

government to meet the demands of today under a constitution written for another era.

Aware of the changing times which have required these amendments, Marylanders have shown a long-standing interest in revising our Constitution. Every twenty years, as prescribed by the Constitution, citizens of Maryland vote on whether to call a constitutional convention. In 1930 and in 1950 a majority of those voting on the question favored calling a convention but nevertheless no convention was called.

Realizing the interest of Marylanders in constitutional revision, Governor J. Millard Tawes in 1965 appointed a non-partisan commission of outstanding Marylanders to study the need for a convention and to prepare recommendations of necessary changes in the Constitution. The General Assembly of Maryland then enacted legislation submitting the question of calling a convention to the voters in an election held in September, 1966. After an overwhelming endorsement of the calling a convention, the General Assembly enacted further legislation providing for the election of delegates in June, 1967, and outlining the Convention's duties. The 142 delegates elected to the Convention assembled in Annapolis on September 12, 1967, to draft the Constitution presented here.

The Convention represented a

cross-section of Maryland's citizenry. Delegates came to Annapolis from the mountains of Western Maryland, the rolling hills of central Maryland, and the coastal-plain of the Eastern Shore and Southern Maryland. Joining them at our state capital were delegates from the suburbs and the inner cities of our metropolitan centers. Marylanders of all backgrounds were present and the completed document is a blend of the variety of viewpoints represented at the Convention.

The delegates to the Convention did not attempt to write a constitution which merely reflected their own viewpoints and opinions. Before they began drafting a constitution, the delegates heard hundreds of witnesses explain how they believed the Constitution could provide efficient and representative government and yet protect the people against arbitrary government. The witnesses included legislators, members of the judicial and executive branches, political scientists, people representing a variety of special interests, and many average citizens and taxpayers who were interested in Maryland's government. The Convention was offered many suggestions for solutions to existing problems, and many others for the anticipated problems of a growing state in the face of rapid change. These suggestions were invaluable in writing the final document approved by the Convention.