenant Governor in case of vacancies in both offices. (There is now no provision for succession beyond president pro tem of the Senate.)
- Allows the legislature to provide for the continuity of state government in case of enemy attack, including succession to the powers and duties of public office and change in the seat of government. (There is now no provision for such emergency.)

Amendment No. 4 — Voting Rights

- Allows the legislature to determine a place of voting for a citizen, otherwise qualified, who changes precincts within the state within 30 days of an election. (At present, a voter who moves within 30 days of an election is disenfranchised.)
- Removes obsolete provisions regarding voting rights of Indians.

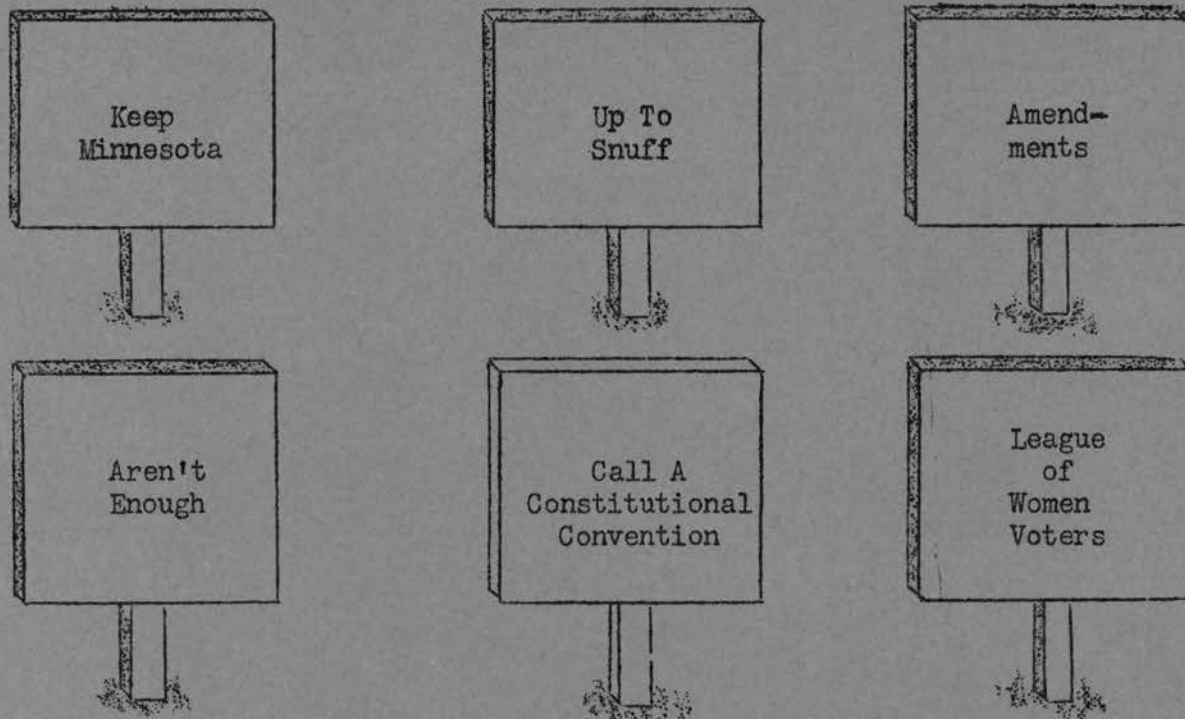
REMEMBER—FAILURE TO VOTE COUNTS AS A "NO" VOTE

Presented as a public service by the

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA, 15th and Washington Avenues S.E., Minneapolis 14

JUN 28 1956

[1956]



Memo to: Local League Presidents
From: Mrs. Gordon Grunditz
Re: "Burma Shave" type signs on Constitutional Convention.

We need more orders for "Burma Shave" type signs advertising constitutional convention, and feel that only if we have coverage over most of the state will this type of display be effective. Would you again consider the possibility of using the signs in your community and let us know what you decide? The signs will be available for delivery around July 10.

