

DELEGATE HANSON: Mr. Chairman, I yield five minutes to Delegate Gill.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Gill?

DELEGATE GILL: Mr. Chairman and fellow delegates, we believe that interests of all citizens, and especially the average, and those with specialized problems, would be far better represented and that the electorate would be better able to hold their representatives accountable if the legislative power exercised by the representatives were not divided in two houses.

Because of the visibility and accountability of the legislature it would be very difficult to play one house against the other as is often done in the two houses now.

A streamlined well-organized unicameral legislature which is effectively, intelligently and justly operated could do more than any other single thing to help democracy work in Maryland.

Because of its simple and non-duplicating process, the people could become fully informed as to their government's operations. Simplicity of form would encourage public knowledge and participation and involvement.

A single chamber, a single-member district, would open up and keep open many channels of communication between the legislators and the people.

Because of pure legislators, no duplication of committees and a simple process, the citizens would learn more about the legislative procedures, and this would enable them to judge more adequately persons and issues.

This direct and often personal experience would cause them to trust their fellow man and have more confidence in decisions.

Unicameralism would particularly benefit the minority and ethnic groups and individual citizens because the responsibility and blame for actions taken or not taken on bills could be clearly fixed. Minority groups who have long histories of unfulfilled promises and buck-passing, which has resulted in many frustrations, disillusionment and disappointments should welcome the opportunity of a unicameral legislature so that they would know who are and who are not living up to their promises, and could then react appropriately at the right time.

The smaller number of legislators in a unicameral chamber should result in a

higher caliber of persons selected to represent the electorate, and that in itself is far more important than any particular number.

This smaller body would be able to transact the elaborate's business in clear view of the public, and would, we think, be in a better position to make citizens and public enemies their main concern.

These superior legislators selected to serve in a unicameral body should cause the end result to be a better percentage of participation by the people, of the people, and for the people.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Gallagher.

DELEGATE GALLAGHER: Mr. Chairman, I yield three minutes to Mr. Neilson.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Neilson.

DELEGATE NEILSON: Mr. Chairman, fellow Delegates, unicameralism in theory may be an acceptable substitution for bicameralism. I am not for using the State of Maryland as a guinea pig for the political scientists to prove a theory. Nebraska unicameralism in 31 years has not proved its superiority to bicameralism. I cannot and will not argue all the points previously argued in the Committee. Much testimony was heard. I recall one particular witness from out of state who stated he had much experience in Nebraska serving either with the legislature or working with it, and although he stated that he favored unicameralism in theory, on direct questioning, stated that he was afraid that if we attempted to adopt such a radical change in the State of Maryland, he feared we would lose the whole constitution that might come out of this Convention.

I would urge that the recommendation of the Committee, who gave much thought to this whole question, be accepted and the amendment as proffered be rejected.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Hanson?

DELEGATE HANSON: Mr. Chairman, I yield three minutes to Delegate Raley.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Raley.

DELEGATE RALEY: Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee of the Whole, I think there is one basic issue here: there is no question that unicameralism will work. So will bicameralism. But the one big difference as I see it is that the legislature, the legislative branch, would be able to efficiently, purposefully meet their needs of the people through unicameralism.