

different in Maryland and the nation. This election was the first in which the presidential candidates appeared on the ballot and represented a slate of electors rather than Marylanders having to vote directly for the electors.²⁴

1944

The nation was deep into the horrors of World War II for the presidential election of 1944. America's entrance into the war on December 7, 1941 did not bring immediate results and the Republicans were the political beneficiaries in the congressional elections of 1942. They gained 10 seats in the U.S. Senate and drew within 13 votes of leadership in the House of Representatives. Three Republican Governors, John W. Bricker of Ohio, Harold E. Stassen of Minnesota and Thomas E. Dewey of New York, arose from the 1942 elections with presidential hopes. Maryland's Democratic Governor, Herbert R. O'Connor, earned wartime praise as Chairman of the National Governors' Conference and served in an advisory role in the Federal government.²⁵ President Roosevelt occupied himself with the war effort and traveled overseas in 1943 to meet with leaders of the allies. Events flowed quickly and another presidential contest seemed almost incidental.

The Republican primaries did not produce a frontrunner as contenders saved their energy and resources for the collection of delegates. The leading vote getter was General Douglas MacArthur who won the April primaries in Wisconsin and Illinois but received only a scattering elsewhere. Governor Earl Warren swept his home state of California for the second highest total while unpledged delegates finished a strong third at the ballot box. In a May 7th primary, Maryland Republicans expressed a strong preference for unpledged status over a Wilkie slate (17,600 to 4,701). By the time of the convention, the 1940 nominee, Wendell Wilkie, had withdrawn and Dewey had solidified his strength among the delegates and Republican voters. After all the other contenders withdrew, the still youthful New York Governor captured all but one of the convention's 1,057 votes for the presidential nomination.

The Democrats gave President Roosevelt renomination for a fourth term without much controversy as the President ran well in the primaries, showed strongly in various polls, and the risks of changing leadership during a World War were too great for the incumbent party to take. There was mounting anti-Roosevelt sentiment evidenced by the almost 25 percent primary vote given to unpledged delegates and in the discontent of southern states which gave Virginia Senator Harry F. Byrd 89 votes for the presidential nomination. The vice presidential sweepstakes represented the jockeying for the future. The current Vice President, Henry Wallace, was viewed as too liberal and Roosevelt agreed to accept another running mate. Twelve names were offered to the convention delegates with Missouri Senator Harry S. Truman, favored by the Maryland delegation,²⁶ emerging as the unifying second choice.

The campaign was unusually vigorous for a wartime contest. Governor Dewey was successful in fundraising and proved to be an effective campaigner on the stump. Roosevelt announced early that he would be devoting his attention to the affairs of