

I want to say at the outset that each amendment which will be voted upon separately and not as a whole stands by itself, is severable, is not dependent upon any of the other amendments with the exception of the last three, which are actually simply housekeeping amendments to bring in line the balance of the provision with earlier amendments if adopted by this Convention.

I purposely divided these amendments into nine separate amendments so that they would not otherwise be divisible by this body. They each present you with clear and distinct different questions.

Note that the memorandum stated there will be eight amendments. The memorandum numbers each amendment in the revised section and has two number eights. The second number eight is now number nine.

There is one correction I wanted to make on Amendment D but because I think most of the delegates probably do not have that yet, I will mention it when we vote on Amendment D. I am going to make a presentation now with respect to all of the amendments so that you can understand the purpose of all in toto, then speak for only a minute or so when we come to each and are about to vote on each.

I am very proud of the job which this Convention has done. We worked hard and the product clearly reflects our careful deliberations.

We are writing a constitution which will create a viable and responsive state and local government for the twentieth and perhaps the twenty-first centuries. We all hope it will endure for a great period of time. However, by virtue of the nature of our deliberative body, we made many compromises and some provisions have been written and will be adopted which may very well not be to the liking of all. I submit that many of those provisions, as Delegate Scanlan has pointed out on numerous occasions, are unnecessary, are too detailed, are inflexible, and are statutory in nature.

In addition, I doubt that we are sufficiently wise and visionary to create a document which will last forever or even a hundred years as the current constitution has lasted. I think our constitution will and should reflect the thoughts of our time. It should definitely be a living document.

Therefore, it will not necessarily be representative of the views of the time a hundred years from now or even fifty years

from now. The relationship of government to society is changing rapidly and our society is increasing in its complexity at an alarming rate.

I am not being critical of the job we have done but, I think, realistic. The adoption, the amendment, and the revision of the constitution are the most basic exercises of the sovereign power of the people and we should not put the ability of the people to exercise that power out of their reach. I feel that Committee Recommendation GP-8 is unduly restrictive in several respects. We offer these amendments to free up that procedure.

Remember that none of the procedures by which a constitutional convention can be called requires an overhauling of the constitution. But they do permit an outstanding deliberative body such as this one to review the basic structure to determine if any changes may be desirable.

I think this only gives recognition to the job which we have done and I am asking you to pat yourselves on the back a little by providing amendments for calling together such a convention as this in the reasonably near future.

I suggest that the most effective way to study the entire structure of state and local government is by a body that can do something about it. There have been any number of commissions here in Maryland which have studied reorganization of various branches of the government and have come up with some very laudatory reports.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have used five of your ten minutes, Delegate Needle.

DELEGATE NEEDLE: But those reports to a large extent have been filed away and little has been done about them.

In addition to that, I submit that this is a piecemeal manner in which to study the structure of our government.

Some of you may ask what about the cost to this State of calling of a convention? I submit that regardless of what that cost may be, and it is relatively small, it is a small price to pay.

To get down to specifics. GP-8 only permits the General Assembly to call a constitutional convention. I cannot understand why the governor or the people by petition should not also have the right to call a constitutional convention. I think that by virtue of your rejection of the initiative for the submission of amendments to the