

the backs of the farmers. I suggest you adopt the amendment so that the legislature can get on with the job of helping the farmers, helping all of us because we all have a stake in their interest, without giving this unneeded windfall to the speculators.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question?

Delegate Adkins.

DELEGATE ADKINS: Mr. Chairman, I take it this Convention is face to face perhaps for the first time with the fact Maryland is in fact a divided State. It is divided between the rural sections on its one hand and the heavily urbanized areas on the other. It is divided by the fact that what is good for rural Maryland is not necessarily good for urban Maryland.

I suggest to this Convention that its job, the exercise of its dedicated responsibility, is to try to find that compromise between those two differences of interest which best serve all the people. The sponsor of this amendment in response to a question has conceded that at this point at least in history he would not recommend the abolition of the farm land exemption.

I think it is generally the feeling of Delegates to this Convention as I discussed it with them that they feel farm lands and farmers, pursuit of agriculture, basic as it is to our welfare, is entitled to some form of protection.

The thing that concerns many Delegates is the fact that there are abuses in this exemption and with that I completely agree. But I suggest to the Delegates that at the same time that we are divisive we are also faced with the fact that the balance of power has shifted from rural Maryland to urban Maryland. I suggest to the delegates further that with that shift of power has come a situation when urban Maryland for the first time must show the real restraint that we are entitled to have them exercise if in fact they are to be worthy of this trust which is being imposed on them.

We are not asking that the abuses should be continued. I am not arguing personally for the benefit of speculators. I will interstitially say to you that if you eliminate the farm land exemption you will in essence be playing into the hands of the speculators because to that extent you will be forcing rural Maryland to sell its land now devoted to open spaces, if you will, a term which seems to be popular in urban

Maryland, it will be forcing rural Maryland to sell or the farmers of Maryland to sell their land by economic necessity to the speculator who can hold it for future profit.

Unless this is in the constitution, and in view of the fact coming events cast their shadows before, I am thinking of the next amendment which I am quite confident will be presented if this amendment is defeated. Unless you mandate this to at least consider the plight of the farmer, the pressure on urban representatives to cure the ills will be such that the easy answer to the problem will be to eliminate the exemption.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have one-quarter minute, Delegate Adkins.

DELEGATE ADKINS: Eliminate the exemptions and aid the developer. The legislature under this amendment under the Committee Report can cure the ills of speculation. Unless it is mandated and continued in the Constitution you can sure correct the ills, you can also do great injustice to rural Maryland. Remember you are now in the majority. You of the urban areas, exercise that majority with tolerance. Defeat this amendment, support the Committee Report.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does any other delegate desire to speak in favor of the amendment?

Delegate Hardwicke.

DELEGATE HARDWICKE: Mr. Chairman, I think that the problem with the committee report can be pointed up very clearly.

If this Committee will look carefully at lines seven and eight on page 2 under section 8.02, I would like you to do it with me just a moment, the mandate is to property "devoted to agricultural use". In other words, it does not make any difference who owns the property. It does not make any difference why he is holding the property. It does not make any difference whether he is speculating whether he has a gold mine there. It does not make any difference whether he is a farmer or who he is, as long as it is devoted to agricultural use there is nothing the legislature can do about it under this language. Even though the phrase as prescribed by law follows, Delegate Case conceded in his answer to questions that the prescription by law could not make any difference as long as the land was used for agricultural purposes.

So I submit to you ladies and gentlemen of the Committee of the Whole that this