

Monday January the 6th 1845

This day the Governor having qualified as the Governor of the State by taking the oath prescribed by the Constitution & declaring his belief in the Christian religion, delivered before the Members of the Senate & House of Delegates the following inaugural address.

Senators & Gentlemen

It will be expected by you that I should, in accordance with the example of my predecessors, address you upon some of the topics of paramount importance, which will demand your deliberation and action during the present session of the Legislature. During the canvass which resulted in my election, I visited most of the Counties of the State, and thereby possess the advantage of knowing the views and wishes of our common constituency, upon the subjects to which I shall invite your attention. The subject which, above all others, will demand your early deliberation and your energetic and manly action, is the provision which it will be your duty to make for the immediate payment of the interest upon the public debt of the State.

No people on earth could feel more deeply than the people of Maryland, the degrading position now occupied by the State in reference to this subject, and no people in the civilized world could be more unanimously determined to wipe off this, the only stain which has ever rested upon the honor and integrity of their government. I profess to speak the almost universal sentiment of the people of Maryland of all classes and of all parties, in asking of you prompt and efficient legislation to relieve the State from her present humiliating position. The principal of the public debt bearing interest, amounts to the sum of about \$12,000,000. Upon this debt the amount of interest due on the first of December last, the end of the fiscal year, was about \$8,400,000, and the annual interest upon the debt is \$655,341. The plain duty then devolves on you to make such provision for the payment of the interest now due, and for the future payment of interest as it becomes due, as will relieve the public mind of all apprehension of another failure on the part of the State to meet its liabilities, the existing tax laws, properly executed, will yield a larger revenue than has hitherto been derived from that source, but will be still inadequate to meet the ordinary expenses of the government, and to pay the interest of the public debt by about the sum of \$150,000 per annum, and further legislation is therefore necessary to raise this sum.

Direct taxation is more objectionable to the people, because thought by them to be more unequal than any other species of taxation by which the public revenue can be raised, I would therefore suggest to your consideration some