

MESSAGES TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

January 14, 1959

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the General Assembly:

I have just taken the oath of office as Governor of the State of Maryland.

This solemn ceremony has left me with a feeling of both pride and humility—pride in the consciousness that I now am a part of that succession of men who have been chosen to govern this State, and humble as men are likely to be when faced with a grave task and heavy responsibilities.

In taking office today, I have become the fifty-ninth elected Governor. And thus I take my place in a long line of Governors that goes back more than 180 years—to Thomas Johnson, who was sworn in as the first elected Chief Executive in 1777.

The responsibilities which now rest upon me I feel most deeply, and in all humility, I implore the support and the prayers of the citizens of Maryland who have given me the opportunity to serve them in this high office. It is my own fervent wish that I may be able to discharge these obligations with courage, dignity and wisdom.

Each Governor, during his administration, confronts the peculiar problems of his day and era. Glancing back over the recent history of the State, we recall that Governor O'Connor's responsibility was to make certain that Maryland rendered the maximum contribution toward winning a global war. Governor Lane's big task was to restore State services and rebuild State facilities, which, through necessity, had been deferred during the war years. My immediate predecessor, Governor McKeldin, had the burden of guiding our State through a period of intensified growth in population and economic activity.

Now, with this inauguration, we are moving into a new era—an era which will produce new problems and new challenges and a period in which the people of Maryland will be called upon to make decisions of great consequence. Firm courage in the face of these challenges must become the touchstone for the conduct of the Governor, the Legislature and all public servants.

The task of the Legislature is not made any easier because of the