

DELEGATE CLAGETT: I rise, Mr. Chairman, in support of amendment 1 to section 3.01 of LB-1.

I doubt if there is anyone in this chamber who is more, or has more traditional ties, or to put it slightly differently, is tied more by tradition than I happen to be. However, I have been concentratedly exposed to the pros and cons of this question, bicameralism versus unicameralism, for two and a half years. You will recall, Mr. Chairman, when the first vote was taken back in 1965 in your Commission, I cast a vote in favor of bicameralism. When the last vote was cast in the latter part of 1966 and bicameralism was the sentiment of the majority by a vote of 13 to 12, I was in the minority, the unicameral column.

I have become convinced, after careful study and careful consideration of the merits of the respective arguments, that the extreme expense, the gross waste of time, the high cost without value of the bicameral method, was one which we no longer could follow.

For example, consider the regular working day, to get some insight into the functioning of our bicameral system, which we are now saying that we want to hold on to. Notwithstanding the reduction of committees in each of the respective houses, both bodies divide themselves into committees and those committees are corresponding ones. A matter is scheduled for hearing before the house, and because it happens to be a question which is less than glamorous, one which involves some technical detail, some expertise, a group of experts travel to Annapolis when the scheduled hearing is set. A group of people accompany them because of their interest in the matter. They mill in the floors and about the corridors, and finally in the late hours of the evening or the early hours of the morning they come before the committee, and because it is a committee, for example, of 32, and the hour is late there are only 10 or 12 members then present to hear.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Clagett, you have 20 seconds.

DELEGATE CLAGETT: And so, as we take the course of that legislation before the Senate, a week or two later, and the same effort is duplicated, three or four members may be present and the matter heard.

When it finally is voted upon and out of committee, it then must follow the course

between houses, and the lobbyists have their day.

Finally, it is in the last ten days, by the figures just given, that the matter is considered.

Is that where we want to continue, or is that a method we want to continue?

We have a chance to charter a new course. We have a chance to exert a degree of leadership and give direction. The responsibility has been placed on us by the people who have elected us. They are waiting for us to give them a degree of leadership. Here, on such a vital and constructive matter, we can give it, where streamlining of government, the fixing of responsibility, the clear definition of responsibility can be accomplished.

THE CHAIRMAN: Your time is up.

DELEGATE CLAGETT: I would say, examine your conscience and cast your vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Gallagher.

DELEGATE GALLAGHER: Mr. Chairman, I yield five minutes to Mr. Scanlan.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Scanlan.

DELEGATE SCANLAN: Mr. President, fellow delegates:

We have heard this afternoon an argument that has raged for about 50 years in the papers, mostly of political science journals, sometimes in law reviews. All the arguments you have heard today have been repeated ad nauseum. I suppose one would have to concede that with one look at logic, purely and simply, the unicameralists might have a logic by a shade on their side, but as Mr. Justice Holmes reminds us in the first page of his volume on the common law, the life of the law has not been logic, it has been experience.

I think the life of state government has been the same way, and except for the aberrational excursion of Nebraska, the background of which was fully presented by Mr. Gilchrist, no other American State has ventured down the unicameral path.

I think that it is far more important that we act on the other things that are before this Convention for consideration, single member districts, adequate compensation of legislators, the abolition of local legislation, adequate sessions to give the legislature time and attention to do its important job. These are the things that will bring real reform to state government whether unicameral or bicameral.