P.S. to **the** NEWS

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by PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY
Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002
Phone: 618-462-5415

D.C. REPRESENTATION

The advocates of a new constitutional amendment popularly known as "D.C. Rep" have started off their campaign for ratification using the-end-justifies-any-means tactics. Their approach is, we want this constitutional amendment right now, and we'll change any rules that stand in our way of getting it!

To thr surprise of many who didn't believe it had a chance, on August 22 the Senate approved by two votes a proposed constitutional amendment to treat the District of Columbia "as though it were a state," giving it two Senators and at least one Congressman. D.C. Rep is now i+earch of ratification by the necessar 38 states. Pennsylvania and Michigan are expected to consider it this month.

California was the only legislature in session at the time Congress completed action. So the principal D.C. Rep lobbyist, Walter E. Fauntroy, and Washington City Council Chairman Sterling Tucker flew to Sacramento to urge inmediate ratification.

All legislative bodies have rules of procedure. This enables them to conduct government business in an orderly and fair way that empowers the majority at the same time that it protects the rights of the minority. Rules of procedure are usually adopted at the beginning of each session so that they are not tainted by prejudice for or against any particular legislation.

Among the rules of the California legislaturejs .one that says that a new bill may not be heard by a conmittee within 30 days of its introduction, • Another requires any conmittee to give four days' notice of a hearing on a bill. Such rules are designed to allow both sides time to present their arguments, and for the public and the press either to attend the hearing or to notify their legislators of their wishes.

Now comes the D.C. Rep lobbying twosome from Washington, Fauntroy and Tucker,• demanding that the rules be waived so their special-interest amendment can be passed

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inmediately. They urged ratification before the California legislature adjourned - without a hearing, without debate, and before Californians realized what their legis lators were voting on or why.

D.C. Rep was stalled after some legislators refused to lie down and let the steamroller ride over their rules, nd California adjourned without ratifying the amendment. Some amendment supporters shouted "double-cross." But why the rush? States have seven years to vote the D.C. Rep amendment-up or down.

Since the U.S. Const)tution (including all ratified amendments) is the supreme law of our land, there is more reason, not less, for state legislatures to take their time, hear both sides of the issue, and find out what their constituents want. The whole idea of ratifying a constitutional amendment without due consideration is an insult to constitutional integrity.

Walter Fauntroy has been a non-voting delegate in the U.S. House since 1970. His main activity has been to lobby the D.C. Rep constitutional amendment through Congress. He modestly describes his success as the result of his "masterpiece of strategy." He is a classic example of how an "inside" lobbyist can be specially effective in persuading Congress to pass special-interest legislation.

Now Delegate Fauntroy is making it his mission to lobby the state legislatures for ratification. Probably he intuitively recognizes that his best chance for ratification lies in persuading states to vote on the amendment quickly, without holding an1 hearings.

Fauntroy is already making plans to be elected in 1980 as the first U.S. Senator from Washington, D.C. If that happens, he can then spend all his time lobbying for bigger federal spending, higher wages for federal employees, and an expanded federal bureaucracy. After all, the federal government will be the largest "industry" in his "state," and federal employees will be by far his largest bloc of constituents. Isn't it the job of Senators to represent the interests of their constituents?

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