

Page of Comment



'Varoom—Varoommm!'

Letters to the Editor

Women Voters Express Thanks

Editor, Independent Record:
The Helena League of Women Voters wishes to thank all those organizations and individuals who gave so freely of their time to call city residents, reminding them of the important sewer bond election.

The individuals who helped are too numerous to mention, but the groups deserve recognition as they show that there are many who care about the future of Helena. These groups include AAUW, American Legion Auxiliary, Sierra Club, Audubon Society, Daughters of Isabella, Zonta, Soroptimists, Northside Neighborhood Council, Model Cities Aides, Telephone Pioneers and the Garden Club.

Helena voters also deserve credit as they proved to be most concerned about the water and sewer problems. The large turnout and overwhelming approval of the bond issue indicate an informed public.

Mrs. Penny Egan,
President Helena League of Women Voters
Rimini Route

Care a Little

Editor, Independent Record:
March is the month to be concerned about the elderly, the aged and the sick in our community.

A smile, a kind word, a visit to the elderly who thrive more on friendship and companionship than any form of existence would be a great help since many older people go through stages of restlessness, weariness and loneliness. Receiving a card or letter mean much for even if unable to read, someone will read it for them. A walk

Isn't It the Truth

BY CARL RIBLET JR.

We have only to observe the body contours of people who seem to be enamored of success, those who have come to think mighty well of themselves in any and all situations no matter how silly they may appear to others, to note that some have acquired the round shoulders that develop so quickly from all that patting themselves on the back.

"Pride and conceit were the original sins of man."
—Le Sage

with a companion could mean not only fresh air and exercise, but a heartwarming lift.

If God permits, we shall grow into the latter life. We would surely respond to a gesture of kindness. A friendly hello is warmly accepted, even if the response isn't what you expect, keep in mind people collect memories, even the smallest.

Dedicate a few moments a week to brighten someone's day. Visit a nursing or retirement home, or an invalid friend. Patience is the key word to establishing a comfortable relationship with someone. The following is a poem by an elderly lady. Think about it, "Appreciation."

"It was a little gift, you may never learn what joy it brought to me. That kind word you spared, or the smile you brought, or the time you gave to me."

L. F. Nangle
901 N. Main

Highway Hokum

Editor, Independent Record:
I'm tired of all the hokum about the "highway lobby" taking the people's money and spending it on roads for the special benefit of the truckers and the contractors.

The highway lobby consists of every person who owns a car and who wants transportation facilities. He and no one else is paying for the highways.

In fact I have often said and I repeat it, the gasoline tax is the only tax where I get my money back.

I can remember driving to eastern Montana back in my earlier days when the only reason I got through the mud was because I had a light Model T and was able to pass all those big cars which had skidded into the borrow pit. The gasoline tax has rescued us from that.

Robert E. Miller
2010 East Sixth

Independent Record

Montana's Oldest Daily Newspaper in Continuous Publication

Established in Helena
Dec. 17, 1865

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Fred Rant — Adv. Manager
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Clayton Rickman — Press Foreman
Ron Jose — Stereotype Foreman

And to the Delegates We Say..

To the delegates of the Montana Constitutional Convention:

Tomorrow you return to your private lives after participating in Montana's most historic political event in 83 years.

It has been a pleasure having you in Helena. Your conscientiousness, your sense of responsibility, your recognition of and devotion to the important job at hand has been inspiration.

Your accomplishments, while they don't please everybody, including yourselves, entirely, are from a practical standpoint probably the best that can be expected.

You are a diverse group—representing the diversities that exist in Montana. You include liberals and conservatives, reformers and stand-patters, city people and rural people.

So compromises were inevitable, not only to write a new constitution acceptable to a majority of the delegates, but also a document that stands a good chance of approval by the voters.

You have been criticized on the one hand for timidity in not making sweeping reforms and on the other for making changes that some consider too extreme.

As one of the earliest advocates of a constitutional convention for Montana, this newspaper had hoped you would make more substantial changes than you did, especially in the executive, judicial and local government articles. But we must accept, as you have, the realities. In democratic politics you seldom, if ever, get a whole loaf. You have, thankfully,

given us better than a half a loaf.

You had one thing going for you — you had no way to go but up. The old constitution has so hopelessly stifled governmental progress in Montana that almost any change is an improvement. You have made many changes, many improvements.

By and large, you have strengthened the Bill of Rights. (We think you weakened it in one section—the people's Right to Know—but only time will tell.)

You have definitely strengthened Montana Legislature and made it more responsible to the people, regardless of whether they choose one house or two.

You tampered only slightly with the executive branch, which is unfortunate. However, again accepting reality, it seems that most Montanans prefer the long ballot even though they may not know whom they are voting for or the duties to which they are electing him.

The changes you made in the judicial system may be more significant than initially meets the eye.

While the local government article is weaker than we had hoped, you have at least reversed the crippling concept that cities and counties can do nothing without legislative approval.

The environmentalists didn't get all they wanted from you, but neither did the polluters. Healthful environment is established as a right, but without overly restrictive provisions that might wreck the economy of Montana.

You have greatly improved the taxation article by removing special-interest provisions and unshackling the Legislature.

