

be the weakest in state government by dividing among themselves the direct representatives of the people.

If we turn to the direct arguments made for bicameralism by the Committee Report, the first is that from a statistical point of view bicameralism really works in Maryland, which is to say that one house passes bills and the other house passes them, too, and sometimes one house declines to pass a bill which has been passed by the other house, which is to state the obvious, or nothing.

This in fact gives us no qualitative judgment as to whether or not good bills pass or bad bills pass. Statistically it would probably also indicate, if one could decide what is a good bill and what is a bad bill, that on the average about as many good bills are killed as bad bills.

What the Committee neglects to mention is that one house does not provide careful consideration of legislation passed by the other house simply because the second house does not have an adequate opportunity for careful consideration. I call your attention to page 6 of the Minority Report, LB-1A, in which we have reproduced a table from the Eagleton study of the legislature, indicating that 82 percent of all legislation was enacted in the last two weeks in 1966, and 79 percent in 1967.

Also, we indicate on page 7 of the Report that a very large percentage of the bills moving from one house to the other does not move until the last ten days of the session, including Sundays.

In things that matter greatly, such as the consideration and enactment of the budget, the General Assembly has found it necessary to develop informal relationships between the two houses so that the budget bill can be carried to completion in substantially the same form in both houses, thereby avoiding a conference.

In the development of major new areas of legislation, such as tax reform, the General Assembly resorts, as seems most wise and widely heralded, to the use of the Legislative Council, which consists of a joint committee of the two houses acting together. Thus it would seem that in those things that matter most the General Assembly has already recognized the validity of the unicameral principle, and attempts to combine the two houses insofar as it is possible within the present system.

We may conclude, then, from the facts that are available, and from the behavior

of the legislature as contrasted with the theory and slogans of bicameralism that hasty and ill-considered legislation is, as I suggested earlier, a self-fulfilling prophecy in a bicameral body.

The second argument made by the Committee is that bicameralism offers greater opportunity for different citizen interests to be represented in the legislature.

We of the minority believe that this is probably the strongest argument made by the majority for the retention of a bicameral system. We believe, however, that this purported advantage is offset in a unicameral body by its increased visibility, and thereby by the ability of the individual citizen, the constituent, to understand the legislative process, and to carefully view and consider the behavior of his representative.

We believe that the interest of citizens is better protected if the legislative power is undivided and no opportunities are provided to shift responsibility for actions from one house to the other.

The third argument advanced by the Committee is that a bicameral legislature with houses of unicameral size will insure that issues are viewed from varying perspectives. Again, this is a statement of the obvious, for if there are two people considering the matter, there will be varying perspectives brought to view on the question, or if the experience of the Constitutional Convention may apply, if one person is considering the matter there may be occasionally varying perspectives brought to view on the issue.

The practices in both houses of our General Assembly move in the direction of fewer committees, and toward a tendency of a parallel committee structure in each house of the General Assembly, so it would appear that the argument of varying perspectives may not be as strong as supposed.

The fourth argument advanced by the Committee is that bicameralism permits legislators to play differing roles and each house to operate under different rules of procedure. It would perhaps be more accurate to say that bicameralism diffuses responsibility rather than increases responsibility, and the second look may often be only a passing glance.

The fifth reason advanced by the Committee is that bicameralism is more responsive to the public will and offers more time for citizens to learn what is happening in the legislature. This statement is based