

I think that that is something that the present members of the General Assembly seem to overlook at times; that there are many pieces of legislation which in the whole context of legislative matters that come before a session may be classified as trivial in nature. These matters it should be possible to get by so as to leave more time to deliberative judgment within the forums with respect to major pieces of legislation and let me nail if I can one thing right to the wall. They talk about eleven members passing a piece of legislation. If you will read the Majority Report, you have to have a quorum present, so at any time any member of the house, either in the House of Delegates or the Senate may investigate a piece of legislation about to go through and if he feels that there should be more members present, all he has to do is stand on his feet and say, I suggest the absence of a quorum, and that will take care of it.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have one minute, Delegate Gleason.

DELEGATE GLEASON: Recently, within the past two or three weeks a situation developed in the State of Michigan. I would refer you to the fact that Michigan is one of the twenty-six states that requires a majority of the members elected to pass a bill. At that time the governor of the State had recommended for part of his program a bill to be adopted by the legislature of Michigan, and I have to say, it was members of my own party that took a walk and brought that legislature to a standstill. They could not pass that legislation because they required a majority of the members voting and elected. This is what the majority report gets at. We want to free the hands of the legislature so that if at any time you have a vigilant minority that says, we are not going to cooperate and pass legislation, we are going to go home, the legislature will not be brought to a standstill.

I would urge you to reject the minority report.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Gilchrist.

DELEGATE GILCHRIST: I yield two minutes to Delegate James.

DELEGATE JAMES: Mr. Chairman and fellow delegates, I would like to speak in opposition to the Committee Report and in favor of the minority report.

I am in favor of the minority report because I feel the majority report is, first of all, undemocratic. It seems to me that in a

legislative body, a bill should have a vote on final passage of the majority of the membership. This is the responsibility of the legislative body. A bill should not proceed in the order of becoming law unless it has votes of the entire membership.

We have never had any problem about attendance in the General Assembly. We have never had a problem such as that cited in Michigan. Most of the sessions of the Senate are attended 100 percent. It is seldom that you have even one or two absences. The members of the Senate are very faithful in their attendance, and I can say that the House members are equally faithful so that we have a historic record of a very good attendance in the General Assembly. This proposal would jeopardize that. We certainly do not want to follow the congressional path, in which the quorum rule promotes absenteeism. We certainly do not want to be in a situation where a 435 member house is passing legislation with 140 members voting for it. This certainly is not a good thing. The people of America really do not know and do not comprehend the absenteeism that exists in Congress. It is one of the worst things about the federal government, this type of absenteeism.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have a quarter of a minute.

DELEGATE JAMES: We do not want to promote this type of thing in Maryland. We want to adhere to a rule which promotes attendance and which requires people to attend, or requires the majority membership.

I would like to call your attention to one point. Under one of these sections a member could be expelled with three-fifths of a quorum so that you would be expelling people under one of these proposals without the necessity of a majority vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Gallagher.

DELEGATE GALLAGHER: Mr. Chairman, I yield the remaining three minutes to Delegate Hanson.

DELEGATE HANSON: Mr. Chairman, I do not believe that the problem of attendance will be affected very much one way or the other by this proposal. In the Congress of the United States, when there is anything that is important to vote on, the attendance is very high.

I think that the good attendance that we have had in the Maryland General Assembly will continue, whether we have this amendment or whether we do not have this