The Unionism that was numerically dominant in Maryland by spring 1861 was, it must be admitted, fragile. Most Marylanders, even those who denounced secession as illegal and unjustified, saw the North as the aggressor in the sectional conflict. Marylanders were especially sensitive to Northern disregard of the fugitive slave laws. Unionists also shared with the activists a high regard for the Crittenden Compromise proposals. Approval of the plan was automatic at every one of the numerous meetings held that winter, by all parties. Also, although the Unionists had the numbers, the activists had the more emotional case. In this situation Maryland could be severed from the Union by an explosion of feeling which overrode interest, blotted out reason, and substituted rage. Two incidents in the spring of 1861 threatened the control of the Unionists over the state.

II

President-elect Abraham Lincoln was scheduled to pass through Baltimore on Saturday, February 23, at the end of the speaking tour which wound up in Washington just ten days before his inauguration. Maryland newspapers reported Lincoln's progress through the North and East and carried synopses or even texts of the speeches he made on the way. His coming was anticipated with curiosity, excitement, and considerable alarm. A group of Baltimore Republicans petitioned Marshall of Police George P. Kane for protection and permission to accompany the president-elect in Baltimore and to hold a brief rally in his honor. Kane refused them, saying that it was a dangerous idea and that he could not promise protection. The *American*, which reported Kane's reaction, approved of it and called Lincoln "particularly obnoxious to the people and public sentiment of Baltimore.[111] The failure of the city authorities to plan a welcome for the president-elect or even to allow his followers to do so, was an ominous sign of ill-will. Dominant Unionism notwithstanding, Lincoln's passage through the state would be dangerous.

Baltimore was the riskiest stop on the president-elect's entire itinerary, not only because of the hostile sentiment there, but because of the physical arrangements that were required for his trip. Four passenger depots were scattered in various parts of Baltimore; all passengers from the North had to change trains in the city, and had to go from one depot to another through city streets. Lincoln was scheduled to arrive from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, at the Calvert Street station around midday on Saturday, February 23, and to cross Baltimore by carriage to the Baltimore and Ohio tracks, stopping on

[111] February 26, 1861.

the way to greet well-wishers at the Eutaw House Hotel. The journey through the city streets would be well over a mile long.

As February 23 neared, Lincoln's friends began to hear alarming reports of trouble to come in Baltimore. Chicago detective Allan Pinkerton, originally hired by the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad to protect their tracks and Bay ferries from secessionist sabotage, was working undercover in Baltimore when he discovered a group of Southern sympathizers plotting to assassinate Lincoln on his way through the city. Pinkerton was quite sure that the conspirators were in earnest; he later revealed details of the plot and named one of the leaders, a barber named Cypriano Ferrandini.[112] According to Pinkerton, a small band, chosen by lot from a larger group of conspirators, would create a row at the Calvert Street station, divert the police, and strike down the president-elect. A Bay steamer would be waiting to take the assassins to Virginia. On February 21, the alarmed Pinkerton rushed to Philadelphia, where Lincoln and his party were stopped at the Continental Hotel. Through fellow Chicagoan Norman B. Judd, the dectective met Lincoln privately and warned him to go to Washington without delay and without a ceremonial stop in Baltimore.

The weary Lincoln was skeptical, and, besides, he was scheduled to go to Harrisburg to meet the legislature and make a speech on Friday, the twenty-second; from there he would leave for Baltimore. He resolved to stick to his itinerary. But immediately after he left Pinkerton, Lincoln received a second and completely independent confirmation of the plot's existence. Frederick Seward, son of William H. Seward, was waiting in Lincoln's room, and told him that a group of New York city police detectives engaged by his father and himself had also found out about the would-be assassins.[113] Neither set of detectives knew about the other, and Lincoln was then convinced that the danger was real enough to warrant a change in schedule.

Lincoln went to Harrisburg on February 22 as arranged, but he did not wait for the Northern Central train to Baltimore on the morning of the twenty-third. Instead, he disguised himself with a soft wool cap pulled low, and left secretly that evening for Philadelphia

[112] The basic account of Lincoln's passage through Baltimore is taken from the judicious study by Norma Cuthbert, ed., *Lincoln and the Baltimore Plot, 1861* (San Marino, Calif.: Huntington Library, 1949). Cypriano Ferrandini was listed in the *Baltimore City Directory* in 1860, and for many years afterward, as a hairdresser and barber. Despite Pinkerton's positive assertion of Ferrandini's deep involvement with an assassination conspiracy, no legal action was ever taken against him.

[113] Whether the assassins uncovered by the New York detectives and those scouted by Pinkerton were the same is not known. It is conceivable that at least two separate plots on Lincoln's life existed.

by a special Pennsylvania Railroad train. Someone cut the telegraph lines to keep the president-elect's movements unknown. From Philadelphia he went to Baltimore by a special Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore train on the night of February 22/23. The rail line from Philadelphia terminated on the eastern edge of the harbor at the President Street station. Before dawn Lincoln passed through the city; because the cars could be drawn by horse from the President Street station to the Baltimore and Ohio tracks, Lincoln did not have to expose himself, as he would have if he had taken the train from Harrisburg. The secrecy was perfect, and the trip went off without incident. Lincoln and his party arrived in Washington around 6:00 A.M., February 23, roughly the time he was originally scheduled to leave Harrisburg.

In Baltimore on the twenty-third a large crowd gathered to see Lincoln. Perhaps ten to fifteen thousand people assembled near the Calvert Street station. Some were merely curious, others were outright hostile. The rumor circulated that Lincoln was already in Washington, but no one believed it. Finally the train arrived, carrying only Mrs. Lincoln and the children. Shouts and threats greeted the train; several persons called derisively for "the damned black Republican."[114] The crowd was stunned and angry to learn that the rumor was true and that Lincoln was already in the capital. Mrs. Lincoln and her party made their way nervously through the crowd and got out of town pushed and shaken and occasionally insulted, but unharmed.

Whether or not a plot to assassinate Lincoln existed and was actually going to be carried through[115]—it is fairly certain that at least some plans of this sort had been made—the emotional effect of Lincoln's midnight trip through Maryland was dismal. Unionists were embarrassed

[114] Cuthbert, *op. cit.*, p. 134. The description of Mrs. Lincoln's experience in Baltimore is essentially that given by a *New York Times* reporter. In their remembered biography of Lincoln his two secretaries, Nicolay and Hay, recalled the scene differently and said that the party had no difficulty. *Ibid.* Clearly, the contemporaneous account by the reporter squares with the facts of the Baltimore mob and its mood.

[115] Considerable controversy exists over the seriousness of the danger to Lincoln in Baltimore, and the various conflicting accounts by contemporaries are not much help. I agree with Pinkerton's view that a plot existed; it is highly improbable that he invented all the evidence and agents reports which Miss Cuthbert unearthed and reprinted in the volume cited above. But even Pinkerton was uncertain that the conspirators really had the nerve to go through with murder. If they had, the crowd scene at the station would have been perfect for their purposes. One Maryland Republican was definitely of the opinion that Lincoln's midnight trip was necessary. William Louis Schley was in Baltimore on the morning of the twenty-third, probably as a friendly greeter for the president-elect. He later wrote Lincoln that the conspiracy was "*meditated* and *determined*. By your course you have saved *bloodshed and a mob*." Schley to Abraham Lincoln, February 23, 1861, Lincoln Papers; italics in the original.

and infuriated because confidence in the incoming administration was nearly wiped out by the Baltimore escapade, and that made their position more difficult. The *Sun* summarized the overwhelming disgust of most Marylanders: "Had we any respect for Mr. Lincoln . . . [this] would have utterly destroyed it."[116] Lincoln seemed cowardly because of the precaution, or, if not cowardly, ridiculous. The spectacle of the chief executive smuggling himself into the capital in disguise was completely disheartening. Some Marylanders were offended to think that Lincoln held them in so little regard as to shun them entirely; that they had snubbed him first made no difference. Mayor Brown later complained that the people of Baltimore were not only slighted but slandered.

