Constitutional Convention
To Begin Work Tomorrow

Example of what a constitution might not be.

The Louisiana Constitution has been criticized by good government groups for its limitations on the authority of the governor and the legislature to carry out the affairs of the state, and for the specifics included about salaries, taxes, and local affairs which require numerous revisions with changing times.

Eight Committees

The Constitutional Convention of 1973 has organized the delegates into eight substantive committees which cover all phases of Louisiana government, and four committees to handle the procedures of the convention. The substantive committees are named: Bill of Rights and Elections; Executive Department; Legislative Powers and Functions; Judiciary; Local and Parochial Government; Revenue, Finance and Taxation; Education and Welfare; and Natural Resources and Environment.

The convention has authority to isolate certain issues about which there are irreconcilable differences among the delegates and about which the public has strong contradictory feeling. These may be presented to the voters on the ballot as alternate provisions. Authorities suggest no more than 6 alternatives and strongly recommend submitting only issues of real constitutional import to the exclusion of trivial matters.

Of the 13 new constitutions submitted to voters of the various states during the past 10 years, six were rejected — Arkansas, Maryland, Rhode Island, New York, New Mexico, and North Dakota.

Participation Vital

The experience of other states where new constitutions have recently been submitted indicates that the participation of the public is vital in order to produce a new constitution that expresses the will of the people and one which the voters will adopt at the polls.

All sessions of the Constitutional Convention are open to the public and it is anticipated that the convention will break at intervals and meet in committee in the manner of the Legislature. The public will be permitted to testify at these meetings at the discretion of the committee chairman and many committees have openly invited suggestions from the public.