

McKnight claims constitutional point being sought

By LEE JONES
Associated Press
AUSTIN, Tex. — Sen. Peyton McKnight, D-Tyler, says many opponents of the proposed new constitution are looking for a rallying point and his "Citizens to Preserve the Texas Constitution" should give it to them.

The organization, with Houston public relations woman Patricia Black listed as campaign manager, registered with the secretary of

state this week as a political committee. It took some checking to find out that McKnight, in fact, was the committee's founder and chief spokesman.

The new constitution will be submitted to the voters Nov. 4 as eight separate proposals. "A lot of people are looking for a place to go to oppose it," McKnight said Tuesday in a telephone interview, and he has been finding some of them among state and local officials. He said he would like to have Gov. Dolph Briscoe on his side.

Mrs. Black, as campaign manager, will have the duty of filing periodic financial reports with the secretary of state. She said however, that her only contact thus far had been with Jimmy Banks of Austin, public relations director of the Texas Railroad Association.

Banks said the railroaders were not involved and that the McKnight group was one of his public relations sidelines.

Mrs. Black also has worked with a group formed by business lobbyist Searcy Bracewell called "Committee to Preserve the Present Constitution."

McKnight said opponents of the

new constitution called on him because of his vocal fight against it in the 1974 Constitutional Convention and this year's legislature.

He said he had no names of other members because "we have just gotten started."

The group's plans include a "speakers bureau" to make public appearances against the new state charter and fund-raising for an advertising campaign.

Bracewell's group, he said, will concentrate on Houston, which has major local elections the same day as the balloting on the constitution.

Houston, McKnight said, could

account for 40 per cent of the statewide vote on the constitution so "I am glad to see them concentrate on that area down there... I imagine we will be touching hands, keeping in touch."

McKnight said his campaign will seek defeat of all eight separate propositions to replace articles of the 1876 constitution with new ones drafted by the legislature.

Asked what elements of the constitution his group would concentrate its fire upon, McKnight said, "The main thing, to be very frank with you, is that if we pass this thing we will be moving from a position of

constitutional restraint to permissiveness weighted in favor of the legislature. The reins of government will be turned over to the legislature."

"The people are losing their law to the legislature."

Briscoe has indicated concern over provisions calling for the legislature to meet annually, instead of every two years, and giving it a mechanism to call itself into special sessions to override vetoes.

"I like what he has been saying," said McKnight. He said that during telephone conversations Monday with governor's aides Ken Clapp

and George Lowrance he mentioned his organization and hoped the governor would open certain sections.

"Most people I talk to feel their contact with the constitution such that they have never been damaged by the one we have. They feel state government is straitjacketed by the one we have now," McKnight said.

Backers of the proposed constitution also have registered a group to promote it, called "Citizens for Texas Constitution," headed by Robert W. Calvert, former justice of the State Supreme Court.

Ima Hogg dead at 93

In London

HOUSTON (AP) — Miss Ima Hogg, who's name was synonymous with cultural development in Houston, died in a London hospital Tuesday, at the age of 93.

Miss Hogg died in Westminster Hospital where she was recuperating from a broken leg suffered Friday. Doug McDugald, Miss Hogg's cousin, said the reasons for Miss Hogg's death were unclear Tuesday night and added that an autopsy is planned.

Miss Hogg was the daughter of former Texas Gov. James Stephen Hogg and the granddaughter of a Texas plantation owner and Confederate officer.

The Houston Symphony was started by Ms. Hogg and she also was a heavy contributor to the Museum of Fine Arts and other cultural institutions in the city.

Miss Hogg also founded the Houston Child Guidance Center and helped to establish the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health at a time when mental health was virtually an unknown term.

VA officials remind vets of deadlines

With fall registration next week, A&M's veteran's representatives remind veterans discharged between Jan. 31, 1955 and June 1, 1966 that they have only the fall and spring semesters to collect GI Bill benefits.

Veterans Administration officials explained that the deadline for eligibility for such veterans is May 31, 1976.

They also said that benefits can be used for technical, apprentice, or cooperative programs as well as academic training.

Tutorial assistance is also available through GI Bill benefits.

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