

mented: "We in Montgomery County have some very desirable sections, and we do not want to run the risk of losing any big atomic energy plant out there!"<sup>17</sup>

The discussion on topics such as these helps place the Constitutional Convention in the proper socio-economic and historical context. The much more numerous pages in the *Debates* devoted to other provisions and proposals are equally instructive, but it must be remembered that all subjects did not get equal consideration on the convention floor. It is here that the *Guide to the Records of the Constitutional Convention Commission and Constitutional Convention* is most valuable. Subjects mentioned only briefly in the convention *Debates* were frequently debated extensively by the commission or were the subject of special research reports prepared at the behest of that body. Since members of both the commission and the subsequent convention were convinced that the new constitution would become the supreme law of the state, they were careful to fully document their deliberations. An historian/archivist was appointed, and arrangements were made early in the proceedings for all materials to be transferred for permanent preservation to the Hall of Records, the state archives, where, in the words of Convention President H. Vernon Eney, they would be "always available to the public."<sup>18</sup>

A word is necessary, perhaps, both about the *Index to the Debates of the Constitutional Convention* that appears hereafter and about the accompanying microform publication of the full printed text of the *Debates of the Constitutional Convention*. H. Vernon Eney, presiding officer of both the Constitutional Convention Commission and the Constitutional Convention, was committed to publishing the essential documents of both bodies so that the massive research and cumulative experience of those involved in the constitution-making process would be accessible to the widest possible audience. As the list of publications under both the Constitutional Convention Commission and the Constitutional Convention in the *Guide* attests, Eney succeeded in seeing into print several meticulously edited, valuable reference books relating to the work of both. Transcribing, editing, and proofreading the *Debates of the Constitutional Convention* proved a difficult and time-consuming task, however, and the work remained incomplete at the time of Eney's death in 1980. The text of the entire *Debates* had been set in type, however, encompassing 3,452 pages and scheduled for publication in four thick volumes. But access to the information in the *Debates* could only be gained through an index, and this onerous job had not even been started.

In early 1981 the Hall of Records Commission of the Department of General Services was asked by the governor's office to prepare cost estimates and a work plan to bring to fruition the work begun by H. Vernon Eney. A detailed analysis of what remained to be done, and updated estimates of the cost of publishing the *Debates* with an accompanying index and guide, established that completing the project in a hardcover edition as initially planned would be prohibitive. The Hall of Records then proposed as an alternative publication of the *Debates* in microform, which offered the advantage of substantially lower initial production and subsequent per unit publication costs. The index to the *Debates* and the *Guide* to the archives of the commission and convention would be published in a standard hard-

<sup>17</sup> Del. James V. Bennett, *ibid.*, p. 2741.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3294.