> If Mr. Lincoln had arrived in Baltimore at the time expected, and had spoken a few words to the people who had gathered to hear him, expressing the kind feelings which were in his heart with the simple eloquence of which he was so great a master, he could not have failed to make a very different impression from that which was produced not only by the want of confidence and respect manifested towards the city of Baltimore by the plan pursued, but still more by the manner in which it was carried out. . . . Fearful accounts of the conspiracy flew all over the country, creating a hostile feeling against the city, from which it soon afterwards suffered.[117]

Lincoln himself recognized the damage the trip had done. "You . . . know," he told Ward Lamon, who had been with him on the trip, "that the way we skulked into this city [Washington] has been a source of shame and regret to me, for it did look so cowardly!"[118] Presidential prestige, already perilously low in Maryland, virtually disappeared on February 23.

The Unionist cause weathered that setback, however, and regained its strength through March 1861. Lincoln was inaugurated without incident on the fourth. The last feeble convention of the activists adjourned on March 13. Except for the alarming situation of the federal troops under seige in Charleston Harbor, excitement waned for a time. Marylanders waited. Then, on April 12, firing on Fort Sumter began, and civil war with it.

III

Marylanders were stunned, if not totally surprised, by the firing on Fort Sumter. John P. Kennedy noted ironically that war had broken

[116] February 25, 1861.
[117] George William Brown, *Baltimore and the Nineteenth of April, 1861* (Baltimore: N. Murray, 1887), p. 12.
[118] Cuthbert, *op. cit.*, p. xv.

out on Henry Clay's birthday.[119] Lincoln responded with a call for 75,000 troops to put down the armed rebellion against the United States. Of this number, Maryland was asked to supply four regiments (3,120 men) to aid in subduing what many Marylanders were accustomed to calling "our sister States of the South." Federal forces prepared to pass over Maryland soil to protect the threatened national capital. Everyone knew that Maryland's role was crucial, but no one knew for sure what to do. On April 16 and 17 crowds milled through the streets of Baltimore gathering especially near the offices of the *Sun* and *American* on Baltimore Street. Fistfights between persons of different views were common; agitation was universal.

The opening of hostilities and the call for troops put Hicks on the spot. Resisting the call for a special session was one thing, but denying the president's demand for troops was quite another. Evasion was no longer possible. The governor must, it seemed, either uphold the Republican administration or defy it. Hicks, however, found one more compromise to try, although the middle ground was shrinking under him. He hurried to Washington on April 15 and saw Lincoln, General Winfield Scott, and Secretary of War Cameron. Able to impress upon them the dangers of asking Marylanders to participate in "coercion" of the South, he secured a promise from the administration that no troops raised in Maryland would be asked to leave the state except to guard the District of Columbia from attack. The next day, April 16, Hicks told John P. Kennedy of the arrangement, and two telegrams sent by Secretary Cameron on the seventeenth confirmed in writing what Hicks had been assured of earlier.[120] For the time being, Hicks made no move to summon any troops.

With this problem at least temporarily solved, the next crisis came over the transport of troops to Washington from the North. Troops had to cross Maryland to reach the capital. Given the temper of Marylanders, their divided sympathies, and clear opposition to the use of force against the South, violence could be avoided only by the most adroit handling of the situation. There being neither time nor wisdom enough for adroitness, Maryland nearly erupted into open rebellion. Baltimore was the pivot of the problem. South-bound troops had to make the same kind of exposed transfer between trains that had endangered Lincoln, and no other rail routes from the North existed except those which passed through Baltimore. The city was in an uproar by April 17, in anticipation of the coming troops. Southern

[119] John P. Kennedy, Journal, April 13, 1861, Kennedy Papers.

[120] *Ibid.*, April 16, 1861; and Maryland General Assembly, *House and Senate Documents*, 1861, document "A."

recruiters were active in Baltimore.[121] Palmetto flags appeared several places around town. In this atmosphere the passage of large numbers of armed Northern troops, visible symbols of perceived Northern coercion, was almost certain to cause trouble. Their passage was a raw confrontation between Maryland's lingering Southern sympathies and the federal government's resolve to maintain the Union by force. Sensing trouble, Mayor Brown issued on the seventeenth a proclamation urging calm and avoidance of rash and provocative acts. As he himself admitted, "I cannot flatter myself that this appeal produced much effect. The excitement was too great for any words to allay it."[122]

Order began to break down on April 18. Word came from Harrisburg that two companies of U.S. artillery, under Major George Pemberton, and four companies of unidentified militia would arrive at the small Northern Central Railroad station on Bolton Street, at the north end of town: they were due at 2:00 P.M. While many citizens prepared to confront the troops, Mayor Brown went to Bolton Street, as he put it, "to receive them." But before the troops arrived he was called away to consult with the governor. When the soldiers passed through the streets the crowd prudently avoided the regular U. S. artillery, but they harrassed the un-uniformed and unarmed militia mercilessly. The crowd grew quite large as the soldiers neared their destination at the Camden Street depot on the west side of the harbor. But for this day, at least, the Baltimoreans hurled nothing more than verbal abuse, and sang "Dixie."

That night a meeting was held in Taylor's Building, on Fayette Street near Calvert, by a group calling itself the "Southern Rights Convention." T. Parkin Scott led a large group of speakers; he told the audience that only lack of organization had made Southern men powerless that day, and he ominously urged them to prepare resistance for any other Northern troops that would follow. Bellicose resolutions in favor of the South, just short of being treasonable in their tone, also were approved.[123] News of Virginia's secession on April 17 measurably heightened the excitement in Baltimore on the 18th. Many Marylanders had long maintained that their state should follow Virginia if that state left the Union. Tension grew with every hour. The mayor issued another proclamation asking citizens to avoid rash

[121] *Baltimore Sun*, April 17, 1861.

[122] Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 36. Throughout this narrative of the events of April 19 I will rely heavily on Brown; with a few exceptions his book is by far the best source for the incident. Unless otherwise noted, material about the riot is from this work, and was checked against newspaper accounts and other documents.

[123] *Baltimore Sun*, April 19, 1861; see also John P. Kennedy, Journal, April 18, 1861, Kennedy Papers.

acts, and the governor, who had come to the city that afternoon, did the same. If Brown's proclamation of the seventeenth was ineffective, these on the eighteenth were small voices lost in the storm. Unable to control the city, the two officials sent urgent pleas to the president. "The excitement is fearful. Send no troops here," pleaded Hicks.[124] Added Brown, "it is not possible for more soldiers to pass through Baltimore unless they fight their way at every step."[125]

More Northern troops were rumored to be due on the nineteenth, but no one in Baltimore knew for sure when, how many, or from where. The only certainty was that the people of the city were extremely excitable and that an undetermined number of them had vowed to resist the passage of any more soldiers. Mayor Brown always maintained afterwards that, if he had been notified on April 19 of the exact details of the military's movements, he, with the police, could have kept order and prevented bloodshed.[126] Certainly the commanders of the troops arriving on the nineteenth expected trouble, but evidently they and the director of the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad did not trust the city officials of Baltimore and so kept them in the dark. Consequently, Mayor Brown was at his office on the morning of the nineteenth when word came that an unknown number of troops were due to arrive momentarily. At the urging of Police Marshall George P. Kane, Brown rushed to the Camden Street station, where he found Kane supervising a rapidly growing force of city police. Why Kane was at the station where the troops would likely depart the city, and not at the depot of arrival, is a puzzle. Perhaps he did not know where the troops would arrive; if so, his move to Camden Street was the only logical one left to him. There he, the mayor, and several other city officials waited.

The troops arrived from Philadelphia at the President Street station at approximately 11:00 A.M. They were fully uniformed and armed, and, worst of all, they were from Massachusetts—an "abolitionist"

[124] Thomas H. Hicks to Abraham Lincoln, April 18, 1861, Lincoln Papers.

[125] George William Brown to Abraham Lincoln, April 18, 1861, *ibid.* Brown recalled this telegram, and Hicks's, too, as being sent on the nineteenth, and he reported them as such (*op. cit.*, p. 57). But the originals in the Lincoln papers both carry the date April 18, and it seems unlikely that the date was incorrectly entered on both, and then not corrected by the recipient when they were filed. The clash of citizens and troops referred to, then, must be the incident on April 18 and not the bloody affray with the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment. Most subsequent authorites, including Radcliffe (*op. cit.*), follow Brown's claim that the often-quoted telegrams were sent April 19. It would appear, however, that writing twenty-five years after the fact Brown was off by one day on the date of these telegrams.