You have strengthened education in Montana by providing separate boards for higher and lower education and more flexibility in financing.

You have made the constitution easier to amend, so that it can be more readily altered to correct any mistakes you may have made and to keep pace with changing conditions.

And you have wisely segregated three highly controversial provisions so they can be voted on separately.

In addition to the changes you have made in the constitution—subject, of course, to voter approval—you have set some fine examples.

You have shown the importance of independent research as an alternative to heavy reliance upon lobbyists for advice. (Although, perhaps, you were a little too impatient with the lobbyists. After all, most of them are honest and do represent legitimate interests. And surely you couldn't be corrupted by a cup of coffee or a couple of drinks.)

You have, for the most part, avoided the local watering holes, choosing instead to do your homework.

You have shown that party labels need not result in partisan rancor; that decisions can be made for the common good rather than to win points for one party or another.

You have shown that women

can play a vital role in Montana politics. About 20 per cent of your members were women, and most of them had an admirable impact on the convention.

And, most commendably, you have proved that public bodies and public officials can operate effectively in full view of the public; that controversies can be argued, decisions made and votes recorded openly without fear of recrimination. In fact, your openness has won you public admiration.

So you leave the convention hall and return to your private endeavors. But your public duties have not ended.

The history you have made cannot be allowed to gather dust, forgotten in the archives. You cannot let that happen. You have an obligation to urge the people of Montana to vote June 6 for the document you have created—to convince them they must have this new constitution or continue to suffer the cost of unmanageable, unresponsive state and local government.

Some of you didn't get all the change you wanted in the constitution you have fashioned. Some of you got more change than you wanted. But you did the best you could, and in the best tradition of a democracy. You have offered the people of Montana something significantly better than what they have now. You must tell them that.

Helena has been honored and inspired by your presence. Good-by, good luck, God bless you and the results of your work.

Setting Auto Pollution Priorities

BY TOM WICKER

© New York Times

NEW YORK—By now, we know enough about the problems of reclaiming a decent environment to understand that in this field, as Adlai Stevenson once said in a different context, "there are no gains without pains." It is just not going to be possible, for example, to indulge ourselves in an ever-growing demand for electric power, and at the same time to prevent a comparable increase in the pollution that results from present methods of generating electricity. At the least, some new technology will be needed; more likely, at the worst, the national appetite for power is going to have to be curtailed.

Car Costs Too High

Now a government study proposes significant relaxation of federal restrictions on automobile exhaust emissions, primarily on grounds that to carry out these restrictions will increase the cost of a car by as much as \$775 and still will not attain the desired air-quality standards.

No wonder Sen. Muskie, the author of the emission standards bill, and Ralph Nader, the scourge of the fat cats, have assailed this report, and no wonder Lee Iacocca, the president of Ford, praised it as "the best news the public has had in years." After all, clean air standards are not being set in order to hold down the price of automobiles but to make it possible for Americans to keep on breathing; and if it is true that current emission standards will not achieve the ideal air quality by the period 1975-77, is it likely that air quality level can be reached more quickly by relaxing those emission standards?

The report advocated easing the standard for nitrogen oxide emissions from .4 grams per mile to between one and two grams (by 1976); since this is the most difficult emission to control, but perhaps also the most damaging to air quality, plant life, and humans, there is a strong suggestion here that the recommendation is more for Detroit's engineering benefit than for the quality of the air, or the relief of the consumer.

A Different Approach

Experts at the California Statewide Air Pollution Research Center say, on the other hand, that it would make more sense to hold to strict control of nitrogen oxide and hydrocarbon emissions, while relaxing—if anything—control of carbon monoxide emissions from the presently required 3.4 grams per mile (by 1976) to perhaps 17 grams. Through complicated technical means, they say, that might also provide the best way to limit emissions of the nitrogen oxide and hydrocarbons; but this is an approach that aims at better air quality rather than at the convenience of the auto makers.

The government report also suggested a "two-car solution"—more stringent emissions controls on cars for use in areas most vulnerable to air pollution. But it did not explain how cars could be limited to particular areas of the country; nor does the idea seem to take account of the fact that virtually every urban area either has now or has the potential to develop a photochemical smog problem—to which emissions of nitrogen oxide particularly contribute.

Why should it be assumed, moreover, that the total cost of controlling damaging emissions ought to be passed on to the car buyer? Surely some of Detroit's own wealth,

partially earned by polluting the air, should be rebated to the public through industry absorption of a large share of the cost of pollution abatement.

Costs Should Be Shared

The oil companies, whose sales will go up as emission controls result in greater gasoline consumption, could also be required to pour some of this windfall into the cost of controlling auto emissions; and since the public as a whole will benefit from cleaner air, there also is a case to be made for a government share in control costs.

There is a hidden implication moreover, that may be the most important aspect of the government report. If it is really going to increase the cost of automobiles by \$775 to reduce their emissions to acceptable levels, it seems clear that the economic practicality of the internal combustion engine is being severely reduced. This is particularly so, since the experience of California with less stringent standards than those being imposed by the federal government is that automobiles equipped to meet them suffer greatly in "driveability" and cost much more to operate.

