

## Need for frank, open discussion

In recent days, the Tribune has received several letters critical of its support of the proposed new Montana constitution. It is good that the people are thinking about the document which will be voted on at the primary election June 6. There is need for thorough and widespread discussion of the matter.

Certainly there are weaknesses in the proposed constitution and every citizen has the right to point out its inadequacies. Proponents of the new constitution also have a right and responsibility to bring out strong points of the document drafted by a body of 100 delegates in convention in Helena last winter.

In coming weeks the Tribune will devote considerable space to the proposed constitution. Our editorial position is clear — that we believe the proposed

constitution is a great improvement over the constitution under which Montana has lived since becoming a state in 1889.

While there are certain weaknesses in the proposed document, it provides a way, unlike the old one, for it to be amended on a more flexible basis.

It is encouraging that Montana citizens are beginning to think seriously about the June 6 election and the new constitution. We believe that when they compare its advantages and disadvantages, they will conclude the 1972 model would enable the state to face these changing times better prepared than under the archaic 1889 document, written to match conditions of the post Civil War era when there were no automobiles, airplanes, computers, intercontinental missiles or moon flights.

## Hard to find a convention site

If the Republicans shift their national convention to Miami Beach, as now seems likely, it will be the sixth time both parties have met in the same city the same year, but the first time the site for a convention has been changed after another city had been selected.

San Diego was the party's — and President Nixon's — first choice, but doubts about the city's financial ability and the inadequacy of the hall could not be erased.

Chicago has been the most popular convention city for both parties; the Republicans have met there 14 times and the Democrats, 10 times. Baltimore was the most popular city in the early years with both parties. The Democrats held six successive conventions there, from the first in 1832 to 1852. The Republicans held their first convention in Philadelphia in 1856, and have been back four times, while the Democrats have met there twice.

When Abraham Lincoln was nominated the first time, the Republicans met in Chicago's new Wigwam, a building erected expressly to house the convention. Another city which built a new hall especially to house a convention was Kansas City, where the Democrats met in 1900 in an auditorium hastily constructed after the existing one was destroyed by fire. William Jennings

Bryan was the nominee. The Republicans met in the same hall 28 years later to nominate Herbert Hoover.

Other cities which have hosted two conventions are Cleveland (Republicans, 1924, 1936); New York City (Democrats, 1868, 1924). San Francisco entertained the Democrats in 1920 and the Republicans in 1956 and 1964, and Cincinnati had the Republicans in 1876 and the Democrats in 1856 and 1880. Philadelphia had the Republicans five times and the Democrats twice; and St. Louis had the Republicans once and the Democrats four times but not since 1916 when Woodrow Wilson was renominated.

Cities which have hosted one convention are Atlantic City (Democrats in 1964); Charleston, S.C. (Democrats, 1860); Denver (Democrats, 1908); Los Angeles (Democrats, 1960 when John F. Kennedy was nominated); and Minneapolis (Republicans in 1892).

Air conditioning has been a boon to national political conventions. When the Republicans met in Baltimore in 1864 to renominate Lincoln, it was so hot the back door had to be kept open on the noisiest corner in the city. The proceedings included the shortest keynote address on record.



## James J. Kilpatrick

WASHINGTON—Several months ago, not long before the primary in New Hampshire, Sen. George McGovern called a press conference to release a 56-page statement of his views on national defense. Few persons were taking McGovern seriously then. The statement got a fair play in the press; it drew some editorial comment, pro and con; it faded from the news a few days hence.

McGovern went on to startle the experts in New Hampshire; he broke even in Florida; he swept to a solid victory in Wisconsin; and last week in Massachusetts he raced home with 52 per cent of the vote. At this writing, he leads the field in terms of committed delegates. A great many persons are taking him seriously now.

The Senator's carefully detailed statement on "an alternative national defense posture" thus invites our re-examination. It represents the candidate's considered thinking on an issue of great national importance.

**'... many experienced observers... see potential danger to the national security that McGovern does not see'**

This is what McGovern would recommend if he were elected President of the United States:

The Marine Corps now numbers roughly 207,000 men. McGovern would cut its strength to 140,000 by 1975, by reducing its three combat divisions to two.

