

majority of the whole people, would be a body of delegated powers only; and if the right to form a new or abolish an old government, is a right unalienable in the people, no such right can be transferred by them to any such convention. The advocates of conventional reform, therefore, cannot fail to discover that such arguments have a tendency to defeat, if they are not entirely suicidal to their own objects, and the undersigned will have reason to congratulate themselves, if none more formidable shall be presented to their consideration.

The undersigned yield their most unqualified assent to that great and fundamental principle of the Bill of Rights, which declares "that all government, of right originates from the people, is founded in compact only, and instituted solely for the good of the whole." By this, we understand, the framers of our Government to maintain, in opposition to the theory of the *divine right of kings*, on which the monarchical governments of the old world are based, that the people are the rightful source of power; and that all government is derived from, and founded on their consent. But when government has once been established by the people, with their consent, and in execution of the compact, the undersigned feel constrained to believe, that the framers of that sacred instrument meant also to maintain, that such government when formed, is binding on the people to the remotest generations, until changed or altered in the mode prescribed by the Form of Government itself, or until it becomes perverted from its original uses, and wholly destructive of the ends for which it was instituted.

The article of the bill of rights now under review, has reference more immediately to the rights and power of the people in the *original formation* of government, than it has, to the effect and binding force of government on them, when established. But in no part of that instrument can the undersigned discover the least justification for the doctrines now openly maintained, that the people in the uncontrolled power of their might have the unlimited right to alter and abolish governments of their own formation whenever it may please them to do so. The undersigned submit that such principles are fraught with the most disastrous consequences to human liberty itself, and if carried to their practical results must necessarily end in the destruction of all good government, and finally in the establishment of anarchy and despotism.

The government of Maryland is a government founded in compact—not a compact between the people and the convention which framed it, or between the people and the Legislature, but a compact, by and among the people themselves,—one with the other,—all with each, and each with all, by which they have agreed for the good of the whole, not only to be bound, but to remain bound, so long as the original ends of the compact are preserved. A compact which protects the weak against the strong, the rights of minorities against the encroachments of majorities—and secures to each and the whole all the privileges and rights contemplated by it. The constitution and the bill of rights are the fruits of this compact, and constitutes the basis on which it now rests.

They contain provisions by which a change or alteration in the