

forms many duties. It has always been a check on the executive.

There is no good in locking the barn door after the horse is stolen. What this does is keep an executive honest, if he is inclined not to be so; and during the 100 years that we have lived under the present Constitution we have never had any scandal in the executive department of this State.

I feel that this is a critical hour in the history of Maryland. The leadership of this Convention seems to feel that the electorate of Maryland should not be guaranteed any rights. My good friend Gerald Morgan has quoted from the National Municipal League that a short ballot gives the best government. I do not feel that Maryland has a long ballot. The attorney general, the comptroller, and the governor is indeed a short ballot when compared with other states.

If there had been any scandal in the operation of the Board of Public Works or the comptroller's office, or the treasurer's office, there might be good reason to abolish these offices from the constitution and give their appointment to the governor, but in the 100 years that they have operated there has never been a breath of scandal.

What this is doing is concentrating in the hands of the executive greater power than now enjoyed by any state executive on the American continent.

What we are asked to do today is cast aside the wisdom and the experience of 100 years for a new concept of government about which we do not know, and lest your Convention grow confused, let me refer to the Scripture: "Sayeth the Lord, stand ye in the ways and seek the old path"—which is a good way—"and walk therein, and ye shall find peace for your souls."

What is being proposed is to discard the old path, which has given Maryland 100 years of good democratic government, for a path which may be glittering, but which at the end may bring the total destruction of democratic government in this State, and bring corruption and despair to the people of Maryland.

We are told by those who prepared the draft that 100 years ago when the Maryland Constitution was drafted we were less than 100 years away from the Crown of England, and the people wanted to reserve the right of franchise.

We may be 200 years away today from the Crown of England, but all over the world the lights of democratic government

are disappearing, and what the people in America are afraid of is totalitarian government such as existed in Nazi Germany or Soviet Russia.

The constitutions of the various states in this nation are the greatest bulwark and strength of democratic government.

I ask this Convention to go slowly in abolishing from the constitution of this State offices which for over a century have proved beneficial to the people.

In the Minority Report we pointed out that Governor Agnew in his address to the Constitutional Convention stated: "In my opinion the Board of Public Works should be continued, but reconstituted. The Board provides a forum for public scrutiny and presents an opportunity for the expression of legislative views on significant decisions. I believe the state treasurer, an adjunct of the legislative arm, should continue as a representative of the General Assembly."

At the present time the Board of Public Works has many important responsibilities, most of them statutory, including the supervision of the creation of state debts, the terms and conditions thereof, and the advertising and sale of bonds. And let me call to the Convention's attention that at the present time in the money markets of the world bonds of Maryland have a triple A rating and product the highest return.

In addition, the Board of Public Works has the approval of all contracts for expenditures from the proceeds of any loan authorized by the General Assembly. In other words, if the State were to build a new office building, it would supervise the construction from the loan credited by the State. Supervision of expenditure of all sums appropriated for the acquisition of land, building equipment; new construction; and other capital expenditures except those in connection with state roads and bridges; authority over all state property or rights, having to finance and transfer and dispose of state personal real property; authority to borrow upon the credit of the State, and to issue tax anticipation notes within legally specified limits; supervision of all lump sum appropriations not detailed by law; supervision of the administration of the general emergency fund and the establishment of state property tax rates, are responsibilities of the Board of Public Works.

I cannot quote to you from any political scientists from Columbia University, but I would quote to you from one of the greatest students of good democratic government