

GOVERNOR RITCHIE'S STATEMENT CALLING AN EXTRA SESSION OF
THE LEGISLATURE FOR TUESDAY, JULY 29, 1930, FOR THE
PURPOSE OF PROVIDING NEW GENERAL REGISTRA-
TION DAYS FOR BALTIMORE CITY.

I have decided to call an extra session of the Legislature as the only means of enabling a large group of our citizens to retain their right to vote. This right is the highest privilege of citizenship, and the State should not permit a considerable body of the people to be disfranchised by circumstances wholly exceptional and unforeseen, and entirely beyond their control.

By a remarkable coincidence the four days fixed by law for this year's new general registration in Baltimore City fall on days which are sacred to Jewish people. The Jewish New Year is observed on September 23rd and 24th, and the Feast of the Tabernacles on October 7th and 8th.

I have with great care tried to ascertain the effect of this.

According to reliable estimates there are from 26,000 to 30,000 voting Jews in Baltimore, and of these it is estimated that 20,000 or more are Orthodox. The others are Reformed.

On the first registration day, September 23rd, no Jew, Orthodox or Reformed, would be permitted to register by the tenets of his faith. On the three remaining registration days, September 24th, October 7th and October 8th, the Reformed Jews could register. The Orthodox Jews, however, could not register at any time on any of these days except between dark and 10 o'clock P. M., standard time, on September 24th and October 8th.

This would give the Orthodox Jews about three hours on each of these two nights in which to register, or about six hours in all. Under the most favorable conditions not more than 20 persons can be registered an hour in any precinct, so that in six hours 120 persons would be the maximum. There are a great many precincts in Baltimore in which several hundred voting Orthodox Jews reside, and it is perfectly obvious that six hours are nowhere near enough to register these 20,000 or more persons, large numbers of whom live in communities.

In addition to this, there are around 400 Jewish election officials in Baltimore City, and a great many registration offices are in Jewish homes. This is necessarily so in many precincts of the