

not offer the same propositions as amendments to the majority report?

The PRESIDENT. Certainly.

Mr. BELT. Will the result of this vote in any way affect the right of debate?

The PRESIDENT. No, sir.

Mr. BERRY, of Prince George's, demanded the yeas and nays, and they were ordered.

The question being taken upon substituting the minority report, the result was—yeas 25, nays 46—as follows:

*Yeas*—Messrs. Belt, Berry, of Prince George's, Blackiston, Bond, Briscoe, Brown, Chambers, Clarke, Crawford, Dail, Davis, of Charles, Duvall, Edelen, Harwood, Henkle, Hollyday, Horsey, Jones, of Somerset, Lansdale, Lee, Marbury, Mitchell, Miller, Morgan, Peter, Wilmer—26.

*Nays*—Messrs. Goldsborough, President; Abbott, Annan, Audoun, Baker, Barron, Carter, Cunningham, Cushing, Dellinger, Earle, Ecker, Farrow, Galloway, Hatch, Hebb, Hopkins, Hopper, Jones, of Cecil, Keefer, Kennard, King, Markey, McComas, Mullikin, Murray, Negley, Nyman, Parker, Pugh, Purnell, Ridgely, Robinette, Russell, Sands, Schley, Smith, of Carroll, Sneary, Stirling, Stockbridge, Sykes, Thomas, Todd, Valliant, Wickard, Wooden—46.

When their names were called,

Mr. BRISCOE said: I vote for the adoption of this report in preference to the other, not committing myself wholly to a proposition of this kind upon its final passage. I vote "aye."

Mr. CLARKE said: I stand in the same position with the gentleman from Calvert (Mr. Briscoe,) and vote "aye."

The substitute was accordingly rejected.

The question recurred upon the consideration of the article as reported by the majority of the committee. The first section was read as follows:

"Section 1. Immediately after the adoption of this constitution, and before there shall have been held any general election under it, the mayor and city council of the city of Baltimore shall proceed to lay off and divide the said city into three several districts, of equal population and contiguous territory, as near as may be."

Mr. BELT. I proposed to myself within the limits which the rule allows, to submit some considerations upon this grave and most important subject; but it occurs to me that that may be entirely a work of supererogation. I do not want to speak upon a subject already decided; and I have concluded, for my own relief and satisfaction, and for that of a good many who act with me here, to propound an inquiry to the chairman of the committee. I see no objection to the inquiry, and no reason why it should not be answered in the same spirit in which it is put. If it is answered affirmatively, it supersedes the necessity of any argument whatever. I wish to know of

that gentleman, or, if he will not answer me, of any gentleman of the majority, whether or not the majority of this convention, as a political organization, has determined in any manner to adopt this majority report?

Mr. ABBOTT. I do not think that is a proper question.

The PRESIDENT. It is not in order to propound an inquiry of that sort. This is a body for deliberation, consultation, consideration, whether a party has done so or not, does not elucidate any question brought before this convention. A party has an unquestioned right to organize and adopt any principle of action it may choose. But it is not competent for gentlemen to put interrogations here with a view to ascertain what has been done outside of this hall.

Mr. BELT. I have a right to interrogate; there is no law to prevent that. My question was only based upon fair and open dealing.

The PRESIDENT. The impression of the chair is that nobody has a right in this house to interrogate any member as to what has been done outside of this house. Gentlemen are bound, in honor, bound by every obligation due from one gentleman to another, not to respond to such an inquiry, unless with the consent of every gentleman associated with him. If that universal consent is given, the president will not restrict the gentleman in any interrogations he may choose to propound. Is it the pleasure of the convention that this interrogatory shall be answered?

Mr. SANDS. I object; but I will say at the same time that I know nothing at all of any such conclusion that has been had.

Mr. SCHLEY. I object to the question. It will open an unnecessary discussion of a partisan character.

Mr. AUDOUN. I object, for I regard it as a matter not connected with this body at all, in session. If gentlemen feel disposed to ask such questions outside of this hall, then we may be disposed to answer them.

The PRESIDENT. The gentleman from Prince George's has the right to discuss the question within the time prescribed by the convention, and in the mode sanctioned by parliamentary usage. If he does not desire to discuss it, it is a matter of discretion with himself.

Mr. BELT. I do not care to discuss it particularly. I supposed if there was such an arrangement, gentlemen would be willing to assume the responsibility of it, and not put the rest to the necessity of making speeches unnecessarily. It is no particular pleasure to make a speech upon a question of this character, upon which all parties have ordinarily heretofore been divided, unless they are to have some possible effect.

The PRESIDENT. The gentleman has a right to assume that state of facts if he desires, and to abstain from the discussion. So far as the president is personally concerned, he has not the slightest objection to any gen-