

ance simply because you are not prepared in the face of this assembly to face up to the hard fact that in fact your position is there should be no farm land exemption?

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Hanson.

DELEGATE HANSON: No, my position is that even though it is difficult to meet this problem, that there are valid reasons for obtaining a different classification for assessment for farm land if it is possible to identify bona fide farmers and give them a tax break and that there are other classification systems for the classification of property for taxation which I favor, not, correction, including agriculture but not limited to agriculture and although I favor some of those perhaps even more than agriculture, I am opposed to mandating any of them in the constitution.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Adkins.

DELEGATE ADKINS: May I ask you, Delegate Hanson, if you believe it is possible under the present proposed committee report to write a statute which would cure the abuses about which you and many other delegates are concerned in connection with this farm land exemption?

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Hanson.

DELEGATE HANSON: I think it is more possible for the legislature to write such a law curing the abuses under the section as I would amend it than I think it is possible for them to do it under the section as it now stands which contains the mandatory phrase and contains the phrase "agricultural uses" which I think refuzzed something the first section had unfuzzed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Adkins.

DELEGATE ADKINS: At the risk of getting the answer I fully expect, may I repeat my question.

Do you think it impossible to do that under the language of the committee report?

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Hanson.

DELEGATE HANSON: I am not certain.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Rosenstock.

DELEGATE ROSENSTOCK: Mr. Chairman, fellow delegates, I rise to oppose this amendment.

Since college, I have been operating the family farm. Today we pay twenty-five percent of our gross income to pay state and county taxes, the highest value of land

for purpose of assessment is \$150.00 an acre down to waste land, the bed of the Monocacy River of \$25 an acre.

I would like to know what apartment houses in Montgomery County pay 25 percent of their gross income for taxes in that county.

We are having a difficult time in our county with the speculators from Washington and Montgomery County selling their properties there at inflated prices and buying up farms in our county to replace them without any tax problem because it is purely in a great many cases the sale of the land was caused by condemnation or threat of condemnation. They have been coming up and buying farmland in place of that which is a replacement without any federal taxes at this time and paying \$2,000 to \$3,000 an acre for it.

Yet we are disturbed that these speculators are being protected presently by the assessment laws. We agree with our brothers from Montgomery County that the speculators should not be taken care of under the guise of bona fide agricultural operations. Yet, at the same time, should we destroy the fine agricultural structure that we have in the State of Maryland in order to get rid of, let's say, 500 speculators from Washington and the District of Columbia?

THE CHAIRMAN: Does any other delegate desire to speak in favor of the amendment?

Delegate Beatrice Miller.

DELEGATE B. MILLER: I would give you that no one here would deny aid and encouragement to the farmer. I would also say that less people are against the farmers than are against sin, if you look at last night's vote on lottery. I would point out further, it does not surprise me a constitutional question as aid to the farmer, people in this State voted overwhelmingly in favor of any type of amendment that would seem to aid the farmers.

However, three percent of Maryland's work force today are farmers. This is a small group, and while we all want to help them, I would say putting such a provision into the constitution makes a very attractive bid to speculators to lobby in the legislature similar to the kind of lobby activity they carried on before the Committee and would seem to have overwhelmed the Committee and remove from the legislature any initiative to look for new sources and new forms of aid for the farmers. It may very