HE WOULD RECOMMEND that the Air



Japan! ... Land of the Rising Yen!

Force be cut from 753,000 to 476,000. He would reduce the number of interceptors "by slightly more than half." For the time being, he would preserve the Minuteman missile system, but "plans to upgrade Minuteman should be discontinued." Deployment of the Safeguard system "should be halted." Prototype development of the B-1 bomber also "should be halted." Development of the F-15 "should be ended."

At a time when the Soviet Union is dramatically expanding its naval forces, a President McGovern would reduce the United States Navy from 605,000 to 471,000. He would cut the fleet from roughly 700 ships to 341. He has small use for aircraft carriers: He would cut their number to six. He envisions only 130 escort vessels; in this field "no further construction is required." He is doubtful that amphibious assaults ever will be required in the future; he would preserve only enough vessels to serve a single Marine expeditionary force.

THE ARMY has an authorized active force of 942,000 men. McGovern would cut this to 648,000. He recommends a limit of ten general purpose divisions, down 25 per cent from present levels. As part of its NATO commitment, the United States maintains four and one-third divisions in Europe; McGovern would cut this to two. He would of course withdraw all land and air forces from Indochina. "The remaining division in South Korea should be returned to the United States."

McGovern places the nation's "baseline" defense budget, excluding the costs of Vietnam, at \$75.5 billion in the current fiscal year. He would reduce this figure to \$54.8 billion by 1975.

IN JUSTIFICATION for these drastic reductions, the Senator makes a number of excellent points. He observes, for example, that the armed forces in 1969 were maintaining about one-fifth more colonels and captains, with a total force of 3.5 million men, than there were at the peak of World War II with a force of over 12 million.

He denounces, with great justification, the scandalous waste and bungled defense programs of recent years. He is convinced that his recommendations would produce armed forces "both leaner and tougher than those now in being."

YET MANY experienced observers—men who could not possibly be ridiculed as Colonel Blimps or as victims of paranoia—disagree strongly with the basic assumptions that underlie the McGovern recommendations. They see potential danger to the national security that McGovern does not see. They are concerned, in ways that McGovern is not concerned, at the Soviet Union's relentless gains in first-strike nuclear capability.

## Another summit



## Max Lerner

YOU UNDERSTAND nothing about Richard Nixon unless you understand the emotion he feels about the powers of the presidential office. This is in turn linked with what he feels—and Kissinger, too—about the global power balance. Success for the Hanoi offensive would upset that power balance by the effects it would have in every foreign ministry. Hence, Nixon's response of the B-52s. Hence, the Kissinger talks in Moscow, and hence, also, the return of Le Duc Tho to Paris and the decision to resume secret negotiations there, carried on earlier between Le Duc Tho and Kissinger.

My fellow commentator, James Reston, wrote a buoyant piece the other day on the "miracle" of Henry Kissinger, which came close to the beautification of St. Henry. I share his admiration for Kissinger's hard work, his long-range view of history, his diplomatic skills and whatever restraints he exercises on his more emotional boss. But, in fact, Nixon is the boss. It is his vision of power, history and the presidential office which, in the end, counts, for better or worse. It is not Kissinger but Nixon who is President. Kissinger's importance lies in Nixon's extraordinary use of him.

**'... the Russians decided not to stretch their luck'**

The most important (although not much noted) passage in Nixon's Vietnam speech was his use of the phrase "respect for the office of President of the United States." He has always wanted the word "respect" to be applied to himself. He knows (he has said) that he isn't loved or even liked, but he prefers to be respected. He has now transferred this from himself to the presidency.

It is a clever transfer. Instead of speaking of American power and prestige, which have become somewhat square terms, Nixon speaks of respect for the American presidency. But he speaks of it still in terms of the power the President uses and the prestige for America he evokes by that power.

Implicit in Nixon's phrasing is the resolve that America, with all its present headaches, must remain one of the world's great powers, if not the dominant one as it was under Truman and Eisenhower. There is a restructuring

of the world's power balance going on. It was first officially recognized in Nixon's Peking trip. It will be signed and sealed in the Moscow summit talks.

