

counties consequent upon the above, by making the white population of the state the exclusive basis of representation in the House of Delegates.

Early in the session of the Convention Mr. Clarke offered resolutions to the effect that it was "inexpedient . . . to adopt a system of representation based exclusively upon population," and recommending instead that this principle be applied to the counties, and then four more delegates be given to Baltimore City than would fall to the largest county. A plan of apportionment also submitted by Mr. Clarke divided the county population by seven thousand, giving Baltimore County, the most populous, a representation of eight, and consequently twelve to the city, the entire number of delegates to be eighty. Failing this plan, if the whole state was to be represented according to population, districts were to be substituted in Baltimore City. These resolutions were referred to the Committee on Representation.¹⁵⁴ Mr. Belt submitted the proposition that the entire state be divided into electoral districts, and this was the ground on which the minority took its stand.¹⁵⁵

Mr. Abbott of Baltimore City on May 27 made the report of the six Union members of the Committee on Representation, which furnished the foundation of the compromise plan that was finally adopted as above stated.¹⁵⁶ The three Democratic members handed in a minority report embodying Mr. Clarke's plan of giving the counties representation according to population, and Baltimore City four more delegates than the largest county.¹⁵⁷ This was voted down by the party vote of 26 yeas to 46 nays.¹⁵⁸

The minority, as already stated, now skilfully took its stand on the electoral district plan, which would tend to slightly diminish the overwhelming party influence of the larger counties and Baltimore City in particular, by affording opportunity for the minor political party (at this time

¹⁵⁴ Proc., 26-7, 31-3.

¹⁵⁵ Proc., 88.

¹⁵⁶ Proc., 120-1.

¹⁵⁷ Proc., 122-3.

¹⁵⁸ Proc., 351.