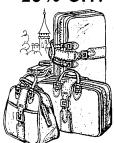
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# George Romney talks about citizen concern

By BARBARA UNDERWOOD
BIRMINGHAM—The most potent influence in society today is the concreted action of concerned, informed citizens. George Romney said Monday facing perhaps the smallest audience of his career in public life.
Romney, chairman of the National Center for Voluntary Action, spoke at the first fall meeting of the Birmingham Citizens Committee. About 40 persons attended.
The committee was formed last year to serve as a forum for discussion of issues of community-wide interest.

"We are rapidly moving toward a government-controlled society." Romney said. "If we continue it is only a question of time until we create a government account of the society instead of ernment-dominated society instead of a people-controlled society.

"IT IS IMPORTANT to reverse that trend with citizen groups." Romney

"It is fair Witches and the continued.

He credited the League of Women Voters with being the organization that "comes closest to doing what is needed."

He also cited a change in the League's national by-laws which now makes mine eligible for membership and he is a member. "I am comvinced that if we are going to preserve a free society more citizens have to take an interest at local, state and national levels in defining problems, understanding facts and discussing solutions." Homney said.

and discussing solutions, frommey such a reliable parties to provide parties to the political parties to the film about an enlightened electronic film and the political process, from a result of the limitations of the political process, frommey said.

"I HAVE CONCLUDED as a result of my experience that we have been expecting too much from political parties." he continued, "but that is not from any lack of conviction that we need two strong political parties. "They play an indispensable, vital tole but we need to look at what we can do to strengthen the parties and

political procedures and overcome out—
dependency on a - crisis to achieve
basic reforms." he said.
Romney is convinced this can only
be done by citizens' organizations at local and state levels—the ultimate
source of power in a free society."
The function of political parties is to
select competing candidates from
which volers can choose and who compact for the responsibility to govern.
"To win, a candidate has to win the
most votes and they can't discuss conroversial issues without risking a loss
of votes so candidates ignore controversial issues," Romney said.

HE RECALLED that in 1972 neither

troversial issues," Romney said.

HE RECALLED that in 1972 neither Richard Nixor for George McGovern discussed inflation or the plight of cities and "both conditions were worse when Nixon left office than when he took more than 1976 the contract of the c

MOST PEOPLE are inclined to think a strong two-party system will educate people but it does not achieve basic reform without political crisis to bring it about. Romney said. When the country is faced with a great political crisis people tend to

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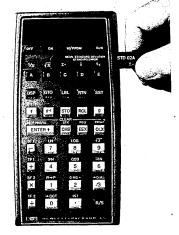
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