

# Ex-Gov. Tawes dies

CRISFIELD (AP) — Former Gov. J. Millard Tawes died today of an apparent heart attack, a hospital official here reported.

Truman F. Painton, administrator of Edward W. McCready Memorial Hospital, said Tawes was found unconscious in his Crisfield home.

Doctors and ambulance crews who responded to the call spent approximately 55 minutes trying to revive the former governor but failed, Painton said.

"Indications are it was a heart attack," Painton said.

Tawes, 85, had been hospitalized at Peninsula General Hospital in Salisbury last month once for chest pains and a second time after suffering a slight heart attack.

According to Painton, the hospital received a call about 8:20 a.m. this morning to come to Tawes' house.

When medical personnel arrived about 10 minutes later, he said, they found Tawes unconscious. Unsuccessful efforts to revive Tawes followed, the hospital administrator said.

Tawes is survived by his wife, two children and four grandchildren. There was no immediate word on funeral services.

A Crisfield native, Tawes served two terms as Maryland's governor, riding into office in 1958 by the largest majority ever given the state's chief executive up until that time. He was a surprisingly easy victor again in 1962 after a tough Democratic primary.

He began his political career as clerk of the Somerset County court in 1930 and spent the next 36 years in public life as court clerk, state comptroller, banking commissioner and Maryland's 59th chief executive.

After his stint as governor, he retired briefly, then returned to government as chairman of the Chesapeake Bay Affairs Commission.

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He was then appointed by then-Gov. Marvin Mandel as the first secretary of Department of Natural Resources when that agency was created by the legislature in 1969.

After another retirement, Tawes again returned to state service as state treasurer in 1973 to fill an unexpired four-year term and retired from that post in 1975.

As a politician, Tawes was an enigma.

To the public, he appeared to be a weak and hesitant governor. Yet he could, and did, use the considerable powers of his office to push legislation through an unwilling General Assembly.

He was known as a fiscal conservative, but state government expanded rapidly under his leadership.

Despite his mild-mannered appearance, he was given to occasional temper outbursts which were legend around the State House in Annapolis.

The impression of weakness stemmed from a number of sources, including the fact that Tawes was, as he liked to remind friends while he was in office, the oldest governor in the nation.

In addition, he preferred operating behind the scenes, saying little about what he was going to do until it was done. And he sometimes waited to act until he was forced to.

But once Tawes made up his mind, he moved with all the power at his command.

His strength was never more apparent than in the legislature when he overrode the time-honored tradition of local courtesy and option to reorganize Baltimore City courts, abolish slot machines and make the Public Accommodations Law statewide.

In all three cases, senators and delegates from the areas involved fought tenaciously against the changes. But the governor and his aides, using the full power of the chief executive, rammed the bills through the legislature.

In addition to these victories, Tawes listed among the achievements of which he was proudest the reorganization of Maryland's high-education system, upgrading of the status of state mental institutions and creation of the state Department of Economic and Community Development.