[126] The government of Massachusetts later sent its sincere thanks to Brown and the other city officials for their efforts toward preserving peace and order, however, futile. Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 53–55.

state in the eyes of Marylanders; this made them doubly offensive to the agitated Baltimoreans. With the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment was an unarmed regiment of Pennsylvania militia; the total aggregation was nearly 1,700 men. Both regiments faced a journey of a mile and a half across the waterfront area down Pratt Street, one of the busiest thoroughfares in the city. The only people who might protect them were at the other end of the line—waiting, confused, and powerless to help. The troops moved out into certain disaster.

From the outset the movement of the troops through Baltimore on April 19 was a botched job. Despite the hazards of a long journey through the waterfront, the officers in charge did not keep their troops in a mass, but began sending them to Camden Street as soon as the units were formed. Seven companies made the trip safely by going at top speed in horse-drawn trollies, but this only aroused the crowd on the street. The last of these cars suffered heavy damage from rocks and paving stones and arrived at the west side of the harbor with its windows shattered. When the people on the street realized what was in progress, they began to obstruct the tracks with cobblestones, bricks, sand, and a stray anchor or two from the wharves. The rest of the Massachusetts troops—about 200 men—were then forced to march the entire route through a mob which was beginning to sense its power.

The next hour was chaos. Mayor Brown was waiting at the Camden Street station when the first seven companies of the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment arrived. The damaged last car and the absence of the expected remainder of the regiment was ominous. Then a messenger told him of the mob on Pratt Street. Brown left immediately for the scene while a messenger ran to fetch Kane, who had returned to the police station. As the Mayor rushed down Pratt Street, he saw the last four companies of the Sixth Massachusetts hurrying at double time while a shouting crowd milled around them. Bricks and cobblestones were flying everywhere, and, occasionally, bullets were fired as the mob pressed its attack; harassed and tormented, the troops fired back. Brown ran to the head of the column and began to march with it, doing his best to lend an air of calm authority. He persuaded the officer in command, Major Follansbee, to stop marching at the double-quick, in hopes that this, too, would restore a sense of order. "We have been attacked without provocation," Brown remembered the officer said to him, and he also recalled that he told the major, "You must defend yourself." For the moment Brown's show of firmness stalled the riot. But before the troops had gone another block the accumulated fury and frustration of the crowd spilled over again. First the stones began to sail out of the crowd. Then rioters rushed the soldiers and

grabbed at their muskets. One soldier shot his assailant in the hip and soon the whole line began firing at will. No order to fire was given. No discipline or direction controlled the riflemen. Brown rushed down the column waving his furled umbrella and screaming "For God's sake, don't shoot!" People fell in bunches. He ran out from the column to try to quell the citizens, but in vain. Just then Marshall Kane ran onto the scene with a large detachment of police. He quickly deployed his men behind the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment—that is, between them and the bulk of their assailants. Kane personally drew a pistol and shouted "Keep back, men, or I shoot!" This finally drove back the mob, and the battered soldiers proceeded to Camden Street without further violence. By the time the troops left Baltimore at 1:00 P.M., four soldiers were dead and three dozen were wounded. As they left the city, one luckless Southern sympathizer named Robert W. Davis, evidently unaware of what had happened, raised a cheer for Jefferson Davis and the South. He was instantly shot dead from the window of the train by one of the infuriated Massachusetts men. Back in Baltimore at least twelve citizens were dead and a large, undetermined number were wounded. The frightened unarmed Pennsylvania militia never even left the President Street station, and those who had not already fled in panic were hastily sent back to Philadelphia by train.

The situation on the afternoon and evening of April 19 was explosive. No word had come from Washington on Brown and Hicks's entreaty that no more troops be sent through the city. The mayor called a mass meeting for Monument Square that evening and invited several leading citizens to speak. All the addresses were designed to quiet the crowd, but the excitement was clearly out of hand. The speeches met with loud cheers or groans and hisses, depending on how the audience interpreted the words. Brown's own speech was the firmest; he said that the authorities had matters under control, and that no more mob violence was either necessary or tolerable.

Hicks followed Brown to the rostrum and made a remarkable and uncharacteristic speech; the strain of the situation was clearly affecting him. He faced a hostile crowd there in the square. Very possibly his life was in danger.[127] More impassioned than usual, he stood next to the state flag and announced his position, that he ardently desired to see the Union preserved. At this, angry shouts came from much of the crowd. Shaken, the governor continued:

I coincide in the sentiment of your worthy mayor. After three conferences we have agreed, and I bow in submission to the people. I am a Marylander;

[127] See Radcliffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 54–55.

I love my State and I love the Union, but I will suffer my right arm to be torn from my body before I will raise it to strike a sister State.[128]

This declaration was so completely out of line with Hicks's steady Unionism both before and after the nineteenth that critics later charged him with hypocrisy and going back on his word. Hicks, however, obviously spoke in the passion of the moment and in a certain amount of fear. He was surrounded by his enemies, hemmed in by the demands of duty, expediency, and panic. Five days of feverish activity, trips to Washington, and hard decisions had nearly drained him. For a while it seemed as if he were cracking under the pressure. He did not go back to his hotel after the meeting, but at Brown's invitation went to the mayor's home; it might not have been safe for him to stay at the hotel.[129] When a group of city leaders arrived at Brown's for an emergency conference late that night, they had to meet in Hicks's bedroom because the governor was too stricken to stand.

The civic leaders who met at Brown's home were desperate to prevent more bloodshed, and they adopted a desperate expedient. It was agreed that the railroad bridges north and east of the city would be burned to prevent the arrival of any more troops by train. Hicks reluctantly approved the action, or at least he could not summon the strength to resist the unanimous determination of the others.[130] The destruction of key bridges on all major approaches to Baltimore was completed by midafternoon on the twentieth. Maryland Home Guard troops and Baltimore police did the job. Some private demolition teams were at work, too.

The next two days were all confusion in Baltimore. "Anxiety, alarm, and rage have taken possession of the town," wrote Kennedy.[131] "A time like that predicted in Scripture seemed to have come when he who had no sword would sell his garment to buy one," said the normally prosaic Brown. He added that Saturday, April 20, "was a fearful day in Baltimore. Women, children, and men, too, were wild with excitement."[132] In a special Saturday morning session the city

[128] Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 56. There is a small disagreement on Hicks's exact words. Instead of referring to "sister states," the *Baltimore American*, April 21, 1861, quoted Hicks as using the word "brother." Radcliffe, however, whose research seems quite thorough, agrees with Brown's version. Such a reference to "sister states" would be in tune with the rhetoric which was current in Maryland that winter.

[129] Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

[130] Some controversy exists over the exact nature of Hicks's approval of the bridge-burning plan. See *ibid.*; and Radcliffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 56–57.

[131] John P. Kennedy, Journal, April 20, 1861, Kennedy Papers.

[132] Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 60, 75.

council agreed to borrow half a million dollars for "city defense." The money was pledged by local bankers within a few hours. Fifteen thousand men were temporarily deputized into the city police force, and three-fourths of them were supplied with arms. The idea was to keep the peace, though many had volunteered with expectations of leading the fight against any additional federal troops. Colonel John J. Robinson, in command of the federal garrison at Fort McHenry, firmly believed he was going to be attacked on the twentieth. Henry Winter Davis told his friend DuPont that "on Sunday 21st Baltimore was veritably *crazy*."[133]

Armed men—some organized militia from the Maryland counties and some freebooters—began to arrive in the city that weekend.[134] They kept coming all during the next week and were a dangerous addition to the city's volatile atmosphere. At least one of the militia companies, a Frederick unit under Captain Bradley T. Johnson, had been invited to come. On the night of April 19 Marshall Kane sent a frenzied telegram to Johnson which said: "Streets red with Maryland blood; send expresses over the mountains of Maryland and Virginia for the riflemen to come without delay. Fresh hordes will be down on us tomorrow. We will fight them and whip them, or die."[135] When the board of police commissioners discovered Kane's indiscretion, they seriously considered discharging him. His act could easily have brought retribution from Washington, many felt.[136] As it turned out, Kane stayed on the job for the time being, only to be arrested later by the federal government.

The ensuing negotiations between Maryland authorities and the federal government were very confused.[137] Brown and Hicks had difficulty communicating with each other, and their efforts were consequently uncoordinated. Emmissaries and telegrams shuttled back and forth between Annapolis, Baltimore, and Washington. Senator Anthony Kennedy and Congressman J. Morrison Harris acted solely on their own initiative, independently of Brown and Hicks, which confused the situation even more. Basically, Marylanders all insisted that no more troops should or could be sent across the state. The Lincoln administration in turn insisted that for the defense of the

[133] Davis to Samuel F. DuPont, April 29, 1861, DuPont Papers; italics in the original.

