

GOP feathers fly

Moderates sound off against 'con-con'

By Tim Richard
staff writer

What is a Republican "moderate" compared to a "conservative"?

One way to tell them apart is their approach to the so-called "balanced budget amendment" to the U.S. Constitution.

A group of Michigan Republican moderates, holding their own issues convention in Bay City recently, pronounced aloud as Senate Majority Leader John Engler said his GOP caucus is "committed to a constitutional convention" to adopt the balanced budget amendment.

But they were enthused when former state Rep. Ruth McNamee of Birmingham publicly chewed out Engler, their luncheon speaker, for wanting to open a can of political worms.

McNamee gained national attention in 1984 when she closed her 10-year legislative career by casting the deciding committee vote against reporting out a federal balanced budget with a con-con attached.

THE MICHIGAN House last week showed divisions in both parties as it voted on a balanced budget amendment. Two separate versions failed to get the needed two-thirds (74 votes) majority.

Opposing a balanced budget amendment even without con-con were nine Republicans and 46 Democrats. These included such Republican moderates as Lyn Banks of Livonia, David Honigman of West Bloomfield, Judith Miller of Birmingham (McNamee's successor) and Shirley Johnson of Royal Oak.

Significantly, Banks, Honigman and Miller all attended the "mod-con" meeting in Bay City; Johnson was on the program but had to cancel out.



Ruth McNamee
opposed to con-con

Area Republicans favoring it, and thus in the conservative camp on this issue, were W.V. Brotherton of Farmington, Mat Dunaskis of Lake Orion, Gregory Gruse of Troy, Gerald Law of Plymouth Township, and Gordon Sparks of Troy.

MODERATES AND conservatives have been battling it out within GOP ranks at least since the flatfight between Teddy Roosevelt and William Howard Taft forces at the 1890 convention — also in Bay City. This year's mod-con was chaired by Ellen Tempelin, a former state vice chairman from Bloomfield Township.

They're expected to duke it out again in 1986, with moderates tending to line up behind Vice President George Bush and conservatives behind Rep. Jack Kemp of New York State.

In the meantime, however, moderates warned conservatives not to



Sen. John Engler
GOP caucus "committed"

drift too far right on issues and not to demand total ideological conformity from them. Dorothy Beardmore, a newly elected State Board of Education member from Rochester, summed it up when she pleaded for "tolerance by the Far Right and of the Far Right."

LAST WEEKEND, the political heirs of Teddy Roosevelt were turned on by McNamee, who described herself as "a team player and a good Republican" despite her 1984 vote against the balanced budget amendment.

"The cards and letters I received showed little understanding of, and no respect for, our Constitution," McNamee said. "Never in our 200 years has our Constitution been amend-

ed by a constitutional convention."

Chief objection to the con-con process, she said, was that single-issue groups and right wingers have "a long list of agenda items" to add to the Constitution.

On their lists are the line-item veto, the human life amendment (prohibiting abortion), the gold standard, prayer in public schools, a parliamentary system and gun control.

McNamee said constitutional scholars agree that, if a con-con were called, "there would be no legal mechanism for limiting the agenda."

SEN. ENGLER held his ground.

"Others on the other side have given a great deal of thought to it, too, and come to the opposite conclusion. It can be limited to one issue — absolutely," he told McNamee politely.

But Engler agreed with moderates on another point: that it was wrong for conservatives to consider censuring freshman Congressman Paul Henry of Grand Rapids for voting against the Reagan Administration on the MX missile issue.

ALTHOUGH THE moderates conference in Bay Valley Inn was attended by only about 60 people, a pollster told them moderates loom large in the electorate.

Al Mann of Marketing Resource Group said that as of last November 29 percent of Michigan voters regarded themselves as conservatives, 46 percent as moderates and 19 percent as liberals.



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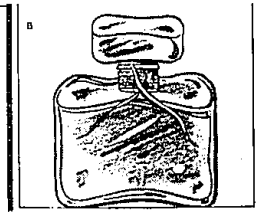
Benefit to aid infants at risk

To mark its 60th year of service, Barst Human Services is planning an event to raise money for its Barst Respite Care Center for infants at risk of being abused or neglected.

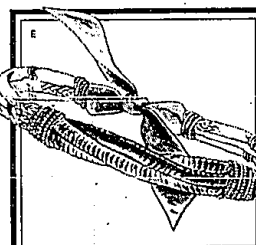
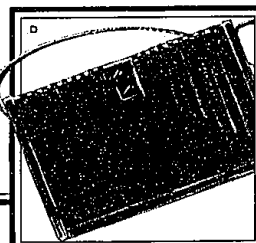
Friends of Barst is sponsoring The Swashbucklers at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, May 11, in the State Theater (formerly

Palm State) in downtown Detroit. Featured will be the epic film "Captain Blood" starring Errol Flynn.

Cost is \$25, which includes the wine reception, entertainment, dessert buffet and dancing. For ticket information call 833-1525.



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B. Estée Lauder's crisp White Linen, a fragrance to remind her of your love, year-round, 1/4 oz. Perfume, 40.00 1.75 oz. Parfum Spray, 25.00 Fragrances
C. A lingerie set you know must be Christian Dior. In Coral Mist: camisole drenched with lace and ribbon, 30.00 Matching petticoat with Dior logo, 28.00 Both P.S.M.L. in Satin Remarque® of nylon/rayon/acetate/polyester. Daywear
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