

in the next session of the legislature, it will be impossible for Marylanders of both parties to express their preference in a presidential primary or to elect their delegates to the state convention.

They have provided that the state central committee of the parties can name the delegates to the state convention. But I submit to you that that is not the democratic process. The democratic process is for every person in his party to express his preference not only for the delegate to the state convention, but to express his preference for a presidential candidate of his party.

If we put this amendment in, as I said, it does not change any provision or alter S&E-2, it just adds to it.

Someone said, well, this can be done by the legislature, and I will grant you that, but in this year unless the legislature does act, we are without our presidential primary and have no provision for the election of the delegates to the state convention. Those delegates are very important because those delegates to the state convention, as you well know, name the delegates to the National Convention.

If we in the Democratic Party and you in the Republican Party are going to sit idly by and let some leaders tell us what we want and what we shall have, then I think we are losing our right as voters. We are losing our party spirit, and it is something, my friends, that I do not want to see go down the river. I do think it is very important that we mandate in our constitution that in any presidential year the legislature shall set the date of the primary sufficiently early in that year, that we can elect our delegates to the state convention, and that the state convention can be held in ample time prior to the calling of the national convention.

Thank you very much. I hope you adopt this amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Koss.

DELEGATE KOSS: Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee, while the Committee did have some proposals before it to set the primary at a specific date, we never had any proposals that would set a primary, only one out of every four years, at a special time.

However, I would like to point out that it seems to me any action by this Committee of the whole to put the primary back into the constitution would invalidate or at least give great question to the action you took this morning in terms of eliminating the application of pluralities.

Third, I would like to suggest that this is, and I think Delegate Weidemeyer has to agree, within the province of the legislature and properly so. I would disagree with him that I give up my rights as a voter if I do delegate this to the legislature. I would assume a legislator is as responsive as we are to the wishes of his constituents. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any other delegate desire to speak in favor?

Delegate Boileau.

DELEGATE BOILEAU: Mr. Chairman, fellow delegates, in regard to the points that Delegate Weidemeyer made, may I add one more point of information. In recent weeks the Harris Poll has shown that the people of the United States prefer to see Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Rockefeller meet in November of 1968 and yet it seems the convention delegates supposedly will nominate two other gentlemen.

There is only one way we could really know how the people of Maryland feel about this. That is the way Delegate Weidemeyer suggested. I am in favor of the amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any delegate desire to speak in opposition? Delegate Frederick.

DELEGATE FREDERICK: Really I have no personal preference here except one. I have not been able to figure out how we can do what this amendment provides for without having two elections in the spring. In May we are going to have a statewide election concerning this new constitution. Then we will have to have another statewide election to provide the delegates to the Convention. Unless we can come up with some way to combine the two, confusion seems likely. We would have two general elections in May or possibly June because the national convention is usually held in July. I would say this does complicate it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any other delegate desire to speak in favor of the amendment? Delegate Winslow.

DELEGATE WINSLOW: Mr. Chairman, I should like very much to speak in favor of this amendment because it seems to me highly desirable that we have as voters a chance to express our opinion with respect to candidates for the presidency and what is even more important to elect our own delegates to party conventions rather than to have them selected by central committees who have very little, if any, responsibility to the voters.