[134] Units came from Baltimore, Anne Arundel, Howard, Talbot, Cecil, Carroll, Prince George's, and Frederick counties.

[135] Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 70. Johnson was later a Confederate general.

[136] *Ibid.*

[137] The details of trips to Washington, dozens of telegrams, missed appointments, conferences, and so on are not worth going into here. See Brown, *op. cit.*; and Radcliffe, *op. cit.*

capital such troop crossings were absolutely essential. A compromise was reached. The Lincoln government pledged that no more troops would be sent through Baltimore. Instead, the units would embark on steamers at the north end of the Bay in safely Unionist Perryville, then go by water to Annapolis. From Annapolis it was a short trip to Washington on the Annapolis and Elk Ridge Railroad. In return the Baltimore authorities would try to prevent their citizens from leaving the city to harass the troops. In addition, a group of Pennsylvania militiamen who had come as far as Cockeysville, north of Baltimore, were prudently held up and then rerouted.

Without question the decision to send troops through Annapolis prevented Maryland from seceding. Another clash in Baltimore would have propelled Maryland out of the Union. For a time after the April 19 riot, "Union sentiment temporarily disappeared," in the opinion of Mayor Brown.[138] Union men were afraid to avow themselves. Even the Minute Men, a Unionist club, hauled down its Stars and Stripes and replaced it with the Maryland flag. Henry Winter Davis, who always belittled his opponents, admitted that he was "very much astonished at the fury of the passions" which had given "for the moment the mastery" of Maryland to the forces of "weakness and wickedness."[139]

Thanks to the caution of the Lincoln administration, that mastery was short-lived. The excitement cooled and Unionism reasserted itself. By April 26 John P. Kennedy reported that the city was considerably calmer.[140] By April 28 "the tide had turned," the Fort McHenry commander remembered; "Union men avowed themselves and the stars and stripes were again unfurled and order was restored."[141] By the twenty-ninth Henry Winter Davis had shifted from extreme despair to cautious optimism, Unionists now being "masters of the state" once more.[142] Some Marylanders felt a purging effect. Davis reasoned that "the outbreak of the nineteenth has opened the eyes of our people as nothing else could; it has greatly strengthened us [Unionists] and I feel now more confidence than ever in the resolute loyalty of Maryland under all circumstances."[143] One Marylander significantly noted that the riot had pointed up Maryland's vulnerability to attack. The South had been clamoring for Maryland's help for months, he said, but had stood by helplessly at that point when Maryland seemed ready to act; the South could not, did not, rise to

138 Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 64.
139 Davis to Samuel F. DuPont, April 29, 1861, DuPont Papers.
140 John P. Kennedy, Journal, April 26, 1861, Kennedy Papers.
141 Beall, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
142 Davis to Samuel F. DuPont, April 19 and 29, 1861, DuPont Papers.
143 Davis to DuPont, May 5, 1861, *ibid.*

the crisis.[144] By May the *Frederick Examiner* was calculating that "secession is a sick man in Maryland."[145]

The bloodletting of April 19 has often been misunderstood. Unionism was dominant in Maryland except during that one brief, inflammatory encounter. When Maryland secessionists were unable to use the Baltimore riot to move Maryland out of the Union, the game was up; they would not get a second chance. Furthermore, the riot itself was not entirely attributable to offended Southern sympathies.

Baltimore's heritage of riots and roughhousing had more than a little to do with April 19. Those who had given the city an unenviable reputation as "mob town"—the unemployed, the street gangs, the fire-house clubs, the riff-raff and drunks, and on-leave sailors—were still numerous in Baltimore. Jobless men were even more plentiful than ever that winter because of the business recession. Though many respectable citizens took part and many honest motives stirred the crowd, the naturally unruly types who had come to infest the city magnified the disorder. Mayor Brown, for example, found it necessary to close all the bars in Baltimore on Monday, April 22; surely this indicated that not all the trouble was grounded in outraged principles. Unemployed men used the disorder as an opportunity to "confiscate" goods and supplies. The toughs found the situation a convenient excuse to obtain arms and ammunition. The business community was seriously alarmed about looting, and possibly feared a renewal of the fighting for this reason more than for any other.[146] What began as pro-Southern indignation grew and sustained itself on other discontents. As time passed, some Marylanders lost pride in the defiant patriotism of the riots and found them instead a source of embarrassment. "The affair of the nineteenth was deplorable," wrote one chagrined Baltimorean. "It put us completely in the wrong before posterity, to say nothing of the pecuniary damage."[147] "An armed mob" did the damage, the *Cecil Whig* complained.[148] To Henry Winter Davis "a mob guarded by police and secessionists" was to blame.[149] "Would to God," lamented the *Frederick Examiner*, "it had never happened."[150]

[144] "O.P.O." to the *Cecil Whig*, June 8, 1861. The Confederate government did think of aiding Baltimore. On April 22 Jefferson Davis telegraphed Governor John Letcher of Virginia: "Sustain Baltimore if practicable. We will reinforce you." Dunbar Rowland, ed., *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist: His Papers, Letters, and Speeches*, 10 vols. (Jackson: Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1923), 5:65.

[145] May 1, 1861.

[146] Catton, *op. cit.*, pp. 94–95.

[147] Anonymous letter to Thomas H. Hicks, May 4, 1861, Hicks Papers.

[148] April 27, 1861.

[149] Davis to Samuel F. DuPont, April 29, 1861, DuPont Papers.

[150] April 24, 1861.

IV

The complicated and confusing events after the April outburst reveal Maryland's halting progress toward acceptance of its position within the Union and the demands that this position would make. This progress could be seen on several fronts at once—in the popular mind, in the governor's increasingly warm relations with the Lincoln government, in the unexpectedly inactive course of the General Assembly, and in the success of federal military operations in the state.

For confirmed Unionists, expressions of their belief became easier after the first of May 1861 as secession became an ever remoter possibility. Unionists were also emboldened by the obviously solicitous surveillance of the federal government and the presence of federal troops. Unionism reappeared first in Western Maryland, where a special election to fill a vacancy in the Washington County Assembly delegation was won handily by unconditional Unionist Lewis P. Fiery, a former American turned Republican. Unionists also carried the municipal elections in Cumberland.[151] A Union convention met on May 2; though this meeting did little, it helped to coalesce Union sentiment and make it public.[152] Mass meetings throughout the state petitioned the General Assembly to avoid treasonable obstruction of the federal government. On May 7 Mayor Brown disbanded the special defense force of fifteen thousand in Baltimore and told the city council that in his opinion the people of Maryland had decided to submit to the Washington government.[153] The city council accordingly asked the legislature to repair the railroad bridges so hastily demolished three weeks earlier. In Baltimore and across the state U.S. flags were brought out of the closets where they had been temporarily hidden.

For most Marylanders, however, acquiescence in the duties of remaining in a Union at war was difficult. For these persons a middle ground was needed temporarily, and that middle ground was called "armed neutrality." Maryland had been traveling down the path of moderation, compromise, and halfway measures for a decade, and her citizens could not change overnight. Although the time for compromise was past and the crisis of allegiances was at hand, many Marylanders made one last attempt to evade the choice; in effect, they asked to remain in the Union, but to be excused from the fight against the Southern states. Under the concept of "armed neutrality" these Marylanders sought to retreat within their own borders, defend their own soil, and wash their hands of the rest of the conflict.

