

higher education, should have a degree of autonomy. The question is whether this should be statutory or if it should be recognized in the Constitution of the State of Maryland.

I believe strongly that it is in the best interest of higher education generally, and the University particularly, to have a degree of autonomy recognized in the Constitution, because this would give the best protection against excessive interference from political or other special interests. I would like to give you a little detailed information about the experience of the State of Michigan with higher education since 1817, which was the date of the founding of the University of Michigan.

From the establishment of the University of Michigan (one of the finest public state universities) until 1850 the institution was not protected by any constitutional provision guaranteeing a degree of autonomy. The experience during these years of legislative and political interference with the affairs of the University led the members of the Constitutional Convention of 1850 to give that institution constitutional protection by establishing a board of regents, providing for the terms of office and election, and giving the board all power over the internal affairs of the University. I believe that it is generally conceded that this action proved to be a wise one, as the University began to develop into a great institution.

Michigan Agricultural College, now Michigan State University (with approximately 40,000 students) was established in 1855 under a constitutional provision, but this did *not* grant constitutional autonomy. Its experience from that date until 1908, as contrasted with the experience of the University of Michigan in the same period, inclined the Constitutional

Convention of 1908 to give Michigan Agricultural College the same autonomy which had been given to the University of Michigan a half century earlier. The results of the application of the principle of constitutional autonomy for institutions of higher education in Michigan seemed good to the members of the Convention who wrote the states' constitution which was adopted in 1963. A degree of autonomy was guaranteed in that constitution to all public institutions of higher education which have the authority to grant baccalaureate degrees.

The experience in the State of Michigan indicates that higher education prospers under constitutional protection. Certainly, this has been true in the State of California which probably has the best system of higher education in the United States. Other institutions which have been given some degree of autonomy in the constitution have found it to be a great advantage.

I am not suggesting that the University of Maryland, or any other public university, should be independent of the Legislature. It could not be, for the Legislature will continue to appropriate monies to help to maintain the University, and the Legislature has every right to be given an annual accounting of the income and expenditure of the institution. It also has a right to be given an accounting of the management, but the members of the governing board of the University (and perhaps those of other public degree-granting institutions in the State) should have the general supervision of the institution and the control and direction of expenditures from the institutions' funds.

This would provide some real assurance that the institution would not be influenced by political and special interests so far as the internal operation is