

# Donn Hopkins Requests Constitutional Convention

## THE REQUEST

The Honorable H. A. "Red" Boucher  
Lieutenant Governor

Sir:  
This letter is written to reaffirm my recent oral request that you place on the General Election ballot this November, the question, "Shall there be a Constitutional Convention?" as you are permitted to do under the existing Constitution, and to explain further my reasons for the request.

Only through substantial changes in the Alaska Constitution will the people gain effective control of their State Government, and regain for the Nation some of the liberty that made America great. Changes which I favor and would like to have considered at a Constitutional Convention include the following:

1. Create a voters branch of government that reserves to the voters the power of forming general policies for government actions. The Governor and the Legislature now perform that function, with little input from the voters.

2. Create a new, small unit of government in which all active voters could meet on a face-to-face basis to discuss issues, reach decisions, and take actions that affect their geographic area, and to provide a training ground for elective office.

3. Limit the time one person may hold any one executive or legislative office to four years, to help fight political power addiction and bring new ideas and energy into government.

4. Replace the two house legislature with a single forty-member body to save money, speed the action, and permit easier control by the people.

5. Limit a term in the Legislature to one year (with the right of any one person to be elected four times.)

6. Require that the Governor and Lieutenant Governor be elected by a majority of the votes cast. The current requirement of only receiving the most votes would, this year, with three teams running, permit 34 per cent of the voters to elect the Governor and Lieutenant Governor; with four teams running, 26 per cent could theoretically decide who wins.

7. Prohibit most of the secrecy that now exists in government. Elected and appointed officials and civil servants often keep public information from the public through the use of secret meetings and files and by not publishing or otherwise limiting access to assembled information.

8. Guarantee the right of every minor and adult to a basic education of equal quality and to education in a needed skill. This will help reduce many social problems, and also the great waste of human resources.

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## RIGHTS

are acquired and kept by physical force. This is not the same as saying what is physically possible through force, is correct or just or right in a moral sense. But, without physical force there are no rights, moral or otherwise.

Therefore each citizen should be physically strong, trained for combat and well armed.

Each citizen should be able to defend himself against another, attacking citizen. The general populous should be able to defend itself against a police force over which it might lose political control. The Nation should be able to defend itself against the potential physical force of other nations.

Toward these ends I favor a public program to train every citizen for combat and I favor no restrictions on small arms ownership.

## CITIES

are for people: the people who live there, first; then, those who work, visit or invest there.

I believe the people who live in a city should be permitted to run their city any way they see fit. It is up to the residents to keep the workers, visitors and investors happy, if they want to.

But — there should be enough cities in Alaska to ensure real

competition between them for residents, workers, visitors and investors. Only by such competition is there assurance that Alaska will have the best cities that are possible.

Therefore, I favor State Government promotion and assistance in establishing new cities throughout Alaska, in choice locations for living and where the cities can have efficient economies. Comparable promotion and assistances should be offered to existing cities.

## MONOPOLY

of a resource is bad, whether that resource is knowledge, an idea, money, a raw material, labor, or means of production; because monopoly usually results in waste of the resource through either non-use or inefficient use. The end results are a weaker economy and a lower standard of living.

There are too many monopolies. The security they afford must give way to orderly competition. Reform is urgently needed in the laws which regulate adult education, use of patents, financial institutions, labor organizations, and the size of corporations.

I think the Alaska State Government can help by reviewing and changing, as necessary, its own laws and by working for needed changes in Federal laws.

9. Allow parents to select their children's primary and high schools from among accredited public and private schools. This use of free education would promote greater academic excellence by fostering competition in the education industry, and would give parents much greater control over their children's educations.

10. Restructure the entire justice system to reduce crime and provide equal justice and greater liberty for all persons.

Our Alaska Constitution is the most basic of the State's many plans for human affairs. It may be one of the best in the nation, but it was obsolete from the very beginning. We need to change that plan as soon as possible to bring it up to date, based upon today's knowledge, conditions, and desires.

Very truly yours,  
Donn Hopkins

## THE ANSWER

Dear Mr. Hopkins:

I have received in the Lieutenant Governor's Office your letter of August 1 requesting placement on the General Election ballot this November of the question, "Shall there be a Constitutional Convention?" According to the Alaska Constitution, Article XIII, Section 3, the Lieutenant Governor is charged with placing this question on the ballot each ten years. This question was last placed on the general election ballot in 1972, and a majority of the votes cast on the question were in the negative (55,389-NO; 29,192-YES). Therefore, the question will not be entered on the general election ballot this year.

Lieutenant Governor Boucher will be reviewing your letter and comments soon.

Best regards.

