

pleaded with us not to make the change that was suggested by the majority because they rely very heavily on volunteer assistance in winning their campaigns. I think this can be carried over, not only physical help but also financial help. If you are going to elections three out of every four years, you are going to be asking people to come out, nonpoliticians to volunteer their physical help and their financial help to work three in every four years. It is clear to me this could be a serious disadvantage.

Turning to the citizens themselves, I think it is clear to us — and it was clear way back in 1922, as Judge Child pointed out — that the 1922 amendment, Article XVII known as the 1922 Fewer Elections amendment, reduced the number of elections statewide. This was a reaction to (a), the cost and (b), not the financial cost, but the cost in the interest of the citizenry. You cannot expect people who are not interested in politics basically to become interested every year and concentrate as the majority would hope they would do, on local issues for the campaign period which could last six months of every twelve, three of every four years. I think it would become a rather mundane thing in the lives of citizens to be faced with that kind of politics. And the day, politics and elections become a mundane thing, I think we are all in trouble. I think the election statistics I provided you for the various levels indicate that already we have reached the point where the citizens are not responding to elections as we would hope they would.

Putting the most important election, the county elections, in the odd years certainly would, we think, aggravate an already unfortunate situation.

I would like to cite, or, rather suggest to you some other objections some members of the Committee had to the majority recommendation. Speaking to the question of whether or not the people will respond at all levels of the government, in all elections, we think this. We think that if a citizen knows he has to vote on two levels, for example, if he knows in 1966 he is going to vote on the gubernatorial level and the county level, we do not think he becomes confused at all. We think he prepares in advance to vote on both those levels.

Statistics have proven to us that there are those, as I pointed out, who go to the gubernatorial election and do not vote on the county level. I think it is fair to say

you are not going to change the indifference of these people no matter when you have the election. They are simply not interested and are not going to become interested because you isolate the election and put it in a different year.

We also think elections in three or four years out of every four years will force office holders in all levels of government to devote more and more time to political activities than they need to in the two of every four years system, and also be forced to make more political decisions in light of current political emotions and activities. I think we also have to know that the reapportionment decisions of the Supreme Court will eventually carry down to county level and we are going to have reapportionment and redistricting problems time after time. I think if you have elections three of every four years, you are going to have people running three of every four years and I think unfortunate deals and trades are going to be made relating to this question of redistricting. It would be far better if we had a period of rest every two years so that rational decisions could be made in this area without bias and prejudice that inevitably results from a current election.

I think we have to note also the cost of campaigning to the candidates themselves which is, I think, substantially increased when you cannot share campaign costs as you can when tickets are formed and there are election levels merged.

Finally, I would point out to you that on November 9 the Maryland Association of Election Officials notified us of their opposition to odd-year elections. I quote from that letter.

“The Association wishes to go on record as opposed to annual elections in view of the intolerable administrative burden which this would impose on the Boards of Supervisors of Elections throughout the state and additional financial burden on the taxpayers of the counties involved. Upon contacting the various boards, I find similar opposition to elections three years out of every four for the same reason.”

I think I have covered very quickly all the points I wanted to make and, as I say, if there are any questions about any allegations or statements I made that you would like to have me document, I would be happy to do so. I have the evidence if you will hear.

DELEGATE J. CLARK (presiding):  
What the Chair would suggest is that we