

STATEMENT, VIEWS ON PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES
ENTERING THE 1960 MARYLAND DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY
ANNAPOLIS

August 28, 1959

I previously have expressed the hope that Maryland would be able to escape a serious Democratic presidential primary next year so that Maryland Democrats may send an uninstructed delegation to the convention in Los Angeles. I wish to make it clear that my position on this issue is not based on any desire on my part to circumvent the aspirations of any presidential candidate. It is, on the contrary, based solely on what I consider to be in the best interest of the Democratic Party in Maryland.

A primary would bind and impede the maneuverability of the delegation months before the Convention, making it impossible for it to take advantage of vital developments which invariably occur during the period immediately preceding the opening of the Convention. We have examples of this in the past, and notably in 1952 and 1956, when Maryland was bound to vote for Senator Kefauver because of his winning in the preferential primary, although it became quite evident on the eve of the Convention that he had little or no chance of winning. Because of this, our delegation was considered everywhere as a rather ineffectual bloc.

In expressing my own feelings on this question, I echoed what appears to be the sentiment of most Democratic governors. The same feelings, for example, have been expressed by Governor Lawrence of Pennsylvania, Governor Brown of California and Governor DiSalle of Ohio. New York Democrats, by their indorsement of Mayor Wagner as a favorite son, have, I am sure, the same idea.

A great many people don't seem to realize that only 15 of the 50 states have the preferential primary, and of these only seven firmly commit the delegation, the other eight treating the result as not binding but advisory only. I mention these things so that the rank and file of the Party, who may have been misled, may realize that there is nothing unusual in my suggestion that the Maryland delegation go to the convention uninstructed.

I cannot emphasize too strongly that my attitude in this situation has nothing to do with the prospective candidacy for the presidency of Senator John F. Kennedy, whose brilliant statesmanship at a youthful age has won my profoundest admiration. I wish to state further,