

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE TAWES ADMINISTRATION,

1959 - 1963

On a sunny but chilly January day in 1959, J. Millard Tawes stood on the east portico of the old State House in Annapolis and made his first speech to the people of Maryland as their Governor. It was not a long speech, this inaugural address, but in it the Governor observed the vast changes that were taking place in Maryland—changes creating new challenges and new problems which in turn would require new programs and new policies in government.

“In common with many other states,” he said, “Maryland has reached a stage of development where great strides forward must be taken if we are to keep up with the times. I conceive it to be the principal task of my Administration to achieve these new standards and at the same time to preserve the financial integrity of the State.”

The General Assembly had been in session for several days, and Governor Tawes lost no time in presenting a program with which he hoped to accomplish these objectives. The plan he presented to legislators was bold but not drastic. Some of the proposals represented pledges he had made in the recent campaign—a campaign that produced for him the greatest majority ever received by a candidate for Governor. Others were the product of his many years of experience in government, observing its processes and thinking about its improvement.

The most highly controversial of the measures before that first session of the General Assembly was a bill to reorganize the lower court system in Baltimore City, eliminating the positions of part-time trial magistrates and substituting for them full-time judges. For years these trial magistracies in Baltimore had been used as a principal source of political patronage, and certain political forces there fought the reform measure savagely. But in the end, the Governor's program, creating the Municipal Court of Baltimore City, succeeded, although a “party call”—an action in which the executive applies the full force of his prestige as a political leader—was required to obtain passage of the bill.

The significance of this accomplishment, aside from the obvious