

was the Magna Carta of labor, that established as national policy the right of workers in interstate commerce to organize and bargain collectively.

Today these rights are basic to our country, to our State, and to our economic system. I support the amendment because these rights should have constitutional recognition, and even more important, the right to organize and bargain collectively ought now be extended to those workers not covered by the National Labor Relations Act.

I refer especially to migrant workers, waiters, waitresses, laundry workers, and retail clerks, all of whom receive low wages and need the most protection.

There are more than half a million workers in private industry in Maryland not covered by Federal law. In addition, there are more than 100,000 public employees in this State not now protected.

This amendment would provide the basic coverage all American citizens who work for a living are entitled to. The people I represent in Baltimore know what hard work means. They want this amendment passed. For all the working men and women in the State, I urge you to vote for this amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Kiefer.

DELEGATE KIEFER: Mr. Chairman, I yield three minutes to Delegate Jett.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Jett.

DELEGATE JETT: Mr. Chairman, fellow delegates, I rise in opposition to this amendment. I think it is a tremendous example of what not to put into the constitution.

As Delegate Child has said, we are putting in here something of one class against another. As someone else has said, if we are going to put this in, we might as well put in references to the landlord and tenant, borrower, lender, husband and wife, mother-in-law and son-in-law.

This type of thing does not belong in the constitution that we are writing for all the people of this State, and I should say to you again that it is not a thing that should be in the constitution because the legislature has recognized it.

There has never been, so far as I know, one single bit of anti-labor legislation put through our legislature. In addition to this, as Delegate Bothe recognized when

she stood up, we have written into the policy of our State the right of representatives and employees to organize and to act for their own benefit.

I say to you that this is the type of thing that we should leave to the legislature. They are equipped to handle it. They are aware of the problem, and it is not the type of thing that we should put into our constitution.

I ask you to vote against the amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Bothe.

DELEGATE BOTHE: I yield two minutes to Delegate Borom.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Borom.

DELEGATE BOROM: Mr. Chairman, fellow delegates, I want to rise to support the amendment submitted by the minority because it is my belief that there ought to be, within the constitution that we are writing now, a clear and free right for every individual to organize and bargain collectively.

Delegate Kosakowski, I think, has made the case very well. There are many people who should not be deprived by accident of employment of the right to bargain collectively.

I think I would rather not indicate we are in a class struggle, but I think we would have to recognize that the population to which this particular section may have the most importance, represents a population that has limited employment opportunities. It also represents a population which, although they may have specific preferences for a particular vocation, should not be denied the right to bargain collectively, to enhance or increase their earning potential, and to have something to say about the working conditions which prevail at their places of employment.

In a society of rapidly escalating income, it is extremely important that intrastate workers have this privilege and this right recognized in the constitution so that they will not find themselves in the bind of the group to which Delegate Bothe referred during her presentation, those at Church-Home Hospital. There, although they recognized that certain conditions are against them, they in effect do not have the opportunity or the option for ample recourse against conditions which prevail.

I urge you to support this amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Kiefer.