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SYMPOSIUM ON THE VICE-PRESIDENCY
AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ELECTION REFORM

*Fordham University School of Law
New York, New York
December 3, 1976*

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Political observers and Vice-Presidents alike have often denounced the office of Vice-President, with its limited and uncertain duties, as debilitating, politically damaging, and even superfluous. But Presidential inability and sudden death in recent history have re-emphasized the importance of the office in the public eye. History has made plain that the drafters of the Constitution and even of the twentieth amendment failed to account sufficiently for the problems surrounding Presidential succession.

Moreover, during the last four years, an unprecedented chain of events has catapulted the controversial office to greater prominence. A series of three men occupied the Vice-Presidency and one of these succeeded to the Presidency without having appeared on a national ballot. The three apparently held similar political views, but their qualifications for and conduct of the office differed markedly. Since 1967, when the twenty-fifth amendment was adopted to eliminate some serious constitutional inadequacies, debate continues as to whether further changes—in the order of succession, the selection of candidates, or the functioning of the office—are needed.

The American Bar Association's Special Committee on Election Reform has held a series of meetings devoted to discussion of these problems, culminating in the present Symposium of diverse observers and participants in the political process, conducted at Fordham Law School in New York on December 3, 1976, and the Committee's recommendations which follow the transcript.

The transcript of the proceedings has been edited and reordered.