THERE IS A PENTAGON of great powers emerging as the dust of recent events settles—a pair of superpowers still at the top (United States and Russia), a triad of great powers just below (China, Japan, Western Europe). No one power can be dominant any more; nor can the two superpowers pretend to divide the world between them.

Each of the five has its weaknesses as well as its strengths. America's are its domestic discontents, as China's are its persisting internal convulsions. Russia's weakness is its preoccupation with the looming power of China. Japan's is its lack of a strong resource base at home, as well as its military reliance on America. Europe's weakness is its national rivalries (France is now beginning to forge ahead of Germany) which keeps its economic union from becoming a political union.

THE WORLD'S POWER balance has undergone changes through a series of recent events—the new alignment of the United States and China, India's and Russia's triumph in the Bangladesh war, the weakness of the American dollar, the wavering fortunes of the treaties between Germany and Eastern Europe, the maneuvers over the military balance in the Middle East. Nixon counted on a successful winding down of the Vietnamese war to firm up the power balance. The invasion by Hanoi unsettled his calculations. What made Nixon feel frustrated was that he could do little to stop it, or to undo Russia's role in helping to mount it.

At this point the Russians decided not to stretch their luck. They were in danger of paying too heavy a price for their Vietnam victory by losing the summit meeting with Nixon which they sorely need. Hence, the extraordinary four-day pre-Summit meeting of Kissinger with Brezhnev, each feeling out the other's mood and terms and taking his measure of the other. Hence, also, Nixon's sentence in his speech: "I shall find the same respect for the presidency" in Moscow as in Peking, which suggests Brezhnev's assurances to Kissinger of having to take America's formidable power into his calculations.

## Our readers' opinions

### The people are sovereign

It is discouraging to see your Sunday editorial and other blanket endorsements of the proposed state constitution with no mention ever being made about WHY it is good as compared to the present constitution.

To state that the present document is "a handicap to good government" and constitutes "colonial era shackles" without stating why this is the case is irresponsible editorializing. This does not help the people to vote intelligently on the proposals.

If denying the people the present constitutional right to vote on tax levy limitations and creation of indebtedness (as the proposed constitution does) is good government, then I misunderstand the meaning of the term. If prescribing in the constitution limitations and requirements relating to legislative procedure and activities (eliminated by the proposed draft) constitutes "colonial era shackles," I think the people deserve such in their constitution for, under our system, the people are sovereign—not the legislature.

"Power to the people" is a cry as old as man-

kind's struggle for freedom and self-government. The proposed draft limits the power of the people in the respects mentioned. The purported rights of the people to participate and to know are a delusion because of obviously stated restrictions on those rights in the proposed draft.

Deficiencies in other instances are not disclosed by the "official publication" now being distributed to the people or in other material coming from the convention or its delegates. The news media should help inform the voters in an impartial and objective way.

It is pleasing to me that the Montana Supreme Court has declared that the "education committee" of the convention is without authority to spend public funds to "educate" the electors. Such material as will now come from delegates has no "official" connotation. The voters have the wisdom to determine whether efforts and activities of delegates are informational or purely promotional. I trust the people to vote June 6 on the proposals with knowledge based on reasons, and not from pressure, endorsement or promotion by delegates or others. It is not an easy task the people face.

WESLEY W. WERTZ, Helena



## James Reston

NEW YORK—President Nixon is now approaching another critical decision in Vietnam! What to do if the enemy stops the invasion before or after the battle for the former Vietnamese capital of Hue, and offers to make a deal while Hanoi is in control of a large part of the north of South Vietnam?

There have been some reliable indications through the embassies in Paris and Washington that Hanoi and the National Liberation Front will do just that, and such a pause in the fighting would put the Nixon administration and the Thieu government in Saigon in a very awkward situation.

So long as the Communist offensive goes on—and it is making alarming progress—Nixon's policy is clear. He has stated that he would do "whatever is necessary," short of using atomic weapons or sending the American expeditionary force back into the battle on the ground—"until the North Vietnamese stop their offensive in South Vietnam."

