

have before you a proposition that a constitutional convention can be convened at any time, or put to the people at any time by a majority of the General Assembly. Truly if the situation should arise that great public issues are left unattended by the General Assembly, a bare majority of that Assembly can put it to a constitutional convention and the matter can be rectified.

In short, whatever justification there once was for the constitutional initiative has since passed into history and is a memory with George Norris.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does any other delegate desire to speak in favor of the amendment?

Delegate Byrnes.

DELEGATE BYRNES: I would point out to Delegate Scanlan and members of the Committee that we are living testimony and witness to the fact that, despite the fact that we are now reapportioned, we do not leave the initiative for constitutional amendment with the legislature. This very Convention suggests that at times the people must act.

I think the essence of Delegate Winslow's proposition is that the people should retain the basic control over their basic law. We reject the initiative of legislation, and that may have been a wise rejection. We are now talking about the basic organic structure of our government, and I think it behooves us to recognize that the people retain that control.

I think we are representing that very philosophy here today, and we should continue it by accepting the amendment suggested by Delegate Winslow.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Pascal.

DELEGATE PASCAL: The same proponents I see for this indirect constitutional initiative were almost the same on the legislative initiative, and some of the reasons we rejected it in committee were these: First, the law would not have the opportunity to come before the General Assembly for debate, and the General Assembly would be a total representation.

Delegate Winslow proposes it come from four counties of 23,000 signatures apiece, and I suggest this is not the total representation which a provision would get in the General Assembly.

Now, another reason for the Committee's rejection of indirect initiative was this, that again a special interest group, well fi-

nanced, could turn the tide rather than the total representation of this State, and I think there is a great fear here. I think this amendment should be rejected.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does any other delegate desire to speak in favor of the amendment?

Delegate Hanson.

DELEGATE HANSON: Mr. Chairman, I rarely find myself in a position to disagree with my colleague from Montgomery County, Mr. Scanlan. I share his lack of enthusiasm for the legislative initiative. I was opposed to the legislative initiative and I remain opposed to the legislative initiative.

I do not think that as a practical matter it has fulfilled the promises that were made for it when it was developed. I am a sponsor of this amendment, and I must say I am a sponsor of it with some degree of trepidation because of my lack of enthusiasm for initiatives generally.

The reason I sponsor it, however, is for what I believe is a very practical reason in the development of constitutional government. It is quite true that a representative and reapportioned legislature should be able to handle the initiation of amendments to the constitution. I think that it will be able to handle them with one area of important exception, and that is the area of reform of the legislative branch itself.

I believe we in this Convention have done much from the point of view of our own judgment in this place and in this time to reform the legislature to improve its procedures and to make it an effective branch of the government.

I think that all of us would confess, however, that we may not have the last word in wisdom on what the future structure of the legislature should be. I think the one thing that we can observe is that there is probably no group of people in creation less likely to reform themselves than the members of the legislature when the time for that reform has arrived, and it is for this reason that it seems to me that we should provide in the constitution a means external to the legislature for the revision of that part of the constitution which pertains to the legislature.

I recognize the problem that this may be used for other areas. I am willing to take that risk. I am willing to believe that the legislature will respond in most instances to the needs of the people for constitutional change and constitutional re-