The cost for each set of six signs is \$3.30, not \$2.64 as we hoped (see President letter of May 31). They are made of masonite board and are twelve by eighteen inches. Each League is furnishing its own mountings, and we have found that old lumber can be purchased at lumber companies for a minimum amount.

The slogan to be used on the signs is being reviewed by an advertising company, and we hope it will be satisfactory to all. Each League is assuming responsibility for getting permission from its local government for placement of the signs, and we have found excellent acceptance.

We appreciate your cooperation and hope you will see your way clear to ordering the signs.

What every Leaguer should know about....

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Minnesota's Constitution is its fundamental law. It should: 1) set forth the principles of government; 2) delegate power between the three branches; 3) guide legislative action. The legislature passes laws to meet current needs of the state within the principles of the Constitution.

MINNESOTA NEEDS A NEW CONSTITUTION BECAUSE:

1. The Constitution restricts the executive by not giving it adequate authority equal to the responsibility it bears for doing its job.
2. It limits the legislature by imposing 19th century procedures for a 20th century job.
3. It hinders speedy and equal justice by the courts (two amendments relating to the judiciary, submitted to the voters in 1954 and 1956 point to the need for overall examination of this part of the Constitution).
4. It prevents local government from being truly local by making cities, towns, villages and counties come to the legislature for management of many of their affairs. Amendment #1, submitted to the voters in 1958, is an effort to improve this situation.
5. It imposes obstacles in the way of an efficient and economic fiscal policy for the state by its outmoded and restrictive provisions.
6. It instills in the people a disrespect for the Constitution and law by the example of the legislature's refusal to carry out its constitutional duty to reapportion itself.

MINNESOTA'S CONSTITUTION SHOULD BE REVISED BY A CONVENTION BECAUSE:

1. In the United States the citizen is the constitution-maker. This job cannot rightly, therefore, be done by the legislature, but must be done by Convention. Self-government rests upon a) the power to prescribe the basic law; b) the power to elect representatives to put it into effect. Loss or diminution of either of these prerogatives weakens self-government. The fact is that:
 - a. The people have not had an opportunity to review the Constitution since it was drafted in 1857.
 - b. As early as 1871, Governor Austin declared it outmoded, inconsistent, inadequate, and asked for a convention to rewrite it.
 - c. The last three governors (two Republican and one DFL) have supported a constitutional convention bill, but the legislature has not passed one.
2. A convention attracts outstanding citizens to serve as delegates. A convention is traditionally conservative and is less susceptible than a legislature to pressure groups. Its delegates will not be standing for re-election; they are aware that what they do will become history.

3. The Minnesota Constitutional Commission (composed of 18 legislators, a member of the executive department, a Supreme Court Justice, and three citizens) agreed unanimously upon the desirability of a convention, as opposed to the amendment process, for the comprehensive consideration of our complicated document.
4. The study, research and recommendations made by the Minnesota Constitutional Commission have laid the groundwork for a convention; this will lessen the work and time, and therefore, expense of a convention.
5. Amendments are slow, costly, cumbersome, compromising, and difficult to understand in relation to the Constitution as a whole. There have been 83 amendments in 100 years.

New Jersey's recent convention cost was paid for almost immediately by resultant court reorganization. Missouri officials estimate that reform in the new Department of Revenue only, brought about by its recent convention, saves more than \$1,000,000 annually.

6. Constitutional conventions, attended by widespread public interest in the constitution, convention proceedings and results, have increased the understanding of governmental problems in other states. Because of an awakened and informed citizenry, constitutions produced by conventions have a higher record of voter approval than amendments have had in Minnesota.

THE LEAGUE RECORD

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota has endorsed the convention principle since 1948, in addition to studying various phases of revision such as home rule, reapportionment, the executive department and legislative reorganization.

In 1954 the League of Women Voters worked hard for Amendment #3 which provided that legislators may serve as delegates to a convention and that the resulting document must be submitted to the people for approval. The passage of the amendment by a large vote was considered by the League to be a mandate to the legislature from the people of Minnesota to submit the convention question to the voters. This mandate was not carried out in the 1955 legislative session, and succeeded only in the House in 1957.

During the 1959 session the League will again support a bill submitting to the voters the question of calling a constitutional convention.