As a phrase, "armed neutrality" dated back in the Maryland press

[151] Radcliffe, *op. cit.*, p. 94.
[152] *Baltimore American*, May 3, 1861.
[153] *Baltimore Sun*, May 7 and 8, 1861.

at least to November 1860, but the idea became both well defined and popular in the spring of 1861.[154] A major ingredient in it was that curious local attachment which is so hard for twentieth-century Americans to comprehend. The state flag for a time replaced the national banner on Maryland public buildings. Even more important to armed neutrality was the difficulty of choosing sides. "Neutrality is the only antidote of Revolution now," cried the *Frederick Examiner;* "it is our only safety." Any other course would be "Ruin, ruin, ruin."[155] The *Baltimore American* was another leading advocate of armed neutrality. When breaking the news of the firing at Fort Sumter, the paper urged Maryland to "stand aloof."[156] A correspondent to the *American* urged on April 19:

> Say to the Southern Confederacy; you must not pass over our soil to invade the federal capital. Say to the [United States] government; we are loyal citizens. The public property shall be safe and protected in our borders. We will keep our troops to guard our State. We ask of you a truce until Congress meets. . . . Hold, and we will act as *mediators.*[157]

Both the governor and the legislature also offered at various times to serve as mediators in the conflict, either alone or in concert with other border states. Armed neutrality was the essence of the proposals Hicks took to Washington—that is, that Maryland troops be left in Maryland. Throughout the spring Hicks had spoken of a concert of neutral border states as the proper antidote to the crisis.[158] He later told the special session of the General Assembly, "I honestly and most earnestly entertain the conviction that the only safety of Maryland lies in preserving a neutral position between our brethren of the North and of the South."[159]

Armed neutrality, of course, was impossible politically, geographically, and militarily. But it was a useful fiction because it postponed a choice, a conscious recognition of taking sides, until the federal government was able to consolidate its position in the state. The president and his administration were wise in not insisting at the outset that Maryland firmly and unequivocally declare that it would participate fully in the war to restore the Union. Armed neutrality,

[154] *Frederick Herald,* November 27, 1860. Neither the idea nor the term "armed neutrality" was unique to Maryland. Kentuckians, for example, tried the same approach.

[155] April 30, 1861.

[156] April 13, 1861.

[157] *Ibid.*: italics in the original.

[158] *Cecil Whig,* January 19, 1861; and *Baltimore Sun,* January 21, 1861.

[159] Maryland General Assembly, *House and Senate Documents,* 1861, document "A."

as genuinely and as earnestly as it was advanced by so many persons, simply served to buy time for Unionism.

One of the first public figures to abandon armed neutrality was Governor Hicks. In his correspondence with the Lincoln administration in late April and into May he said he saw a change in public sentiment in Maryland toward the Union, and his own tone became quite cooperative.[160] On April 29 he issued a proclamation warning Marylanders against enlisting in the numerous military companies springing up around the state, because these groups "[are] subversive of good order, and in the present excited condition of the public mind, are well calculated to imperil the public peace."[161] The governor also tried unsuccessfully to invalidate the commissions of some state militia officers he suspected of being Southern sympathizers.[162] On May 4 he moved to enroll the troops Lincoln had asked for in his April 15 proclamation. On May 30 he instructed Colonel E. R. Petherbridge of the state militia to collect from the local militia units all arms and accoutrements belonging to the state; this was obviously a move to disarm potentially disloyal military groups.[163] He also called upon Marylanders to deliver up all state-owned arms to Petherbridge.[164] Furthermore, Hicks stocked the collected arms at Fort McHenry and the state armory at Frederick, but not at the other state arsenal in Easton, on the pro-Southern Eastern Shore.[165]

While Marylanders tried to straighten out personal loyalties and Hicks became increasingly friendly with the Lincoln administration, the General Assembly was meeting in special session at Frederick. Hicks had been forced to convene the legislature in the wake of the April 19 bloodshed. If he had not done so, extralegal steps would have been taken to convene either the legislature or a state convention, and Hicks had to avoid that. Coleman Yellott, state senator from Baltimore County, had drafted a letter to the other members of the General Assembly asking them to meet for consultation in Baltimore.[166] The *Sun* concluded that, if Hicks did not yield on calling a special session, "a spontaneous demonstration of the people" would initiate "revolutionary proceedings."[167] That same afternoon Hicks resignedly summoned a special session to meet on April 26 in Annapolis:

[160] This correspondence is in the Letterbook of the Executive, Hall of Records, Annapolis, Md.
[161] *Baltimore Sun*, May 2, 1861.
[162] Radcliffe, *op. cit.*, p. 89; and *Baltimore Sun*, May 8, 1861.
[163] Thomas Hicks to Colonel E. R. Petherbridge, May 30, 1861, Hicks Papers.
[164] Moore, *op. cit.*, 1: 347–48.
[165] Radcliffe, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
[166] *Ibid.*, p. 52.
[167] April 22, 1861.

he later protested that he did so because he had no choice.[168] A special election in Baltimore on April 24 filled the ten delegates seats vacated by the House in 1860 because of fraud. Given the excited condition of the city, only a "Southern rights" ticket was in the field: turnout was slight.[169] Also on the twenty-fourth Hicks moved the session to Frederick to avoid any possibility of a clash between the legislature and the Washington-bound federal forces. Not incidentally, Frederick was also more safely Unionist than Annapolis.

Unionists feared the worst when the General Assembly met on April 26 in the German Reform church in Frederick, but as it turned out the legislature behaved moderately. The day after they convened the Senate unanimously passed an "Address to the People of Maryland" in which they denied that they had the right to consider an ordinance of secession.[170] The House concurred by a vote of 53 to 12.[171] No further statement issued from the legislators for two more weeks, as the Committee on Federal Relations struggled with the task of drafting resolutions that were acceptable to the diverse shades of opinion present at the session. In the meantime the Assembly sent a three-man delegation to Washington to protest the military occupation of parts of the state.[172] Finally, on May 9 the Committee on Federal Relations produced its resolutions. These resolutions declared that Maryland would have no part of a war against the South but would remain neutral, that the military occupation of the state was "a flagrant violation of the Constitution," and that the Confederate States should be recognized. But the resolutions also said "that . . . it is not expedient to call a sovereign convention of the state . . . or to take any measures for the immediate reorganization and arming of the militia."[173] The House adopted these resolutions by a vote of 43 to 12.[174] Indignant rhetoric aside, these resolutions, coupled with those of April 27, clearly meant that Maryland was not going to secede; the legislature first denied that it had the power to consider secession, and then refused to call a convention which would have had the power.

The legislature was reduced to impotence by the unexpectedly sharp divisions of opinion within its own body and by its lack of

[168] Maryland, General Assembly, *House and Senate Documents,* 1861–1862, document "A."

[169] Only 9,244 votes were cast, as contrasted with over 30,000 at the last presidential election.

[170] Maryland, Senate, *Journal,* 1861, p. 8.

[171] Maryland, House of Delegates, *Journal,* 1861, p. 22.

[172] The delegation consisted of Otho Scott, Robert McLane, and William J. Ross.

[173] Maryland, General Assembly, *House and Senate Documents,* 1861, document "F."

[174] Maryland, House of Delegates, *Journal,* 1861, p. 106.

effective influence on the course of events. The first special session adjourned on May 14, and by the time it reconvened on June 4 the federal authorities and Governor Hicks were so firmly in control of the state that the legislators could do nothing.

The initiative had passed to the federal government in the last week of April, and the Lincoln administration acted with careful firmness. Upon the decision to go to Washington via Annapolis, General Benjamin F. Butler seized the town and the Baltimore, Annapolis, and Elk Ridge Railroad terminal.[175] Annapolis was no less hostile than Baltimore to the sight of federal troops, but it was a great deal more manageable in size. By May 5 Butler had the entire railroad under control, including the tracks. On the fifth the general occupied the Baltimore and Ohio Relay House seven miles from Baltimore, where the Baltimore, Annapolis, and Elk Ridge tracks join the B. & O. line to Washington. The next step was to occupy Baltimore itself, and Butler used the cover of a violent thunderstorm to enter the city on May 13.[176] He immediately fortified the commanding heights on Federal Hill. So calm and resigned had Baltimore already become that no resistance whatsoever was offered. The elaborate preparations and plans for defending the city at a cost of $500,000 were nowhere in evidence. Baltimore acquiesced quietly, and Maryland was definitely secure for the Union.

The General Assembly was the only group which did not resignedly accept the situation. The subsequent course of the legislature in the summer and fall of 1861 was painfully tragic. The governor and the federal authorities were so completely in control that the legislators could only work themselves into an impotent fury, which made them seem more and more treasonable. Furthermore, with the writ of habeas corpus suspended in Maryland by order of the military authorities, the individual members placed themselves in danger of arbitrary arrest.[177] The first legislator was arrested by the federal

[175] See Benjamin F. Butler, *Private and Official Correspondence of General Benjamin F. Butler*, 5 vols. (Norwood, Mass.: Plimpton Press, 1917); and by the same author, *Butler's Book* (Boston: A. M. Thayer & Co., 1892).

[176] See *ibid.*; and Radcliffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 90–93.

