

I received late yesterday afternoon a letter of resignation from Delegate Ralph R. Webster. I will ask the Clerk to read the letter and the attachment with the letter.

READING CLERK: "To the Honorable H. Vernon Eney, President, Constitutional Convention of Maryland, State House, Annapolis, Maryland. Dear Mr. Eney: As you will recall, I was elected as one of four delegates from Allegany County to the Constitutional Convention. I attended the initial session of the Convention and qualified to serve in this capacity. Thereafter, I became ill and have now been hospitalized for quite some time. Due to my illness, I have been unable to be present and participate in the work of the Convention, since the plenary session began on September 12, 1967. I have discussed my illness with my personal physician and I have now concluded that my physical condition will prevent me from serving as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention. Under these circumstances, I believe the interest of the citizens of Maryland, and of Allegany County, will best be served by my resignation, so that a replacement can be appointed. Therefore, effective immediately, I hereby resign as delegate to the Constitutional Convention of Maryland, and I request that you initiate whatever appropriate action is necessary to enable the Convention to appoint my successor as such. Sincerely yours, Ralph R. Webster."

The above noted signature of Ralph R. Webster was personally witnessed by each of the undersigned: W. A. VanOrmer, M.D., Lester Kiefer, M.D.

State of Maryland, Allegany County, to wit: I hereby certify that on this, September 22nd, 1967, before the subscriber, a Notary Public of the State of Maryland, in and for Allegany County, aforesaid, personally appeared W. A. VanOrmer, M.D., and Lester Kiefer, M.D., both satisfactorily identified to me and each made oath in due form of law that he is and has been attending Ralph R. Webster as his physician, that he personally witnessed the signature of said Ralph R. Webster on the attached letter addressed to the Honorable H. Vernon Eney, President, dated September 22, 1967; that prior to said signature being affixed thereto, the contents of said letter were read and explained to said Ralph R. Webster; that in the medical opinion of each said Ralph R. Webster fully understood and assented to the same and that thereupon he did affix his signature thereto. Witness my hand and notarial signature on the date above written, by Virginia L. Carter, Notary Public.

DELEGATE BEALL: Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Just a second, Delegate Beall, if you will, please, sir. We will resume this point in the proceedings after we heard the address from the Governor. Sergeant-at-Arms:

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: His Excellency, the Governor of the State of Maryland.

GOVERNOR AGNEW: Mr. President, distinguished Delegates to this Convention, as a Governor who has had a rather challenging and busy week, I endorse and support the remarks of my predecessor, Governor Tawes of yesterday, and I commend him for his energetic defense of this office and I share his indignation.

When I took advantage of your kind invitation to address the organization session of this Convention, I suggested broad principles to guide your historic effort. I cited general objectives, stressed basic ideals, and concentrated on the essence rather than the specific.

It was my contention then, and I risk repeating it today for it cannot be overemphasized, that for a constitution to endure it must be mainly limited to an expression of great principles.

What are these great universal principles? First, to secure and sustain the sovereignty of the people. Second, to protect and perpetuate the rights of the individual. Third, to create a political structure which safeguards the citizen by a series of checks and balances among . . . but not within . . . our three traditional branches. Fourth, to develop that superstructure for the State most conducive to efficient administration, effective legislation and impartial adjudication.

Finally, to embrace a consistency of logic which reflects in the fewest words the fullest expression of a free society's solemn and voluntary contract with its government.

This assembly has been convened so that our State's Constitution may be reformed and rewritten to conform to those standards — standards which our present document fails to fulfill. All branches of our state government must be strengthened and streamlined. Simplicity and professionalism must be encouraged, responsibility to the electorate incisively exacted. Existing incoherencies require clarification. Superfluous detail must be discarded. Above all, a philosophy must prevail which recognizes the constitutional imperative that omission produces as significant an impact as inclusion.