

In this same resolution the General Assembly viewed the secession of the southern states as final and irreconcilable, and it asked the government to recognize that fact, to "accept the olive branch which is held out to [the president], and in the name of God and of humanity, to cease this unholy and most wretched and unprofitable strife" and especially to remove its troops from Maryland soil.⁴⁹

At the same time, by resolution 2, the legislature commissioned Outerbridge Horsesy of Frederick to proceed to Richmond and negotiate with Virginia "for the protection of the citizens of Maryland from injury in person or property, by any unadvised act of the military forces of Virginia, and their compensation for any already done." Six weeks later the legislature learned that Confederate troops had been destroying the dams, locks, canal boats, and other property belonging to the C & O Canal Company, and, by resolution 8, formally requested from the state of Virginia "full recompense for all property destroyed."

The political sentiment expressed in resolution 4 as to the legitimacy and finality of secession soon changed. As noted, the Unionists had become organized on a statewide basis and were given significant support by the Lincoln administration and the troops it commanded. This was particularly manifest on election day in November 1861. The Unionists had nominated candidates for governor and the General Assembly and apparently for the two positions on the Board of Public Works then expiring. The military authorities, seeking to assure a Unionist victory, stationed soldiers at the polling places and through arrests, intimidation, test oaths, and other coercive devices dissuaded many people from exercising their franchise. The election, says J. Thomas Scharf, was "a shameless mockery, and its results were but the work of fraud and violence."⁵⁰

The result was the intended one. Augustus W. Bradford, the Unionist candidate, was elected governor (defeating the States Rights candidate Benjamin C. Howard, the prominent Baltimore countian and delegate to the 1850-51 Constitutional Convention), and his party gained control of the General Assembly. It also elected two commissioners to the board—Frederick Fickey, Jr., of Baltimore City, and Edward Shriver of Frederick County.⁵¹

The General Assembly that convened in December 1861 was of quite different persuasion from its immediate predecessor. It repudiated the doctrine embodied in resolution 4 and expressed, in various resolutions of its own, its rejection of the notion that states had the right to secede. It stated instead the view that the war "has been forced upon the government of the United States, by the seditious and unlawful acts of those who have attempted its overthrow by violence." In sharp contrast to the resolutions adopted nine months earlier, the legislature conveyed the people's "approval of the course and policy of the President in the conduct of the war thus far." The only fear, or caveat, was that Lincoln, pressured by northern agitation, might interfere with the institution of slavery in Maryland. To that end the legislature protested all schemes to excite insurrection among the slaves, regretted attempts to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and asked the president "to resist and rebuke all attempts,

49. Ibid. See also res. 13, adopted 22 June 1861, requesting the state's two U.S. senators to "vote for an immediate recognition of the independence of the government of the Confederate States of America." Res. 14 and 15 expressed a clear recognition of the sovereign right of a state to secede, urged the immediate cessation of hostilities, and protested in the strongest terms certain arbitrary actions on the part of the military.

50. J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Maryland from the Earliest Period to the Present Day* (Baltimore: John B. Piet, 1879; reprint, Hatboro, Pa.: Tradition Press, 1967), 3:460. Compare Duncan, "Era of the Civil War," pp. 354, 355.

51. Fickey was a merchant, deeply committed to the Union cause and to Freemasonry. His service on the board did not interrupt his political activity. In August 1862 he was one of three commissioners in Baltimore City responsible for implementing Lincoln's draft of militiamen, and in October he was an unsuccessful candidate for mayor of Baltimore.