

it seems to me, that it should be presented to the Constitutional Convention of Maryland, one of the original states, by the oldest silversmith still in active business in the United States.

It is a handsome piece. It will be with us daily, and its place on this rostrum will signify that the Constitutional Convention of Maryland is in session.

Again, on behalf of the delegates and on behalf of the State of Maryland I thank you most sincerely.

*Address by the President.*

On August 17, 1867, the fourth Constitutional Convention of Maryland adjourned after 75 daily sessions, and submitted to the people of the State a Constitution which endured for 100 years. Today, 100 years, 26 days and something more than 200 amendments later we assemble as the fifth Constitutional Convention of Maryland.

It seems to me that before we begin our work as the elected delegates to that Convention it behooves us to reflect for a moment on the task before us, to consider the conditions and circumstances which bring us here today, and to think a bit about the problems to be solved and the possible methods of their solution.

Today we live in a great stream of change, a stream which moves so rapidly and with such force that sometimes we are at our destination before we realize that we have started, and oftentimes we have begun our journey before we have charted our course.

One hundred years ago the people of Maryland and of the nation were living in a period of great social unrest, a period of great stress and strain. Today we are again living in a period of great social unrest, another period of great stress and strain, but there is a tremendous difference between the two eras. Then our nation was at the end of the most bitter and heart-rending conflict it had ever known, either before or since, a period which saw brother pitted against brother in cruel and agonizing fratricidal warfare. Maryland, as a border state between the opposing social and economic forces and torn asunder by its own inner conflicts, had become a battleground for the armies of the Union and the Confederacy. But although the wounds had not been healed and although there were many bitter memories of excesses committed in the name of military necessity, of a great city living under the

shadow of the guns on Federal Hill, and of soldiers at the polls supervising the elections, nevertheless, the armed conflict had ended and we were looking forward hopefully to a future of peace and quiet, liberty and contentment, and economic and cultural rehabilitation and progress.

Today we are not at the end of a period of conflict. We are in the midst of it. We live not only in a period of great social unrest amidst all the stresses and strains produced by such unrest, but in a period in which conflict and strife are again prevalent. We are no longer a border state caught between the opposing forces of the North and South, but an island in a sea of hatred and violence. We do not have armies pitted against armies in mighty battles on our soil, but more frightening, perhaps, we see all about us throughout our nation citizen pitted against citizen, in scenes of equal violence which seem to erupt almost spontaneously and perplex and plague us all. We grope blindly for solutions to problems which appear to be insoluble and, through it all, the swift current of events seems at times to be carrying us to the brink of disaster.

We cannot in this Constitutional Convention of Maryland in the space of the next 90 or 120 days, or even longer if we had the time, solve the problems of the world, of the nation, or even of our State, but we can and we must, within the time allotted to us, provide the framework of a government for our State which is capable of grappling with the problems confronting us today, and with at least a possibility of being able to solve those problems in such a way as to prevent our State from being caught up and destroyed in the inferno of hate and conflict and bitter defiance which we see all about us.

We must forge a document which the people of our State will adopt on May 14, 1968, and thus make it a constitution, and not a mere exercise in semantics, a scrap of paper. We must draft a constitution which will guarantee to every citizen the right to pursue his own goal of personal happiness and seek his own level of achievement as free from interference by government or his fellow citizens as the complexities of a modern society can permit and allow, and we must draft a constitution which can meet these objectives, not only for us, but for our children and our grandchildren and their children, a constitution which can survive as a meaningful, operative document, even when subjected to the continuing assaults of changing conditions and of problems and situations