

The legislature has not been unmindful of this problem. It has made a very good attempt to tackle the problem, and when I say this, I say to you that what we are doing here is not putting heart and soul in the constitution. I think we are putting meaningless phrases and hot air in it. There is no way that I can conceive of, that anyone could oppose the concept of this provision or of any way you could oppose any other concept.

We want to protect the consumer. But I say to you the policing that is implicit in this suggestion is beyond anyone's comprehension; it is an utterly impossible thing to implement. I say to you that as you get back into your history and into the days of Esau and Jacob, where Esau was seen to be a notorious consumer, regardless of how you handle this problem or whether that law had been on the books then or whether it will ever go on the books, no one can protect a consumer against himself; and that is what this pretends to do. That is what I think we are holding out, the most indecent hopes to people that we cannot fulfill, and we cannot hope to fulfill, and for that reason, I shall vote against this proposal.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate L. Taylor.

DELEGATE L. TAYLOR: I rise in support of this particular constitutional proposal, mainly because in 1933 President Roosevelt decided to make some reforms to protect consumers at that time.

In 1933 the Securities and Exchange Commission was established because so many investors were being defrauded and victimized because of the policies of that day. During that time Mr. Roosevelt was president. He said the buyer should be protected, and at that time, in 1933, an act was passed to provide that people would be protected if stock brokers did not give accurate information to investors. At the present time we find that the small consumer is not protected in the State of Maryland. We find that he needs protection, and of course, this particular constitutional proposal would give a mandate to the General Assembly.

We have certain laws passed by the General Assembly, but at the present time we still find that many important and well-to-do people are unprotected. I feel this will be one way of saying to the public that we feel it is not enough to ask the General Assembly to protect the interests of Maryland citizens. I feel that it should be stated constitutionally. This is why I rise

in support of this particular constitutional proposal.

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

Delegate Hardwicke.

DELEGATE HARDWICKE: I will be brief, Mr. Chairman.

This is not a mandate. The Chairman of the Committee himself says that whether there is need for protection is a matter of legislative discretion. If they decide there is no need for discretion he concedes that there will be no need for action.

Consequently, by the admission of the Chairman himself, this provision does absolutely nothing.

I suggest that we want a constitution that we will be proud of, that will live through the ages. This is the kind of provision that should be omitted.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Sickles.

DELEGATE SICKLES: Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this provision.

I share the doubts with him here as to the inherent validity, the inherent power of this provision, but I think it would be an overstatement to say that it will have no impact and no effect whatsoever. I think first it would focus attention of the entire State of Maryland, not only as a result of this colloquy today, but in the course of the actual consideration of the document as we go to the people for its ratification, and also it would focus the attention of the General Assembly on this subject matter once again, and indicate to them what this cross-section of the State feels about this particular provision.

It can do no harm, and it might very well do some good. I would suggest to you that perhaps we are taking on the role of a lobbyist; but I am content to lobby for consumers, and therefore I shall support this provision.

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

*(There was no response.)*

Does any other delegate desire to speak in favor?

Delegate Bard.

DELEGATE BARD: Mr. Chairman, I should like to speak in favor of the proposal.

Last Wednesday I talked about the importance of consumer protection. Today