

to a higher level where they are deserving of a definite place in the judicial system of our State.

Provision for a constitutional amendment to provide for betterment in the set-up and operation of the People's Court of Baltimore City was passed by your body. The citizens of the State showed how much they approved your action by overwhelmingly passing the amendment in the recent election.

Also, in Baltimore City, the Traffic Court situation has been vastly improved through the appointment and administration of judges of ability, integrity and sound judgment. Abuses of the past have been eliminated. The Court has handled a considerably greater amount of work with efficiency and dispatch.

In regard to the several divisions of the minor judiciary, it is gratifying to note that these tribunals, oftentimes referred to as the "poor man's court", are now administered in a manner where every person, regardless of his class or of his means, can expect fair treatment and conscientious service. Furthermore, the motoring public which is peculiarly affected by the standards of these courts throughout the State realizes that marked improvement has been brought about, which is as it should be.

#### STATE INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT COMMISSION

In the interest of working men and women, as well as of employers, attention was directed at the last session of the Legislature to needed improvement in the State Industrial Accident Commission.

As an administration measure, a new set-up was provided which would afford greater facilities for trials with improved machinery for administrative control and all with a reduction in the number of commissioners. A referendum petition was filed, thus staying the operation of the law for a year and a half. In the meanwhile, I appointed a Commission, of which Mr. Ralph S. Warnken was Chairman, to make a thorough-going study and report on the Commission, its operation and its needs. This Commission made a most careful survey, affording hearings to interested parties and submitting a comprehensive report disclosing the fact that grave abuses had occurred.

Realizing that delay in the improvement of this important department would not be justified, immediate steps were taken under the Chairmanship of Mr. Charles E. Moylan, to accomplish this needed betterment. When the referendum petition was put to a vote in November, two months ago, the people approved the law passed by your body. Guided by the evident insistence of the people that this Commission should be supervised by the most competent individuals, I have selected four outstanding commissioners whose work, I am certain, will be in keeping with the expressed intent of the law.

As indicative of the important bearing on the general public of the work of this Commission, and to indicate the improvements that have been made, the following facts are cited:

During 1939 there were 10,300 cases of injury and occupational disease claims filed with the Commission; 108 workers were killed; 542 lost the use of some member or members of their bodies. The average number of industrial accidents in Maryland is approximately 30,000. During the year, an Occupational Disease Board, consisting of three physicians, was established to advise