

had urged the adoption of the poll-tax. If even the principle was right, still they ought not to impose this tax. They had taught the people of Maryland to believe that poll-taxes were odious. The Bill of Rights declares that every man must pay according to his worth—the man who owns much pays much, and the man who owns little pays little.

The assertion that the large class who own no property contribute nothing to the support of the government is utterly devoid of foundation, as shown yesterday by his colleague from the first legislative district of Baltimore city, (Mr. Vansant.) Not only every article of luxury, but every article of use and comfort which they needed, they had to pay an indirect tax on. If this poll-tax was established, there would have to be a penalty established for its non-payment, and what would that penalty be? You might call it a tax for public works, or for education, or what you will, but the penalty would be a deprivation of the right to vote—a right which should be hedged with no penalties or restrictions. Every man of this Convention knew now how naturalization papers were obtained; how they were paid for all over the country by political organizations for the purpose, and what else would this poll-tax lead to? How many would this poll-tax reach? There were about 90,000 voters in the State now, and probably one-fourth of them would be reached by this tax who do not now pay taxes. If this fundamental change was to be made in our organic law, the prejudices of generations were to be encountered. He asked that this one single right to vote should be left without a tax. The shadow of the tax collector darkened every door in this land now. Every species of property was now taxed and burdened to the extremest limit by Federal and State law. They would certainly meet with the scorn and denunciation of the people of this State if they tampered with this right. The Federal government, in its merciless cupidity, has spared this right to vote, and let it not be said that the ingenuity of the law-givers of the State of Maryland found an avenue of taxation which had escaped the keen-eyed scrutiny of the Federal government.

Mr. McKaig professed his inability to understand the