

which we cannot only not contemplate, but not even dream of today, a constitution which can provide an effective government for our nearly four million citizens of today, and also for our ten or more million citizens of tomorrow.

As we set about this task, we must realize that our separate existence as a sovereign State, a government of and by and for the people of Maryland, is at stake. We are not alone in this. The separate existence of every one of our 50 states as viable and effective instruments of local government is challenged. The course of events of the past 100 years has caused a metamorphosis. We and our sister states, so apprehensive and fearful in the last century of the powers of government, put in our state constitutions shackles and restraints which made our state governments incapable of meeting the needs of the people in a rapidly changing urbanized society.

The inability of state and local governments, because of these constitutional limitations and restrictions, to meet the simple everyday needs of people — the need for pure air and water, sewer systems, education, cultural advantages, recreational opportunities, mass transportation, created a void, a void into which our federal government has stepped to an ever-increasing extent.

These needs of the people — needs so vast and complex that they can only be met by governmental action, needs which traditionally had been and, by all scientific principles of government, should continue to be met by state and local government, simply had to be met. These governmental services required by the people had to be supplied. The inability of the state and local governments to do so has forced the federal government to meet the demand and supply these purely local requirements.

And so, we, the citizens of what we proudly call the great Free State of Maryland, have, along with our fellow citizens of other states, become cringing, favor-seeking vassals, fawning at the feet of Uncle Sam, grateful for the few crumbs of our own money tossed to us. But that great big, sprawling, bureaucratic colossus sitting astride the Potomac is too big, too far removed from the people, too impersonal to make more than uncertain, feeble, ineffective and oftentimes inept attempts to solve these problems which ought to be solved by state and local governments.

The challenge is clear for us to see; it is written in large bold letters on the walls

of this historic State House. We have almost complete freedom in drafting a constitution to submit to our people. So long as it provides for a republican form of government, so long as it does not transgress the rights and liberties of the individual citizen guaranteed and protected by the Constitution of the United States, we, the people of the State of Maryland, can have almost any kind of constitution we choose. Certainly a people with the genius for designing a craft which can be hurtled millions of miles through space and yet be controlled minutely in its landing on a distant planet ought to be able to devise a system of government which can provide for our people at a local level those essential services which are so sorely needed — services which are needed now but which are going to be needed to an ever-increasing degree as our society becomes more and more urbanized and as our population grows to an extent difficult for us even to comprehend at the present time.

A skeptic may scoff and say these are but lofty, high-sounding euphemisms which cannot possibly be accomplished by words emblazoned on a piece of paper, no matter how formal and fundamental the document. He may say that in the final analysis whether a government is good or bad, effective or ineffective, an efficient provider of services or an inept, bureaucratic maze depends not upon the will of the people which brings it into existence or upon the piece of paper which defines its scope, its power and its organization, but upon the people who manage it. He may say, therefore, that the problems of our time cannot be solved or even substantially affected by the constitution which we may recommend.

This, however, is not at all the case. True it is that the efficiency, the effectiveness of our government will, in the final analysis, depend upon the people we select to operate and conduct that government, but the kind of people who are willing to undertake the task of governing, and therefore the character of the government itself, will be greatly influenced by the constitution adopted by the people of our State.

We can attract to the legislature the most thoughtful and capable of our citizens if we clothe the legislature with sufficient dignity, authority and power to legislate properly, provide for a legislature which can come to grips with the pressing problems of statewide concern and solve them. We can induce our ablest citizens to seek election as the chief executive of our State if we grant to the executive branch sufficient authority and power to carry out the