

portant task. The election of delegates on June 13th is to be non-partisan in nature. Party politics have played no significant role in the development of the convention to this point. It is my fervent hope that the citizens' committees now being formed in Baltimore City and the various counties will assure that this high level of statesmanship continues.

Governor Tawes, who honors us with his presence today, set the proper tone for this convention on June 16, 1965, when he named an outstanding nonpartisan committee of citizens to study the need for the convention and to prepare necessary legislation. One of the most outstanding members of the Maryland bar, Commission Chairman H. Vernon Eney, and the other very capable members of the Commission are here today. They have given unstintingly of their time and their talents and I thank them on behalf of the people of Maryland.

It is regretted by all of us that former Governor William Preston Lane, Jr., who was honorary chairman of the commission and who was so vitally interested in this project, could not have lived to see it accomplished.

The bipartisan or nonpartisan nature of this task came to full fruition in the Maryland General Assembly session now drawing to a close. The most gratifying aspect of my early days in office has been the outstanding cooperation I have received from the leadership of the Legislature and the manner in which Delegates and Senators of both parties have responded to the wishes and needs of the people without resort to partisan politics.

How fitting it is that this particular bill would be the first major piece of legislation from this constructive, bipartisan session of the General Assembly!

It is interesting to note that we are now on a very close time table to that of our predecessors of 100 years ago. The last Constitutional Convention enabling act in Maryland was passed on January 10, 1867. The delegates were elected on April 10, 1867, and they convened on May 8, 1867.

Let us resolve, a century later, to replace their work with a viable instrument of government that will be flexible enough to serve future generations as well as our own, without the need for the 215 amendments that brought about the overwhelming public demand for this revision.