

DELEGATE WHEATLEY: Mr. Chairman, I yield five minutes to Delegate Sosnowski.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Sosnowski.

DELEGATE SOSNOWSKI: Mr. Chairman, section 5 allows each local governmental unit through a referendum to determine whether the school board shall be elected or appointed.

Although this section is free, it represents a nucleus of the cells of education in our State, the nucleus being the local school board.

The vitality of that cell determines the vitality of education. There should be no doubt as to the power of each subdivision to determine what kind of cell will survive and grow best in the environment presented by that particular local governmental unit.

This section does not advocate elected school boards nor does it advocate appointed school boards. This section does something far more significant than recommend one type of selection over another.

Rather than that, it gives to the people of each local governmental unit the prerogative to make that decision for themselves. It gives them the right to decide for themselves just what type of school board will best serve their need.

This Convention has discussed at length and has pretty well gone on record as advocating stronger local government. The adoption of section 5 would certainly be a step in that direction, allowing each unit of local government the right to decide the manner by which its school board is selected or elected.

It is the realistic way in which this Convention might help local governments to strengthen themselves. It is wrong for this body or any body to dictate to every unit of local government throughout the State the type of school board it must have. This would leave no room for the expression of differences that exist in local government. It would place all local government in a straight jacket of sameness, leaving them unable to decide for themselves what is best for themselves.

This Convention can have no more nobler purpose than outlining a structure of education so that all the citizens of the State of Maryland can realize their full potential, thus allowing the State of Maryland to realize its full potential.

In closing, I would like to quote the late John F. Kennedy quoting H. G. Wells.

"Civilization is a race between education and catastrophe." It is up to you to determine the winner.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Lord.

For what purpose does Delegate Mason rise?

DELEGATE MASON: Mr. Chairman, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Clerk will ring the quorum bell. Keep it ringing, please. All right.

The absence of a quorum has been suggested.

Roll call.

Have all delegates answered roll call?

*(There was no response.)*

The Clerk will record the roll call and also record Delegate James Clark present.

A quorum being present, the Chair recognizes Delegate Lord.

DELEGATE LORD: Mr. Chairman, I will yield three minutes to Delegate Lucille Maurer.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Maurer.

DELEGATE MAURER: Mr. Chairman, I believe that the matter of the governments of local school systems should be left to the General Assembly to be covered by law. While I actually agree with the substance of the majority view and I even appreciate particularly their concern and interest and effort with respect to local school board members, we sometimes feel as if we are forgotten even until we are out on the local school board matters, but I support the minority amendment not just because this is something that is unspecific. It is specific in the Majority Report and in fact it would be rather helpful if it were just a matter of being in the constitution for a few years. I see a conflict arising in the next few years as to whether local school boards should be governed by charter or by state law and I hope it is a conflict which will be resolved in favor of state law. Nevertheless, I feel that we are preparing a constitution not for the next five years, not even for the next ten years, but for the long haul, and therefore I came to the conclusion that it would be better not to freeze the form of governments at the local level into the constitution and I would suggest that we support the minority amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Wheatley.