

Morgan, Chairman of the Committee, to present the Committee Report. Delegate Morgan.

DELEGATE MORGAN: Mr. Chairman, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Delegate Adkins, is going to present the Committee Report on this.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Adkins, will you come to the reading desk, please? While Delegate Adkins is coming to the reading desk, the Chairman will announce, so that there will be no misunderstanding, since no one cared to suggest a change in the Debate Schedule as interpreted by the Chair prior to this session of the Committee of the Whole, we will proceed to a consideration of items 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the Committee Report seriatim, taking a vote on each item after it has been debated. Delegate Adkins.

DELEGATE ADKINS: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, some twenty-five years ago when I made my maiden appearance before the Court of Appeals, meeting in the building immediately across the street, I approached the rostrum there with much the same fear and trepidation as I do here. One difference was that there I dropped my books as I rose to speak. I became completely flustered and was able for several seconds to say nothing. The late distinguished Chief Judge Bond, who will long be my favorite and kindest person, looked down from his high place, said in the quietus of attorneys, counsellor, take your time, the ferry for the Eastern Shore does not leave for another hour.

It may very well be that before I finish here, I shall have wished that that ferry were still running.

No question here before presented to this Constitutional Convention is fraught with the brilliant omnipresence of the current political scene as is the matter now pending before this house. We of the majority, however, feel quite confident that this Convention will, in its mature judgment, approach this question as it has all others heretofore presented, and will judge it in terms of what is best for the long range governance of this State.

We are recommending to you that a long-time elected office in the constitution shall be eliminated as a constitutional office, and we do so for reasons which through thought and testimony we consider completely valid reasons. I ask you to consider with me for a few moments what those reasons are.

I do not need to tell this sophisticated and distinguished group what the duties of the comptroller are. They are set forth currently in the Majority Report. They are set forth in the Report of the Commission. All of you have had sufficient experience with the government of Maryland to know in essence that the functions of the comptroller basically are to be the fiscal manager of the State.

We are thus faced with a situation where we have an executive department, one of the most, if not the most critical area of which is not responsive to the elected representative at the top, to wit, the governor of this State.

We are thus faced with an executive branch, headed by a governor who is vested with these general executive powers, and yet is deprived of constitutional control over the general management of the fiscal affairs of the State.

We need many reasons to make this Recommendation. We heard a great deal of testimony. We heard testimony from many people who have been studying the problem of strengthening of local government for many years. Without exception, those people recommended that if Maryland is to have a modern executive to meet the demanding problems of urbanization and of the twentieth century, we must have an increased power in the chief executive of this State.

We heard such testimony from the Council on Economic Development, one of the most distinguished groups of business leaders, professional leaders, academicians in the country. We heard such testimony from the Council on Intergovernmental Affairs, not a business group, not an academic group, but a group of leaders in the field of state, local and national government.

We heard such testimony from the National Municipal League and from independent individuals, such as James Rennie, for many years the budget director of the State of Maryland.

Without exception, people with independence who testified before us and who were not involved in the political climate of Maryland, testified that throughout the country, the need was for an executive branch headed by one or at the most two elected officials.

Had you heard this testimony, I think you, too, would have concluded that an objective assessment of it necessarily forced