Sincerely yours,  
Lawrence W. Jones  
Administrative Assistant

## THE CONSTITUTION

"If during any ten-year period a constitutional convention has not been held, the lieutenant governor shall place on the ballot for the next general election the question: 'Shall there be a Constitutional Convention?' If a majority of the votes cast on the question are in the negative, the question need not be placed on the ballot until the end of the next ten year period. If a majority of the votes cast on the question are in the affirmative, delegates to the convention shall be chosen at the next regular statewide election, unless the legislature provides for the election of the delegates at a special election . . . (Sec. 3, Art. XIII)

## BIGNESS

is bad, usually. Big corporations, big labor unions, big governments, big schools, big cities — all have difficulty in treating their people as people, as human beings, as individuals. Many people are lost in the machinery of bigness. They become less than humane. They cease to behave as individuals. They are helpless people in a helpless crowd.

We must start to think small. We must reshape our institutions to a human scale. We must take charge of our lives, and spend them wisely.

I think Alaska State Government can help us do this reshaping.

## BEAUTY

is for everyone. It is much of what makes life worthwhile. Pity the beholder who has no eye for beauty. His truism might read, "Nothing is in the eye of the beholder."

I believe that for beauty to exist the beholder must "see" order in a series of pleasing sensations. Order alone, without pleasure, results in fascination. For a beautiful experience to continue, and remain beautiful, there must be continually new discoveries or order. This often occurs with discoveries of finer and finer detail in the subject, or of different kinds of order. Thus there is an element of mystery in a beautiful experience.

The following editorial appeared in the  
PIONEER ALL-ALASKA WEEKLY,  
August 2, 1974

## A Candidate With Ideas

In our July 12 issue, we presented a list of the candidates that had filed for statewide office and for the legislature. Inadvertently we made a king-size goof-up.

We left out one candidate, a very important candidate, Fairbanksan Donn Hopkins who is running for the gubernatorial nomination on the Republican ticket.

The goof-up is horrible because, for one thing, Hopkins was the first candidate to file for Governor way back about January. And another thing that makes our faces here at the Weekly quite red is the fact that he has been advertising in our paper since he filed.

And then when we came to listing all the candidates, we left him off the list.

Although we know this omission is almost unpardonable, we would like to explain how it happened. Being extremely busy, we took a shortcut. Instead of trying to get the list from the Lieutenant Governor's office, we simply picked up a list of candidates printed in another paper, changed the style a little to make it easier to read, and let it go at that.

Well, to our dismay, we find that not only that newspaper but practically every newspaper in the state which ran a listing of candidates, left off Hopkins name.

All we can say is we do hope he will accept our apologies. We will try to be more diligent next time.

Hopkins is indeed a candidate and waging a creditable campaign. He doesn't have a huge amount of money to spend. But then he is not utilizing the traditional approach.

His campaign is one of ideas, with emphasis on creative solutions to old problems and current issues, instead of images and rhetoric.

Unfortunately, because Hopkins is not using the traditional approach, does not appear to have organizational backing, and is not well financed, he is not being taken as a serious candidate.

One thing we can safely say. Many of his contentions as a professional planner over the past few years—of what we should or should not do—have in the end proved sound, although at the time they were not taken seriously.

He was like a John the Baptist crying in the wilderness when he pleaded that we not make a huge addition to the Municipal Utilities Power Plant in the heart of the city, pointing to the air pollution problem, he urged that generating facilities be placed away from the population. But local leaders went ahead willy-nilly and that power plant is putting tremendous amounts of vapor and particulates in the air and causing our ice fog problem to grow steadily worse in the wintertime. It's one of the most serious mistakes this community has made in the past decade.

He urged that we attempt to widen our streets in the downtown core area and press for new roads to relieve congestion. But his suggestions and recommendations fell on deaf ears. Now, with the frustrating traffic congestion downtown, perhaps some of those city fathers wish they had cleaned the wax out of their antennas.

You may not agree with Hopkins' ideas. You may not vote for him. But we suggest that you listen to what he has to say. He is one of the few candidates to present some new approaches and solutions. And he is one of the few candidates that will give you a straight answer to a question.

## Experience Summary for Donn Hopkins

**EMPLOYMENT IN ALASKA:** Alaska Department of Economic Development, Director of Planning and Research, 2½ years; Fairbanks North Star Borough, Director of Planning, 2 years; Cities of Fairbanks and Nenana, planning consultant, 8½ months; Chena (a small community), owner and builder from 1963.

**EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE ALASKA:** Planning and Research for government agencies, 6½ years; U.S. Navy, weather forecasting, 2 years; Labor, surveying, and social work as a young man.

**COLLEGE EDUCATION:** 8½ academic years in fields of engineering, weather forecasting, architecture, city planning, and business administration. Bachelor of Science degree, 1946, California Institute of Technology, Master of City Planning degree, 1956, University of California.

### Why not hire a professional public servant?

### Please vote in the Primary; the General may be too late.