[177] For a full discussion of the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in Maryland, see James G. Randall, *Constitutional Problems under Lincoln* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1926). That the right to a writ of habeas corpus could be suspended in case of civil war was clear, but who should do the suspending? The prohibition against suspension appears in Article I, section 9, of the Constitution, which deals with the powers of Congress. But with Congress not in session in the spring of 1861, Lincoln assumed many extraordinary powers, including that of suspending the writ. Furthermore, he delegated this authority to military commanders in the field, to use at their discretion, thereby confusing the issue even further.

authorities after the temporary adjournment in May 1861. He was Ross Winans, "southern rights" delegate from Baltimore, an iron manufacturer who had supplied the Baltimore Home Guard with guns and pikes. He was formally charged with treason, but was released later that year. In September the military authorities seized the remainder of the Baltimore delegation, along with three other legislators and Congressman-elect Henry May of Baltimore. Mayor Brown also was apprehended, a fate he certainly did not deserve. These unfortunate men were incarcerated at various federal forts for lengths of time ranging from a few months to over two years, all without formal charges being brought against them.

These arrests, which caused so much bitterness both at the time and subsequently, were unnecessary.[178] The U.S. government met resentment but no serious resistance in Maryland after the end of April. By May pro-Southern Marylanders had quit trying to take their state out of the Union and were concentrating instead on fleeing South as individuals. The four regiments asked for by Lincoln were recruited by early June, without qualification as to their place of service.[179] In a special election held on June 13, pro-Union candidates carried sixteen of Maryland's twenty-one counties.[180] Although this election was affected by federal intimidation, the point is that federal control was firm.

Unionism, it would seem, was always uppermost in Maryland. Barring the April 19 riot, the record of Maryland shows more fear of the consequences of war than it shows any entrenched treason. The entire "armed neutrality" notion was the product not of disloyalty but of dismay. By 1861 Maryland had evolved into a pattern of life so different from that of the Southern states that secession was never more than a distant possibility.[181]

By summer, 1861, a new phase in Maryland's life and politics was beginning.[182] The war blotted out the old issues and came to dominate

[178] General L. C. Baker, undercover agent for the Lincoln administration, claimed that the Maryland legislature was infested with traitors and that secession ordinances would be passed in September 1861. L. C. Baker, *History of the United States Secret Service* (Philadelphia: By the author, 1867), pp. 85–86. This makes no sense at all, but apparently some believed it.

[179] Radcliffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 95–96.

[180] The five recalcitrant counties were Talbot, Worcester, St. Mary's, Charles, and Calvert.

[181] Earlier works by Seabrook, Beall, Freasure, and Catton, cited above, agree that Unionsm was stronger than secession sentiment.

[182] A first-rate analysis of Maryland politics during and after the war is Jean H. Baker, *The Politics of Continuity: Maryland Politics from 1858 to 1870* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973).

every aspect of life. The weak party structure of the 1860 election collapsed completely by the spring of 1861. The resulting political vacuum was filled by a "Union" party of Republicans, Constitutional Unionists, war Democrats, and loyalists of all types. The confused decade of the 1850s had finally ended in blood and a resolution of sorts. The crisis of allegiance was over—Maryland was Unionist in sentiment, it is clear, though its choice was made manifest by its acquiscence to federal force rather than entirely by its own actions. Marylanders moved into a new era of war and readjustment.

CONCLUSION

LOOKING BACK FROM 1861 at what he had endured, the average Marylander would have been surprised and undoubtedly dismayed. A great deal had happened; a great many hopes had been dashed and fears fulfilled. This average Marylander would not have had it come out as it did. His search for a comfortable allegiance had been futile.

Marylanders as a group could be counted as sectional conservatives in the 1850s. This sentiment was as logical as it was obvious. Lacking a clear sectional identity, Maryland lacked a sectional allegience, and avoiding conflict was a primary concern for its citizens. Marylanders consequently accepted a role in national politics which was comparable to their role in the national economy—as brokers, middlemen, traders between the sections. Marylanders generally supported the Compromise of 1850 and conservative parties and candidates who stressed the artificiality of the sectional crisis—notably, the American party and Millard Fillmore and the Constitutional Union party and John Bell.

Maryland's conservatism was touched by a certain impotent desperation. At times it seemed that Marylanders were seeking to solve all problems by sheer incantation of their belief in the soundness of the Union. Henry Winter Davis's recipe for settling the slavery issue—"be silent on it"—conveyed impatience and exasperation with the debate, but it also pointedly failed to offer any usable suggestions toward solution of the crisis. Maryland's only positive contributions to quieting the North-South struggle were limited. Senator James A. Pearce led the Senate Whigs away from Henry Clay's Omnibus Bill in 1850 and helped save the Compromise. Maryland's congressional delegation generally supported the Kansas-Nebraska Act in the vain hope that it would restore unity. In December 1860 Congressman Davis was crucial to the operations of the Committee of Thirty-Three. Short of that, Marylanders had nothing to offer toward national peace except rhetoric and a record of voting for conservatives.

The failure of conservatism in the 1850s was a national phenomenon, and Maryland's experience may help to explain it. For one thing, conservatives lacked any program beyond the Compromise and the too-late Crittenden Compromise of 1860-1861. Whether or not sectional differences were soluble, Unionists had surprisingly few solutions to offer. Conservatives did not anticipate crises, but tended to ignore them until they were overwhelming. Second, conservative Unionist candidates at the national level—notably Fillmore and Bell—were singularly colorless and uninspiring figures. And in Maryland's case the cause of Unionism was tragically bound up with nativism.

The conjunction of nativism and Unionism was not an illogical one. Nativism grew on the fears of certain Americans—whether rational fears or not—that their nation was drifting into a loss of character and purpose. Immigrants and Catholics were tangible symbols of all that seemed alien and un-American; they could be blamed for urban crime, social unrest, divisiveness, and corruption in politics. To combat this presumed threat the nativists exalted a mythic past and urged Americans to gather beneath the Star Spangled Banner once more. Having invoked the national spirit in the face of an "alien" threat, nativists moved easily to evoke the same spirit against domestic disruption. The same superpatriotism which served as a shield against foreigners was ready for use against disunionists. Nativists and Unionists shared a similar alarm and a similar solution.

When nativism paled as an issue, the Know-Nothings switched emphasis to a Unionism without missing a political beat. In doing so they earned a great deal of scorn from historians for being hypocritical and untrue to their principles.[1] This change was startling to some Marylanders, especially diehard nativists like the Reverend Andrew Cross; but, considered dispassionately, the switch was both rational and understandable. All parties adapt themselves to changing needs and conditions. The move from violent xenophobia to conservative Unionism was in the best interests of Maryland and the nation. Although the sudden abandonment of xenophobia was ironic and possibly embarrassing to the Know-Nothing leadership, it seems unjust that the American party should be condemned both for advocating nativism and for dropping it, or for not continuing to perform as a club instead of as a political party.

In the end, however, the alliance with nativism proved damaging for Unionism. During the period of Know-Nothing hegemony many

[1] See Laurence Frederick Schmeckebier, *History of the Know Nothing Party in Maryland* (Baltimore: N. Murray, 1899); and Mary St. Patrick McConville, *Political Nativism in the State of Maryland* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1928).

worthy politicians who might have contributed to the quality of Maryland's conservative statesmanship either dropped out of politics or were pulled into the Southern rights orbit of the Democratic party. For instance, some former Whigs, like John P. Kennedy, went into semi-retirement, and others, like Senator James A. Pearce, became Democrats. Other causes besides nativism contributed to the political disaffection of some conservatives—factors like the increasing rowdiness of party politics—but the connection with nativism definitely tended to give Unionism a bad name. This guilt by association was especially damaging late in the decade and climaxed when Constitutional Unionist John Bell was denied Maryland's electoral votes, principally because the association of his conservative party with defunct nativism cost him thousands of votes in Baltimore. The transfer of Maryland's eight electoral votes from Breckinridge to Bell would not have affected the outcome of the presidential election, but it would have better represented the frustrated Unionism that was clearly a majority sentiment among Marylanders. At the very least, if Marylanders had been on record as Bell supporters, the Lincoln administration might not have reacted so suspiciously toward Maryland in general, and Baltimore in particular, especially since a tenuous bond of sympathy existed between some Bell supporters and the Republicans.

