

legislative body by whatever name known, and every municipal corporation of Maryland, including the City of Baltimore, shall be public meetings and open to the public at all times.

Nothing contained herein shall be construed to prevent any such body from holding an executive session from which the public is excluded, but no ordinance, rule or regulation shall be finally adopted at such an executive session.

The same thing in another section of the Code applies to county commissioners. The same thing also applies to all of the executive branches of the government, and it says "All meetings, regular and special, of the boards or commissions in control of any department, bureau or other agency in the executive department of the government of Maryland shall be public meetings and open to the public at all times and goes to exceptions, of course, for executive sessions."

Nobody, not even the experts in Washington, wanted to say that the legislature should not have executive sessions, or that the officials of the state government could not confer among themselves in private.

Some of this excitement is based on the federal right to know act. In the federal government it is an entirely different situation. There it applies only to the executive branch, and there are a number of exceptions. The President has the right to eliminate whatever he thinks may be detrimental, and we also heard of a number of private areas where various information is provided to the government for research and for methods of future planning, which if turned loose to the public would be in effect a very serious breach of confidence.

Ladies and gentlemen, I think most of you know how you want to vote on this thing. I simply hope that you will adopt the amendment that I suggest, because I believe that it does reiterate the concept of this body that the public does have a right to know. But let us not open the floodgates.

I urge the adoption of this amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does any delegate desire to speak in opposition?

Are there any questions first of the sponsor of the amendment?

Delegate Beatrice Miller.

DELEGATE B. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I am sorry, but I must pursue my question. Chairman Kiefer has not answered my question.

How much consideration was given to this substitute? It is the substitute of the Committee which considered the language, or is it an amendment as would be presented by Delegate Kiefer, or any other delegate, and which we would consider in that light?

DELEGATE KIEFER: I do not deny the pattern of this. This is my idea. The Committee adopted the concept of the right to know, but I do not remember that any specific language was completely spelled out.

There was a lot of confusion about this, because it was withdrawn by Delegate Hostetter, but there were a number of efforts made to write something into our recommendations, and his particular one, as a matter of fact, was originally introduced to the Committee by Delegate Weidemeyer, so we had a great deal of thought and a great deal of conversation and a great deal of debate and there was not any particular language set forth.

The minority report so far as I know was not adopted by this Committee as such at any meeting, because at the request of Delegate Hostetter the matter was dropped.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Miller.

DELEGATE B. MILLER: I am to take it, then, that the minority report as signed by the members is the result of their consideration in Committee, and what they understood they wanted, and the amendment is one of the aspects of this which you are presenting to the floor. Is this correct?

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Kiefer.

DELEGATE KIEFER: Delegate Miller, as far as I am concerned, it was a closed meeting. I was not there. You will have to ask them. I think they just went around and got names.

Delegate Willoner will have to answer that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions of the sponsor?

Delegate Koger, do you have a question?

DELEGATE KOGER: I have a question.

THE CHAIRMAN: State the question.

DELEGATE KOGER: This amendment, would it leave it up to the legislature to provide information such as statistical records or expenditures and salaries? In