

from partisan control and executive domination.

Law is a phase of government which is readily separable. The establishment of this function as a separate office of government recognizes the need for specialized and non-partisan control of the growth of our civil law.

If the office of the attorney general is controlled to any extent by the executive branch, or used to serve partisan ends, the basic notion of separation of powers is violated.

For example, the opinions of the attorney general are actually statements of the law; and if not altered at the next session of the legislature, they are construed by the Court of Appeals as having been approved by the legislature.

Then, too, the attorney general is the only legal adviser permitted to the governor, many State departments, and many important local agencies. With such a broad judicial function, such an office should be established to operate free of the policy making controls of the executive.

In previous debates in the Committee of the Whole, a number of us responded to the phrase "high visibility." I call today, fellow delegates, for the highest possible visibility in the operations of sensitive legal matters, visibility which can only be increased by the election of an independent legal officer, responsible to each and every citizen.

In previous actions this month, the Committee of the Whole took the people out of the judicial system; decreased the number and diminished the size of legislative districts and disposed of a substantial number of constitutional offices which had been popularly elected. Where and when, fellow delegates, do we stop telling the people of this State that they are not qualified to choose their leaders?

No evidence has been presented to our Committee that the attorney general has not served our State with distinction, representing the people honestly and fairly.

I believe, and with reasonable confidence suspect my belief to be shared by an overwhelming number of my fellow citizens, that an independently elected attorney general will serve, as he has in the past, to further provide a guarantee against hasty or ill-advised legal actions and decisions.

And I adopt as words to live by from "This Week" magazine, the words of one

of our wisest Americans, Thomas Jefferson, who said, "I know of no safe repository for the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves."

I thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does any other delegate desire to speak in opposition to the amendment, in favor of Committee Report EB-1?

Delegate Clagett.

DELEGATE CLAGETT: Mr. Chairman, I rise to a point of personal privilege.

THE CHAIRMAN: State the privilege.

DELEGATE CLAGETT: I wish to advise the chamber that in the gallery at the present time there are 120 students of the 6th grade from North Forrestville Elementary School of Prince George's County. They are under the care of their Vice Principal, Mrs. Martha Hammond, and a number of parents and teachers who include Mrs. Stevens, Mrs. Ellenger, Miss Pickett, and Mrs. Titus. Together I would like to ask us all to welcome them here to watch our deliberations.

*(Applause.)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Maurer.

DELEGATE MAURER: Mr. Chairman, I want to rise to a point of personal privilege.

THE CHAIRMAN: State your privilege.

DELEGATE MAURER: I wish to recognize the presence in the gallery above the rostrum of twenty-three members of the Women's Suburban Democratic Club of Montgomery County. The Club's president is here, and I hope all of you will join me in welcoming them to the Convention today.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are delighted to have them.

*(Applause.)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Hanson.

DELEGATE HANSON: Mrs. Maurer made the announcement I intended to make. I am glad that we have extended our welcome to this great nonpartisan group from my county.

*(Laughter.)*

THE CHAIRMAN: The Chair would like to recognize the presence of five students from Leland Junior High School. We are delighted to have them, also.