The interaction of local and national issues in the 1860 election emphasized the complexity of the issues Marylanders had confronted in the 1850s. At other times during the decade similar overlap occurred. In the period 1850–1852, for example, the combination of national and state issues hastened the end of the party which claimed the allegiance of at least half of all voting Marylanders. Just when the national Whig party was seriously divided over sectional issues the Maryland Whigs found themselves additionally embarrassed by the question of constitutional reform. In consequence the reorganization of Maryland's politics around the Know-Nothing party was speeded up. This reorganization was also more thorough; if the American party had encountered a strong Whig organization—and the Whig party was once powerful in Maryland—the nativists would have had to accommodate themselves to the moderating influence of Whiggery in order to succeed. This, in turn, would have made the American party more into what historians have often erroneously (in Maryland's case) assumed it to be, Whiggery redivivus. Had this moderation of nativism occurred, then the debilitating stigma of rampant nativism might have been avoided and conservatism in Maryland would have had a sounder base and a more influential voice.

Maryland party realignments in the 1850s offer another insight into the complexity of the decade. The Whigs collapsed because of national

party divisions, local party weakness, the disappearance of old issues, and the inability of some of their leaders to adapt to the changes in political style. The vacuum created by their passing was filled by the Know-Nothings, but behind that simple substitution lay countless individual shifts in party identification. By the time these shifts were completed—by 1856 or 1857—the old Whig stronghold in Southern Maryland had gone Democratic while Baltimore had gone from Democratic to Know-Nothing. In the spaces between the shifting party organizations, furthermore, independent candidates operated with better than usual success, especially from 1851 through 1854. Also, one of the most striking features of Maryland politics in the 1850s, the influential reform movement in Baltimore, grew from independent action and only after rising to power made an alliance with the regular party system. Not since the 1820s, and not again until the Progressive era, would political independents have so much scope.

These dislocations show that the economic and social issues which had defined the party balance before 1850 had changed. Issues like banks, tariffs, and internal-improvement spending no longer formed the basis for political identification, nor did considerations of social class carry as much weight as formerly. Instead, Marylanders were, for a time, politically identified in federal elections by whether they valued the Union or Southern rights first. On the state level the Union issue was muted and the question of corruption in the Know-Nothing stewardship became paramount, as the Democratic campaign of 1859 and the reform issue indicated. These two levels of issues, state and national, became entangled in the presidential election of 1860 to the advantage of Breckinridge.

Baltimore remains the fascinating enigma of Maryland life—feared, admired, and, above all, powerful. Only a great deal of laborious study will ever unlock the secret of the city's turbulent street gangs and their relationship to politics. The social structure of Baltimore is shrouded in shifting ward boundaries, inadequate statistics, and the mass anonymity that was one of the city's terrors to contemporary Marylanders. The metropolis grew and changed so quickly that generalizations drawn about 1850 need to be rejustified for 1860. The safest conclusion is that the city usually controlled the results of Maryland's elections, and that no assumptions about what Marylanders did is entirely safe until city and counties have been checked separately.

Above all, examination of a single state in the decade before the Civil War should reawaken a sense of the complexity of the historical situation. Facile assumptions about what the "South" or "North" did, and why, seldom stand unchallenged before the details of more

localized history. The conclusions drawn from a close examination of people's lives are not those to be drawn from perusing senatorial rhetoric. Such important outbursts as the Know-Nothing crusade are too often lost in the traditional overview of the decade, an overview which has been conditioned to serve as prelude to a war which no one at the time really knew was coming. The 1850s contained more than the roots of the war, as important as those were. Choosing between North and South was not the only test of allegiances that Marylanders, like other Americans, had to make. The sectional choice was confused by the others, by choices between tradition and change, city and country, openness and suspicion, localism and nationalism. Even when the firing on Fort Sumter reduced and narrowed the options, the matter of allegiances was not simple.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

Maryland source materials may have discouraged potential researchers. Jean H. Baker, for example, notes that Walter Lord contemplated a book on Maryland's Know-Nothings but abandoned the project because of the lack of information. The paucity of secondary studies on the state reflects—and possibly has grown from—the scarcity of primary sources.

Below is a selective listing of the materials that were most useful in the preparation of this book, arranged by type of source and subject. For the sake of brevity, the *Maryland Historical Magazine* (published by the Maryland Historical Society) is cited as *MHM*.

Bibliographies

In addition to the standard reference works in American History, see *The Manuscript Collections of the Maryland Historical Society*, compiled by Avril J. M. Pedley (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1968). Also handy is Eleanor Phillips Passano, *An Index to the Source Records of Maryland* (Baltimore: Privately printed, 1946).

Manuscript Collections

Two outstanding personal collections were valuable in my research on Maryland in the 1850s—the John Pendleton Kennedy Papers (Peabody Institute Library, Baltimore) and the Samuel F. DuPont Papers (Eleutherian Mills Historical Library, Greenville, Del.); the DuPont Papers contain voluminous correspondence from Henry Winter Davis. Many other useful collections are housed in the Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, including the papers of James A. Pearce, Brantz Mayer, Reverdy Johnson, S. Teackle Wallis, Thomas H. Hicks, Benjamin C. Howard, and Robert W. Garrett. The Society also has a collection of political broadsides and election tickets. At the Library

of Congress, Washington, D.C., the papers of Montgomery Blair, John W. Garrett, Justin S. Morrill, Reverdy Johnson, and Abraham Lincoln were useful.

Official Documents

For the workings of the Maryland delegation in Washington, see the *Congressional Globe.* Also, both the House and Senate of the Maryland General Assembly published a sketchy *Journal* of their proceedings for every session, as well as a volume of *Documents* relevant to that session. The Executive Letterbook is housed at the Hall of Records, Annapolis. For studying the constitutional convention of 1851, see *Proceedings of the Maryland State Convention to Frame a New Constitution* (Annapolis: Riley & Davis, 1850); note that the publication date on this volume should read 1851.

Newspapers

The great Baltimore dailies are the best single source for Maryland history in this period—the *Sun* and *American* most notably. The *Sun* was extensively used in this study because it was the largest circulating and most influential newspaper in the state, and remained as neutral in its politics as any paper in this period was likely to be. Other significant Baltimore papers include the *Patriot* (Whig) and the *Clipper* (Know-Nothing). All other papers used were weeklies—the *Baltimore County Advocate* (Towson, Md.), the *Planters' Advocate* (Upper Marlboro, Md.), the *Upper Marboro Gazette,* the *Worcester County Shield* (Snow Hill, Md.), the *Port Tobacco Times,* the *Frederick Herald* and *Frederick Examiner,* the *Republican Citizen* (Frederick, Md.), the *Herald of Freedom and Torch Light* (Hagerstown, Md.), which was also known at various times as the *Herald* or the *Herald and Torch,* and the *Cambridge Democrat.* Broken but reasonably complete files of these papers for the 1850s can be found at the Maryland Historical Society or the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore. Widely scattered numbers of other local weeklies also are available.

Statistical Sources

The most complete sources of demographic statistics are, of course the U.S., Bureau of the Census, *Seventh Census of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1850), and *Eighth Census of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1860). Joseph C. G. Kennedy, *Historical Account of Maryland* (Washington: Gideon & Co., 1852),

was written by a census official and drew on census materials. Richard Swainson Fisher, *Gazetteer of the State of Maryland* (Baltimore: J. S. Waters, 1852), also used census data. Election statistics come from the newspapers most easily, and may be checked with the manuscript election returns in the Hall of Records, Annapolis. For a quick review of Maryland's behavior in presidential elections, county by county, see W. Dean Burnham, *Presidential Ballots, 1836–1892* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1955).

Descriptions

A large body of descriptive materials, mostly travelers' acounts and reminiscences, was valuable in providing an accurate mental picture of Maryland in the mid-nineteenth century. A comprehensive bibliography of travelers' descriptions is Bernard C. Steiner, *Descriptions of Maryland*, The Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, ser. 22 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1904). Among the more useful reminiscences are John C. French, "Poe's Literary Baltimore," *MHM*, 32 (1937): 101–12; John H. B. Latrobe, "Reminiscences of Baltimore in 1824," *MHM*, 2 (1906); 113–24; "A Maryland Tour in 1844: Diary of Isaac Van Bibber,"*MHM*, 39 (1944): 237–68; and Henry Stockbridge, "Baltimore in 1846," *MHM*, 6 (1911): 20–34. M. Ray Della, Jr.'s "An Analysis of Baltimore's Population in 1850," *MHM*, 68 (1973): 20–35, is valuable for its statistical thoroughness.

