

the space ship or that it was unable to serve a highly urbanized population approaching four million people, who expect much from their state government. For the underlying premise of the Constitution of 1867 was a distrust of political authority and its overriding virtue was the construction of a series of checks and balances not only among — *but within* — the three branches of government to prevent abuse of authority.

The inability to envisage growth and change resulted in more than two hundred amendments to the original document. Yet the fundamental flaws were so great that ultimately the Constitution was not merely hindering administrative action — it was strangling it.

Maryland had become a static state and Maryland was not alone in this. Other states, perhaps even the majority of them, have suffered the same breakdown of their political nervous systems. In turn, the Federal government, forced to fill the vacuum created by the strangled state, has grown out of all proportion to its constitutional purposes, and the cherished constitutional balance between Federal and state governments has been disrupted. Thus, the importance of state constitutional reform is not limited to improving the functions of state governments individually, but may well improve the capacity and quality of all levels of government nationally.

Obviously, as I talk about Constitutional reform I will rely on Maryland's recently concluded Convention as an example, not only because I know it best but because I believe we really have achieved exemplary reform.

The success of Maryland's Constitutional Convention can be attributed to several preliminary factors. First, the State was reapportioned in 1966 and representation at the Convention truly reflected the urban-suburban orientation of Maryland's population. Second, the election to the Convention was genuinely nonpartisan. No indication of political party appeared on the ballot and in the majority of Maryland's subdivisions the political parties united to form and support a bipartisan slate of candidates. Third, as a result of this conscious, nonpolitical approach many highly talented citizens were willing to become candidates, although they had never been active in partisan politics and therefore lacked the traditionally necessary broad political base of support. Consequently, a plethora of well-qualified civic — if not politically — oriented candidates were available and were elected. While many of the delegates to the Constitutional Convention presently serve or have served in high elected offices, even more were college professors, outstanding lawyers, judges, and civic leaders.