1 ONE HOUSE OR TWO

2 (Comments by Dr. C. I. Winslow - February 16, 1966)

3

4 Now that the Supreme Court has decided that it is

5 people not acres which are to be used as a basis for repre-

6 sentation in both houses of state legislatures, the debate

7 over bicameralism changes materially. Since the two

8 houses can no longer be constructed to reflect differing

9 interests or classes, the only strong argument for

10 bicameralism which remains is that one house serves as a

11 check upon the other. Undoubtedly, this is true -- to a

12 degree. The question is whether it is a necessary, or even

13 a desirable check, under current conditions.

14 What checks now exist to prevent legislatures from

15 acting hastily and so enacting ill-considered legislation?

16 To begin with, we have in Maryland a Legislative Council,

17 whose business it is to give a preliminary examination to

18 proposed legislation, especially in the more important

19 areas of policy-making. In the house of origin, three

20 further checks are provided: consideration by a standing

21 committee, action by the house on the committee report,