Idaho Democrats favor moc

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The political pulse

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The lengthy 18-page platform and resolutions approved by the Idaho Democratic Party at its biennial state convention last weekend at Pocatello took a rather moderate tone on key issues, and in many cases, could be construed as liberal. It appeared to provide a little of something for everybody.

The vast majority of delegates showed they wanted to follow a progressive line in opposition to a right wing trend that now appears permeating the nation and the state. They must be commended for letting voters know where they stand, rather than taking ambigious positions.

This doesn't mean that party candidates need to accept planks of the platforms or some of the resolutions in their individual campaigns. Most of the platform planks and resolutions could have just as well not been written, but there are a number of a more controversial and meaningful nature that define the party's position.

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Passed by an unanimous vote was the River of No Return Wilderness Bill authored by Sen. Frank Church, certain to be a key issue in the senatorial fight between Church and Republican Steve Symms.

This plank stated briefly but pointedly that the party "endorses the passage of the River of No Return Wilderness Bill as sponsored by Sen. Frank Church, which reflects a sensible balance between development of our natural resources and preservation of our wilderness values."

This bill has been approved by the Senate-House conferees and is almost certain of becoming law during this session of Congress.

The convention's Natural Resource Committee under the leadership of Rep. Roger Guernsey, Boise, also took stands on a number of other controversial issues.

By its phrasing, the party opposes the Sagebrush Rebellion, stating "we believe public lands should remain in public ownership."

It added "the party supports increased coooperation among local, state and federal agencies to give Idaho people greater voice in the management of those lands." It also urged speedy conclusion of the land exchange program between federal and state governments.

The resolution also adopted, with just a few dissenting voices, enlargement of the Birds of Prey, adding that state lands within the area could be exchanged for suitable federal land. This also may become a prime campaign issue.

Another plank, however, supported "genuine multiple use of BLM and Forest Service lands; preservation of certain unique areas from industrial use and a sustained yield policy for lumbering in the public forests."

The only proposed plank that tasted defeat was one that called for legislation mandating at least five cents deposit on all beverage containers. Debate indicated this was rejected mostly because all beverage containers" is such a general term, that it could apply to barrels and even milk.

The party supports any extension of the Pure Water Act until federal agencies can agree among themselves, and recommended priority funding for pollution control.

A provision which was passed but encountered debate and a half dozen dissenting voters called for a $10,000 loss from farming or ranching be the maximun a corporation or others can deduct on income tax. Debates by Lin Hintze, Mackay farmer, said this was aimed against a chain firm at Mackay which holds a monopoly on farm produce sales and is harming farmers of that area.

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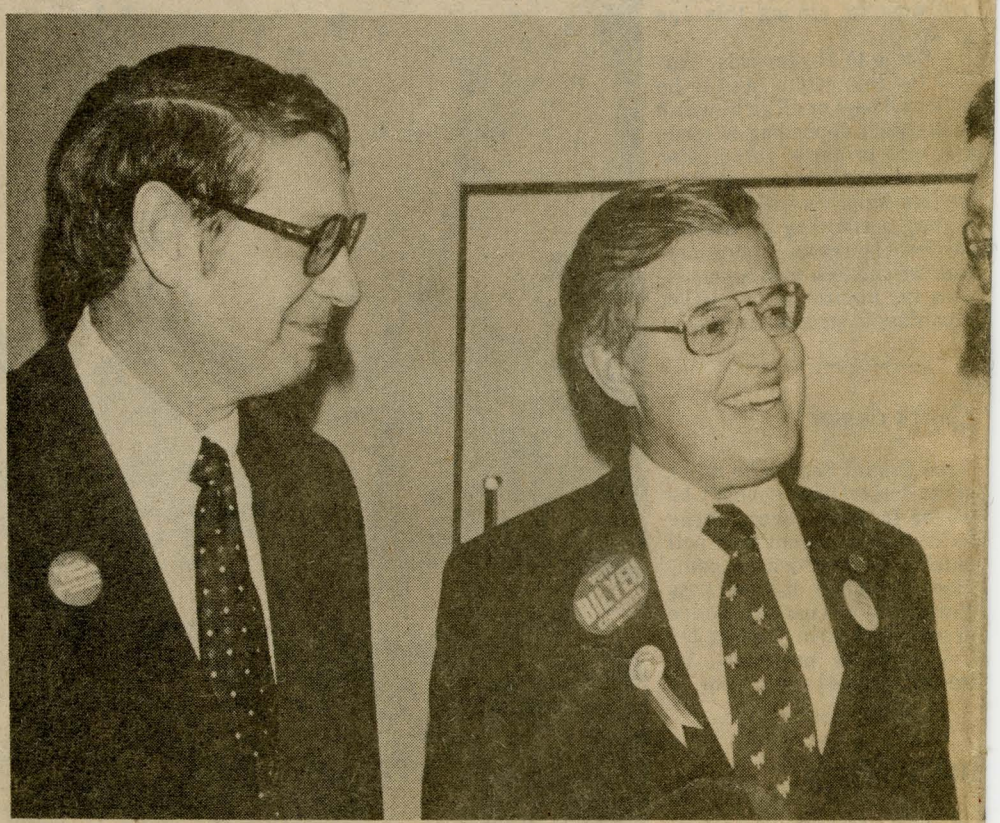
The highly controversial Equal Rights Amendment passed by a 3-1 voice vote after little debate, which was a mild surprise. The debate centered on the fact ERA is long overdue, against the plea that such a plank would harm party candidates. The plank actually places the party on record as re-affirming the action of the Idaho Legislature in its ratification of the ERA.

Resolutions took a strong pro-labor stand, backing secret collective bargaining; a healthy and safe workplace, which could be interpreted as a lefthanded support of OSHA; opposed peace-time registration for military draft; establishment of the electoral college, and not to take any legal or other action to prevent an independent candidate, such as John Anderson, to go on the ballot in any state.

Other of some of the more important planks of some 50 passed included support for tuition-free higher education, local education control,increased funding for a state library system and teacher salaries, teacher collective bargaining, and favor a concept for a simple majority

Election eye . . .



Top Idaho Democrats

POCATELLO — Three leading Democrats at the Idaho Democratic State Convention in Pocatello last weekend were from left, Wayne P. Fuller, Pocatello, state chairman; U.S. Sen. Frank Church and Gov. John addresses.