

It is interesting to note, I think, that 15 other states allow the General Assembly to call itself into special session.

Turning now to the last section of the Committee Report, on compensation of legislators, the language states: "The members of the General Assembly shall receive such salary and allowances as may be prescribed by law. Increases in salary shall not apply to the General Assembly which enacted them. No senator or delegate shall be paid daily living expenses during regular session of the General Assembly."

The effect of this proposed new constitutional section is to remove from the Maryland Constitution the statement of the explicit dollars that members of the legislature are to be paid. As you know, the present Constitution calls for the payment of \$2,400 per year. If you examine earlier versions of the Constitution, you will find that sometimes the figure was set at \$5.00 per day, and various formulas were used. It has long since been recognized, however, that it is unrealistic and poor Constitutional practice to place the salary in a Constitution, because the dollar value, the purchasing power of the dollar in 1967 is far different from what it was in 1867. Since it is extremely difficult to amend the Constitution to take care of inflation and rises and falls in the market, and also to take care of the increase in duties and the correspondingly greater salary which should be paid, the idea and the practice of putting the dollar amount in the Constitution has been set aside.

I think a good example of this practice and its lack of wisdom was the governor's salary, which was set at \$4,500 under the Constitution of 1867, and persisted until 1950.

The result of putting the dollar figure in the constitution has led to a variety of practices to compensate office holders in means other than salary. Consequently, we have today in the General Assembly the practice of paying per diem living expenses, which amount to \$25.00 a day or \$1,750 a year. If you add this \$1,750 a year, which I believe is adopted by rule of the House and Senate, to the dollar figure contained in the Constitution as classified salary, you will see that the actual compensation to the members of the General Assembly is not the \$2,400 listed explicitly in the Constitution, but \$4,150.

It was the feeling of the Committee on the Legislative Branch that the salaries should be realistic ones, and should not

allow for providing a daily expense figure. Consequently we specifically prohibited the payment of daily expenses during the regular session of the General Assembly.

We have recommended that the salary of the members of the General Assembly be set at \$8,000 per year. This figure is not contained in the constitution. The Committee has voted to provide that the \$8,000 annual salary be provided in the schedule of transitory legislation, which was authorized under section 17 of the Enabling Act calling this Convention. Under the particular provisions of that section, the Constitutional Convention is authorized to prepare legislation in the form of public general laws, which it believes should take effect immediately and which should take care of pressing difficulties and problems.

Now, if the new constitution is adopted, it will, of course, have the effect of doing away completely with the old Constitution. But in doing away with the old Constitution, the \$2,400 salary explicitly provided therein would be eliminated, so that upon the adoption of the new constitution there would be no salary available for members of the General Assembly because its one source of authorization would have fallen as a result of the substitution of the new Constitution.

We, therefore, have recommended the figure of \$8,000 per year, which we hasten to point out is not three and a half times what the General Assembly is presently receiving, but is less than twice what it is presently receiving.

We have arrived at the figure of \$8,000, and I and the members of the Committee believe, conservatively, based upon very detailed sifting of the duties of the members of the General Assembly. We believe that the off-session Committee work, as well as the 70 day work which is presently performed by the General Assembly takes up so much time of some of the delegates that although we may be reluctant to classify the General Assembly of Maryland as a full-time legislature, it nevertheless approaches full time service to the people of Maryland in the amount of time that is devoted to the business of this State and to the business of the General Assembly.

Now, it may well be true that in past times it had been difficult to have the voters increase the Constitutionally authorized salary, but the Committee believes that part of the reason lies in the fact that the general public has not been aware of the vast amount of time and sacrifice that goes