But he has left himself an out. He has not said that he would continue his air and naval attacks until they pull back of the Demilitarized Zone and get their troops out of South Vietnam, but only "until the invasion stops." What then if it stops, with Hanoi in substantial control of the north or even of Hue?

**'... Hanoi will probably call for a cease-fire at Hue ... and ask for a compromise settlement'**

"The only thing we have refused to do," Nixon said in his last Vietnam policy statement on April 26, "is to accede to the enemy's demand to overthrow the lawfully constituted government of South Vietnam and to impose a Communist dictatorship in its place."

But when Le Duc Tho of the North Vietnamese politburo got back to Paris on April 30 to re-open the negotiations, he denied that he was demanding a Communist government in Saigon.

"In South Vietnam," he said in a formal statement "what we want is a government of national harmony. . . . We in no way want to impose a 'Communist regime' in South Vietnam such as Mr. Nixon has fabricated, but our people is also determined not to permit the American administration to establish a puppet power in its pay."

WE HAVE HEARD all this before, but with the enemy invasion cutting South Vietnam in half and threatening Hue, the alternatives before the President are hard and even ominous. The farther south the enemy penetrates, the closer the armies get together and the more they move into populous civilian areas, where the President has to risk hitting the ARVN and the South Vietnamese people.

He can insist on fighting the battle through, relying on the South Vietnamese and American air and naval power to smash the invasion and drive the enemy back of the DMZ, or, if the enemy pauses and offers to negotiate at Hue, he can agree to negotiate for a coalition government in Saigon, with the Communists and without General Thieu.

IT IS A HARD BARGAIN, but he is probably going to have to choose between fighting even harder while he withdraws his ground forces and negotiating a new coalition government in Saigon. Nixon has been up against many hard decisions since he entered the White House, but this may be the hardest of all, especially since he has to try to reconcile the tough moral line he took at Secretary Connally's ranch in Texas, with his mission to Moscow this month to negotiate "a generation of peace," which is his main presidential election argument.

In the middle of his first term in the White House, Nixon offered to negotiate a settlement on the basis of the hard political and geographical facts: Who was in control of what in South Vietnam? And now Hanoi seems to be testing that proposition.

NIXON GAVE THREE reasons in his April 26 statement for continuing the battle: "First, to protect our remaining American forces. Second, to permit continuation of our withdrawal program. And third, to prevent the imposition of a Communist regime on the people of South Vietnam against their will, with the inevitable bloodbath that would follow for hundreds of thousands who have dared to oppose Communist aggression."

Hanoi's answer to this, from Le Duc Tho in Paris, was that his government would guarantee the protection of the remaining American forces, and the release of the American prisoners, and that it didn't want to impose a government on Saigon, but that it "demanded" the "immediate resignation" of Nguyen Van Thieu as head of the Saigon regime, and a change of policy in Saigon by a new coalition government, including the Communists.

NOTHING COULD BE harder for Nixon to swallow, but he may have to swallow it or fight even harder than before by the end of this month. The danger at the moment is that Hanoi is doing so well in the drive toward Hue that it may think it can smash its way to a military victory and not only demoralize and defeat Saigon but humiliate Washington.

Hopefully, they will not take this gamble, because nobody in Washington, or Moscow or Peking, let alone in Hanoi, can calculate what Nixon will do if he is trapped. This point has been emphasized through private channels to everybody on the other side, and apparently they got the point.

SO HANOI WILL probably call for a cease-fire at Hue and proclaim an alternative "government" of South Vietnam there, and ask for a compromise settlement and a coalition government in Saigon without General Thieu.

What then will Nixon do? This is the question that is being debated privately in Washington these days, and the answer may very well determine the outcome of the war and influence the presidential election in November.

## Today's quote

In a society in which we have assumed woman's place is in the home, black woman's place has been in the white woman's kitchen. To many black women, liberation means being in their own kitchen supported by their own men.—Dr. Gerda Lerner, history professor and authoress of a book on black women in America.

## Great Falls Tribune

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