

Revised

CON-CON PRESIDENT SUMS UP

by Herman T. Guerrero,
President, Third Northern Marianas Constitutional Convention

I want to thank the Pacific Star for affording the Post-Convention Committee space in your columns to present its views. The Star has been very accommodating, and we appreciate it.

I am taking up just a little more space on this day before the election to look at the most often-repeated reasons given to voters for avoiding a decision on the reforms proposed by the elected Con-Con delegates.

THE LEGISLATURE WON'T DO IT

Some people tell you that the Legislature will make the necessary changes or will propose constitutional changes on its own, so you don't need to support the package offered by the Con-Con delegates. I served in the Legislature, and I can tell you that is highly unlikely. Most legislative initiatives the Legislature has proposed over the past 20 years are to raise its own budget. That is unlikely to change.

THE AMENDMENTS ARE NOT HARD TO UNDERSTAND

Some people tell you that the proposed amendments are hard to understand or are confusing, so maybe you should just play it safe and vote no. But these amendments are not hard to understand. You can do it. Just read the material and take your time. If you have questions, ask them. Call us at the Post-Con offices, 235-0842. Ask your relatives who have been elected to public office. Ask people you trust. And then make up your own mind.

THE 19 AMENDMENTS REPRESENT PRACTICAL CHOICES

Some people will tell you that there are good things in each amendment, but they don't like the way they are packaged together. They want to pick apart what they like and discard what they don't like. But each amendment is designed to make a group of related changes to just one article. The Con-Con delegates have proposed new ways of doing things. A new way often requires several related changes. Balance the good things against the things that you might be concerned about. And then decide if there is more good than otherwise.

THE FUTURE IS NOT SO UNCERTAIN

Some people will tell you to vote "no" on everything because the future is just too uncertain and we can't be sure what will happen under the new amendments. One thing I can tell you, my friends, and that is what will happen if we keep on going the way we are. Think about deficits, the cost of government, the quality of education in our public schools, the swollen public employment rolls of the municipal governments, the snarls in our land system, and the gambling questions that face us, just to name a few. If we don't start doing something positive to

solve these problems instead of just talking about them, our future is certainly not so good.

THE CON-CON DELEGATES THANK YOU

We who served in the Third Northern Marianas Constitutional Convention are grateful to you, the voters, who have given us your input, come to our public meetings, read our publications, and asked good questions. We in the Convention are proud of our proposed amendments and proud of our Commonwealth status that gives us the right to control our own destiny. PLEASE COME OUT AND VOTE ON SATURDAY, MARCH 2.