The logic of the report, therefore, is not that the standards should be relaxed so that the cost of buying a car can be held down; and Detroit's engineering problem can be eased; but that if these standards cannot be met without ruinous increases in original and operating costs, the auto companies should move as quickly as possible to some newer and better technology—whether it be turbine engines, hybrids, or some other development.

Here, as in so many other matters, the desperate need is for the right priorities—in this case, clean air first, consumer costs second, and Detroit's profits last.

Isn't It the Truth!

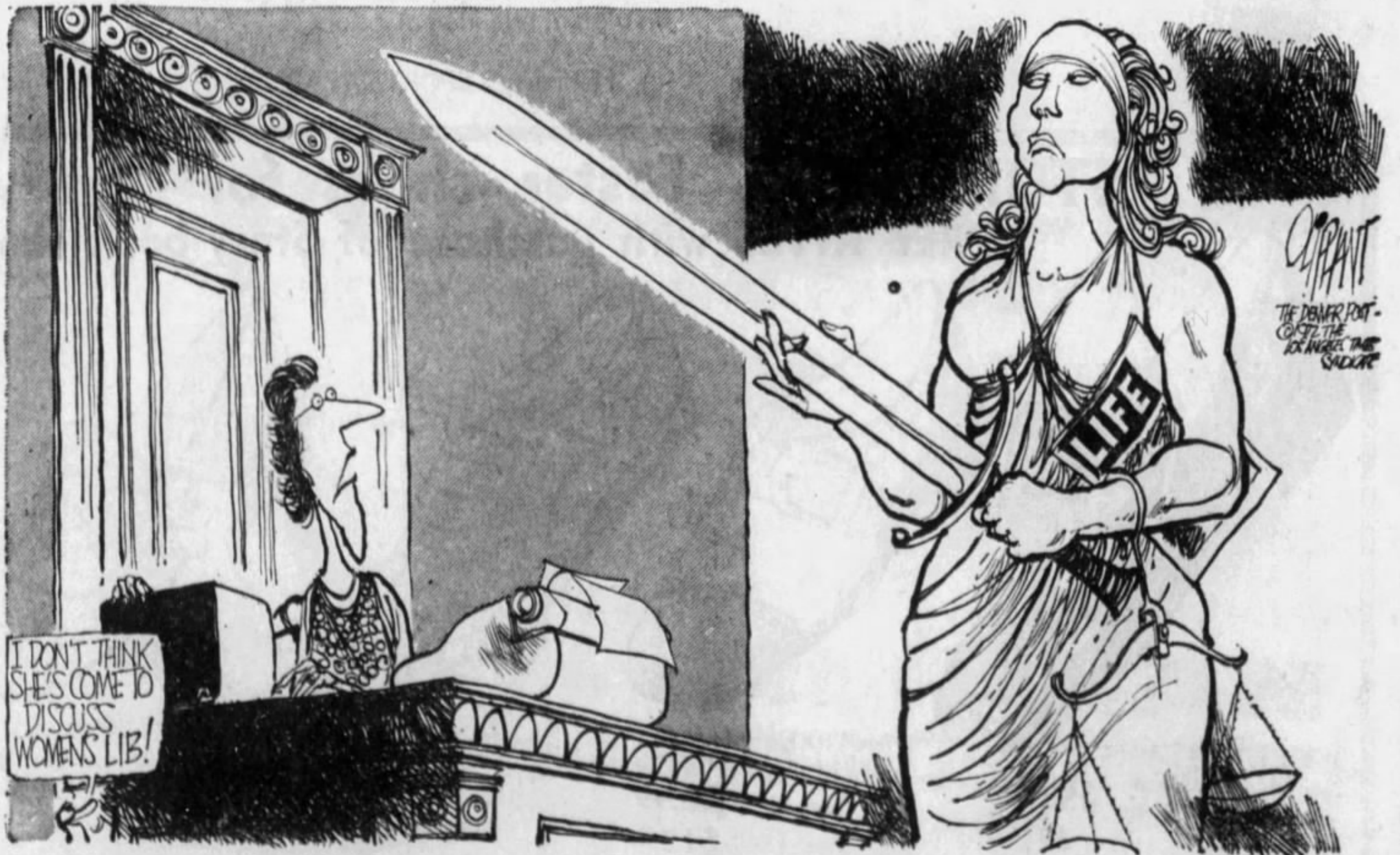
BY CARL RIBLET JR.

We vote in expectation that the office seekers we favor will soon after election do something to make us stand up and yell "hooray!" —like when they bumble into the usual whopping big mistake after warming us up with the usual strings of little ones. And they seldom disappoint us.

"The trouble with political jokes is that sometimes they get elected."
—Anonymous

Another way to stop pollution is to forbid the streets to autos not yet paid for. Besides cleaner air, the result would be a status symbol for debt. Disadvantaged citizens, lean and healthy and deprived of potbellies, spreading hips, shortness of breath and stumbling gait will be those who haven't paid up for the machine that compounds all the ills of man.

"Auto — a convenient place to sit out a traffic jam."
—Ingrid Clement



'Need I Ask What You Want to See Mr. Nixon About...?'