

Revisions 'doomed' from very beginning

Associated Press

There wasn't any doubt from the first. The proposed new Texas constitution was doomed for defeat as the early returns came in, and the margin grew greater as each county, both urban and rural, reported.

Political observers said many voters feared the new constitution could lead to a state income tax and put too much power in the hands of the legislators and this is what turned them off.

The eight propositions were beaten by about a 3-1 margin in a far heavier turnout than predicted.

The rural vote was 5-1 against; the city vote 3-1 and the metropolitan vote, including the population centers of Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio and Austin, was 2-1.

Gov. Dolph Briscoe, one of the few top state officials who actively opposed the changes, said Tuesday night, "The people of Texas have shown their faith in the constitution that has served them well in the past and will serve them well in the future."

"I am pleased with the outcome of today's election. But I think all Texans should understand one thing: This election was not a test of personalities or individuals. There were no winners nor losers; no heroes nor failures. Men and women of intelligence and good will differed over each proposition of the proposed constitution; but there were honest differences of opinion."

Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby, a strong backer of the new constitution, said, "The voters of Texas have rejected five years of effort directed toward constitutional revision by an decisive margin as anyone could imagine. It was a good fight, but we lost."

A voter in Central Texas said, "I was just scared of what might happen if we let the legislature do what

they wanted. I voted against all eight of those changes and I told everybody I knew to do the same."

That feeling apparently embraced all of Texas, where voters decided to stay with a constitution written 99 years ago rather than take a chance on something new.

In the past there has been a vast difference in how West Texans and East Texans voted and how the big cities and the country voters stood on an issue. That wasn't the case this time around.

It was east and west and north and south and metropolitan and rural and most were voting "no."

House Speaker Bill Clayton said, "I doubt that this will be a serious issue in the next legislature unless there is a groundswell from the citizenry. Sooner or later it will come up again, but it will be a movement by the people when it comes . . . I would have hoped we would have had a new constitution by Wednesday morning, but I abide by their decision."

Near decade of effort goes 'down the drain'

Associated Press

AUSTIN — Almost a decade of efforts to extensively revise Texas' much-amended constitution went down the drain Tuesday, and the revisionists don't know why.

But they agree it probably will be a long time before constitution

News Analysis

revision will again stir public sentiment as it did this year.

"I don't expect to see a whole new constitution on the ballot again in my lifetime," said one grieving state official.

Some revision efforts may be made in the 1977 legislature but the big drive is gone.

"After a massive rejection like this we must conclude that a number of factors brought it about," said Atty. Gen. John Hill, one of the most active campaign-

ers. "Until we know what these factors are, and we don't now, I don't think we can make a fair assessment."

"I hope this vote will convince the legislature that any changes in our basic constitutional system should be made by the orderly process of amendment rather than through wholesale revision, which would inevitably incorporate too many bad features along with the good," said Sen. Peyton McKnight, D-Tyler, leader of a statewide opposition group.

One source suggested that the 1977 legislature may see a revival of efforts by those who think a new constitution should be written by citizen delegates, not legislators who were the authors of the defeated document.

"I doubt that it will be a serious issue in the next legislature unless there is a ground swell from

the citizenry," said Speaker Bill Clayton. "Sooner or later it will come up again but it will be a movement by the people when it comes."

"If there is any lesson we have learned from this election, it is that the people have a right to impose restraints upon their government and they still want to do so," said Sen. Tom Creighton, D-Mineral Wells.

"Of course constitution revision must continue to be an issue," said Hill. "The problem is still there and in the next few years, some of the problems now may be magnified, such as the need for speedy trials in our courts."

"It will be an issue in the next legislature," Hill predicted, "but how much of an issue depends on the assessment made in the next year."

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MEETINGS SCHEDULED

Finance Association will meet Wednesday night at 7:30 p.m. in the Treehouse Apts. party room.

Omega Phi Alpha (OPA) will meet Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. in Room 501 of the Rudder Tower.

The El Paso Hometown Club will meet Wednesday night at 7:30 p.m. in room 350 of the MSC.

An organizational meeting of the Orange County Hometown Club will be held Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. in Room 141 of the MSC.

The A&M Wheelmen Wednesday night ride will begin at 5:30 p.m. from Rudder Tower Fountain.

Aggie Speleological Society will meet in Room 510 of Rudder Tower at 8 p.m. Wednesday.

A Bonfire meeting for off-campus girls will be held Wednesday, 7 p.m. in Room 701 Rudder Tower.

The Pre-Law Society will meet in Room 308 Rudder Tower at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday.

The Motorcycle Club will meet tonight at 7:30 in Room 607 Rudder Tower.

A CAMAC meeting will be held tonight at 8 in Room 302 Rudder Tower.

The Graduate Student Council will meet in Room 216 of the MSC at 5 p.m. today.

The MSC Council Executive meeting will be at 5:30 p.m. in the Conference Room of the MSC.

The Student Chapter Assn. of General Contractors will meet in Room 410 of the Rudder Tower at 7:30 p.m.

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