

ences brought to bear on the General Assembly, the inefficiencies and the last-minute rush for legislation. A great deal has been said about what has happened in years gone by.

If I may let us bring the record up to date.

Shortly after the last General Assembly adjourned the last session, and if I am not correct, I stand to be corrected, the Washington Post, the Evening Star, the Baltimore Sun, the New York Times, Life Magazine, radio and TV commentary all wrote, or described editorially, the General Assembly of Maryland. In effect, they all agreed on one thing, that the last session of this General Assembly of Maryland, which was composed of many, many freshmen, was outstanding in its efforts and in its accomplishments.

We worked hard. Certainly we had the pressure of last-minute bills going back and forth. This is not uncommon in any legislative body. For example, this is common practice in the Congress of the United States when many conference committees are appointed.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen of this Convention, I am not ashamed of the actions of this new General Assembly. As a matter of fact, I am proud of them. Thank you.

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

DELEGATE JETT: Mr. President, fellow members of the Convention, I feel that I must speak in favor of unicameralism because I think it is the vehicle that we must use to go forward into the future. It seems to me that we have to deal with the situation that exists today whether we like it or not. We have the one-man, one-vote concept with us.

I do not think there is a man or woman in this group who does not realize that the one branch of this government that needs strengthening, upholding and upbuilding is the Legislative Branch. The image of the legislator in the minds of the average man and woman can stand nothing but enhancement and improvement. I mean no reflection on the great men of the past who have come and served this State at great sacrifice, but the legislature, I think in the terms of this bicameral amendment, is being given a gratuitous disservice. It is being told that it cannot be trusted to act independently as men elected to represent us but that two shots at it are needed.

I think we need to know and we need to let the men that we elect know, we trust them, that we want them to come down here and adequately represent us without fear or favor.

I want to go further. I think as Marylanders we stand here today with the sense that we may have a lot of history. Maryland has never been afraid to step forward in the front ranks of any forward movement, regardless of what her sister states have done or not done. If the unicameral system is the vehicle that should take us into the future, we should not hesitate and stand back because our sister states have not acted.

I sincerely believe that visibility, responsibility is the keynote of this very important amendment, that men and women will be attracted to this body, will represent this State adequately and admirably if they realize that they have been elected and given one vote and one responsibility to represent their constituents and no other.

For that reason, I am for the amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does any delegate desire to speak in opposition to the amendment?

Delegate Sickles?

DELEGATE SICKLES: Mr. Chairman, as I had hoped, most of the delegates here, even though we thought about it and talked about the problem of bicameral versus unicameral for many years, came down with an open mind. I must admit as one who is very emotionally attached to the bicameral system because I am a product of it, I tried to be unemotional about it in listening to the arguments. I must admit also that most of the arguments I had in favor of the bicameral system have been answered reasonably satisfactorily. But I have been listening to the arguments in favor of the unicameral system, and as one who has never cast a vote he could not defend, I cannot bring myself to support the unicameral system for the State of Maryland because whether we have one house or two houses, the one house can encumber itself just as two houses can encumber themselves by rules. I was in the General Assembly in the House of Delegates for eight years and I can tell you that the General Assembly expressed its will. It may not have been the will of the people because of the improper apportionment of both houses, but it expressed its will. It passed what it wanted to and it did not pass what it did not want to.