June 13, 1866 and was ratified by three-fourths of the states by July 20, 1868, according to Secretary of State Seward's certification, Maryland did not ratify the amendment until 1959. Between 1868 and until shortly before the ratification, Maryland had exercised rigid segregation in its state schools, in its intrastate modes of transportation, in housing, employment, recreation and public accommodations. And as we look at the racial discrimination and segregation still existing in the State, we must be challenged to affirm in our new Constitution the new state policy to protect the civil rights of all.

At the time of the founding of this State, the question of religious freedom was as explosive and as controversial as the race question is today. Yet the writers of that Constitution and the bylaws enacted thereto set an example for all the states and for our nation and for the world in our provisions for religious tolerance.

We have an opportunity here to show in our day that we possess the same kind of far-sighted courage and nobility of purpose. It will keep the path to justice in the courts free from the obstructions of long delays and the postponements of the enjoyment by the citizens of their constitutional rights.

The recent and naturally important case of *Bell* v. *Maryland* is an example in point. In November of 1960, students from Morgan State College were arrested in Hooper's restaurant. They were charged with criminal trespass under the trespass act, section 577 of Article 27 of the Criminal Code, for seeking service in that public accommodation. In January, 1962, judgments of guilty were entered, fines were assessed and the defendants appealed to the Maryland Court of Appeals. In 1963, the lower court judgments were affirmed. Petition for certiorari was sought with the United States Supreme Court and that petition was granted.

In 1964 the Supreme Court rendered its decision in the Bell Case and in four other cases which had reached the court in the field of discrimination in public accommodations. The court remanded the case to the Maryland Court of Appeals primarily on the point that Maryland in 1963 had passed the state-wide public accommodations law, which applied to Baltimore City and which abolished the crime for which the defendants were charged. In the light of that new act, the Supreme Court suggested that the Maryland Court of Appeals might want to reconsider its affirmance of the convictions. But it was not until April of 1965, five years later, that this financially burdensome and long litigation ended with a reversal of the lower court conviction.

Now, in 90 percent of the cases that have reached the Supreme Court, there is the same story of the tremendous financial outlays and the long and burdensome struggle through the various procedural delays and obstructions until the court makes a determination.

In the school cases, some Negro children have never enjoyed their constitutional right to a desegregated education which was enunciated in 1954 by the Supreme Court in the Brown case. So in the first place we feel this language would be a mandate to the courts and to the General Assembly. It would also give them guidance in eliminating the long delays that Negro citizens in this State have historically suffered when they seek to enjoy and to have their Constitutional rights enforced.

I find that many of the delegates have no understanding of this area because they do not come in contact with it. I would like to bring to the attention of the delegates the report just issued in October, 1967, via a joint survey conducted by the United States Department of Labor and the United States Department of Commerce.

They included Maryland in this survey. The survey showed some progress in increased income, better living conditions and better educational standards and more integration in the main stream of American life for the middle class colored citizens. While this gives hope that we can solve these problems, this report gives the grim figures which indicate how far we must go before we can say that colored citizens are receiving equal treatment under the law.

For nowhere in the United States is income for colored citizens equal to that of the white. In north-central regions it is the highest, but it is only 70 percent. In the South, which includes the states of the old Confederacy as well as Maryland, D. C., Kentucky, Oklahoma and West Virginia, it is only 51 percent.

The unemployment rate among colored citizens is three times the national average and this survey found that segregation in the cities has increased. Sixty-two percent of Negro families live in the central poverty areas of all of the large cities in the State study. The poverty areas are determined by a family income below $3,000, males in unskilled jobs, sub-standard housing, low educational attainment and inadequate health facilities.