

the colonists migrating to America came to escape from persecutions originating from religious differences. Arrived in the New World, however, not all of the erst-while victims immediately established a new mode. Many, in their turns, discriminated against those who worshipped differently from themselves—taxed them heavily, inveighed cruel punishments against them or excluded them absolutely from their lands. I do not have to go into any detail to remind you that, generally speaking, this was not the practice in Maryland.

The two religious groups at that time most opposed to one another—the Catholics and the Protestants—collaborated in founding our State. Collaborated by design too, collaborated deliberately. They next admitted other groups, or, did not merely admit them—invited them. And if subsequently this policy of farsighted wisdom was thwarted, it was not by the Marylander's own wish, but by the intervention of European politicians. The memory and the spirit lived on in the State. And so when, after a century, the dark imminence of the American Civil War filled all minds, and led to extravagant and passionate conduct, both North and South, it was possible for Maryland to see both sides. Our long custom of liberal thinking sustained us.

It is not my purpose today to retrace those historic complications. I will point to only the chief of them, choosing it not only because it is first, but also because it is imbued with an irony that is to be found in much of human history and can never be disassociated from it. That is the circumstance that Maryland, itself, long before, had performed an act of patriotism which, when the Civil War came, made it physically impossible for the State to remain apart, no matter what its opinions. For Maryland surrounds the city of Washington. In 1791, Maryland, small as it was, had ceded ten square miles of its limited territory to the nation as a whole, to serve as the site of the national capital. Consequently in 1861, the State that urged peace was itself regarded by leaders on both sides chiefly as a bit of land of vast strategic importance. And through this condition, among others, was lost our original plea for a course based on reason and toleration. And it is through this consideration, to a great extent, that the military leaders based their activity in our State. The Union forces occupied our land, the Confederate forces invaded it—both because it was the road to Washington. The State that had stood for peace became the path of war.

Three times the forces of the Confederate states swept into these western lands of ours, aiming to capture and occupy the United States capital. Once they succeeded in reaching Pennsylvania. Twice they were checked within our borders. Three major battles on our soil re-