Local Histories

The state of Maryland has just commissioned a scholarly state history, but until it appears the only available state and local histories are the old ones, which reflect the interests, style, and scholarship of the nineteenth century. The best of the state histories are J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Maryland* (Baltimore: J. B. Piet, 1879); and Matthew Page Andrews, *History of Maryland, Province and State*, an old study which was recently re-released (Hatboro, Pa.: Tradition Press, 1965). Many Maryland counties have been described in local histories. The better local histories include J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Baltimore City and County* (Philadelphia: L. H. Everts, 1881); and, by the same author, *History of Western Maryland* (Philadelphia: L. H. Everts, 1882). See also Thomas J. C. Williams, *History of Frederick County, Maryland* (Frederick: L. R. Titsworth & Co., 1910); his *History of Washington County, Maryland* (Chambersburg, Pa.: J. M. Runk and L. R. Titsworth, 1906); and Will H. Lowdermilk, *History of Cumberland* (Washington, D.C.: J. Anglim, 1878).

Biographies

Biographies of leading Maryland figures in the 1850s are scarce, and many of those that do exist are badly outdated. For capsule biographies there are the cumulative directories of prominent men. In addition to the biographical sections of local and state histories, see *The Biographical Cyclopedia of Representative Men of Maryland and the District of Columbia* (Baltimore: National Biographical Publishing Co., 1879); Heinrich E. Buchholz, *Governors of Maryland* (Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins, 1908); and Wilbur F. Coyle, *The Mayors of Baltimore,* reprinted in book form from the *Baltimore Municipal Journal* in 1919. Various city directories for Baltimore are useful as a source of occupational information about otherwise obscure individuals.

The more notable studies of individual Marylanders include: Philip Bohner, *John Pendleton Kennedy, Gentleman from Baltimore* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1961); Carl Brent Swisher, *Roger B. Taney* (New York: Macmillan, 1936); and Samuel Tyler, *Memoir of Roger Brooke Taney* (Baltimore: John Murphy Co., 1872). The Tyler study contains some autobiographical material. Autobiographical material also forms the early chapters of Bernard C. Steiner, *Life of Henry Winter Davis* (Baltimore: John Murphy Co., 1916). A good biography of Davis is badly needed, and hopefully one of the several studies in progress will fill that need; a full-length treatment by Gerald S. Henig is due to appear in late 1973. In the meantime Davis's own *Speeches and Addresses* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1867) is a help. A Marylander who rose to be postmaster general of the United States under Grant received a cursory study in Elizabeth M. Grimes, "John Angel James Creswell, Postmaster-General" (Master's thesis, Columbia University, 1939). See also Bernard C. Steiner, "Brantz Mayer," *MHM,* 5 (1910): 1–18; and, by the same author, "James Alfred Pearce," *MHM,* 16 (1921): 319; 17 (1922): 33, 177, 269, 348; 19 (1923): 13, 162.

Political Studies

In addition to the general political studies in which Maryland receives notice, some works dealing specifically with politics in the state are invaluable. Among the most worthwhile are Mark H. Haller, "The Rise of the Jackson Party in Maryland, 1820–1829," *Journal of Southern History,* 28 (1962): 309–26; Richard P. McCormick, *The Second American Party System* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1966), esp. pp. 154–73; and W. Wayne Smith, "Jacksonian Democracy on the Chesapeake," *MHM,* 62 (1967): 381–93. Older works which also help are Bernard C. Steiner, *Citizenship and Suffrage*

in Maryland (Baltimore: Cushing & Co., 1895), and, also by Steiner, "The Electoral College for the Senate of Maryland and the Nineteen Van Buren Electors," *American Historical Society Annual Report, 1895,* pp. 129–71. For another perspective on the 1836 crisis treated in the Steiner article, see A. Clark Hagensick, "Revolution or Reform in 1836: Maryland's Preface to Dorr's Rebellion," *MHM,* 57 (1962): 346-66. See also James Warner Harry, *The Maryland Constitution of 1851,* The Johns Hopkins Studies in Historical and Political Science, ser. 20 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1902); Charles James Rohr, *The Governor of Maryland: A Constitutional Study,* The Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, ser. 40 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1932); and Elihu S. Riley, *A History of the General Assembly of Maryland, 1635–1904* (Baltimore: n.p., 1905). New and useful are three articles from *MHM,* 67 (1972): Eugene H. Roseboom, "Baltimore as a National Nominating Convention City" (pp. 215–24); Betty Dix Greenman, "The Democratic Convention of 1860" (pp. 225–53); and Donald Walter Curl, "The Baltimore Convention of the Constitutional Union Party" (pp. 254–77). A summary of state politics from 1851 to 1856, Douglas Bowers, "Ideology and Political Parties in Maryland, 1851–1856," *MHM,* 64 (1969): 19–217, is compact and essentially agrees with the conclusions in this volume.

The Know-Nothings

General studies of the Know-Nothings help to put the Maryland movement in perspective; so do studies of nativism in other states. The basic studies of nativism in America during the last century are Ray Allen Billington, *The Protestant Crusade, 1800–1860* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964); and John Higham, *Strangers in the Land* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1955). W. Darrell Overdyke has written *The Know-Nothing Party in the South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1950). A highly dramatized account of the Know-Nothings can be found in Carlton Beals, *Brass Knuckle Crusade* (New York: Hastings House, 1960).

Works which examine the Know-Nothings in other states include Warren F. Hewitt, "The Know-Nothing Party in Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania History,* 2 (1935): 69–85; Carl F. Brand, "History of the Know-Nothing Party in Indiana," *Indiana Magazine of History,* 18 (1922): 47–81, 177–207, 266–80; Louis D. Scisco, *Political Nativism in New York State,* Columbia University Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law, no. 13 (New York: Columbia University, 1901). For further reference consult the excellent bibliography in Billington's *Protestant Crusade.*

Several works focus directly on the Know-Nothings in Maryland. The best general account, although outdated both in style and methodology, in Laurence Frederick Schmeckebier, *History of the Know Nothing Party in Maryland* (Baltimore: N. Murray, 1899). This work is often cited as part of The Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, ser. 17 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1899). It appeared in both forms, as Murray was the printing agent for The Hopkins Press and simply issued the study in separate book form. Biased but useful for supplementing Schmeckebier is Sister Mary St. Patrick McConville, *Political Nativism in the State of Maryland* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1928). See also Benjamin Tuska, *Know Nothingism in Baltimore, 1854–1860* (New York: Broadway, 1925). Extremely well conceived is Jean H. Baker, "Dark Lantern Crusade: An Analysis of the Know-Nothing Party in Maryland," (Master's thesis, The Johns Hopkins University, 1965). Mrs. Baker's bibliography also is excellent. No study of Maryland nativism is complete without this work.

The voluminous nativist literature in Maryland is well represented by Anna Ella Carroll, *The Great American Battle* (New York: Miller, Orton, Mulligan, 1856); and Friedrich Anspach, *Sons of the Sires* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co., 1855).

Aside from the works of Higham and Billington cited above, the best place to begin an examination of the immigrants and Catholics who were the objects of nativist distaste is in Dieter Cunz, *The Maryland Germans* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1948), a very competent study of the major foreign element in Maryland, and in Robert Joseph Murphy, "The Catholic Church in the United States during the Civil War Period, 1852–1866," *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia,* 39 (1928): 272–344. The *Records* have several usable minor articles on nineteenth-century American Catholics and their difficulties with nativist opposition.

Economic Studies

Transportation was the major factor in the economic development of Maryland. To study this subject see, for a start, Edward Hungerford, *The Story of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1928); Walter S. Sanderlin, *The Great National Project: A History of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal,* (The Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, ser. 64, no. 1 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1946); and *idem,* "The Maryland Canal Project," *MHM,* 41 (1946): 51–65. For a look at the trade patterns developed by this transportation system, consult Laura

Bornholdt, *Baltimore and Early Pan-Americanism*, Smith College Studies in History, no. 34 (Northampton, Mass.: Smith College, 1949); and William B. Catton's well-done "The Baltimore Business Community and the Secession Crisis, 1860–1861," (Master's thesis, University of Maryland, 1952), which is concerned with more than trade patterns but which analyses them very well nonetheless.

No examination of Maryland's economic situation before the Civil War is complete without Avery Craven, *Soil Exhaustion as a Factor in the Agricultural History of Virginia and Maryland, 1606–1860,* University of Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences, no. 13 (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1926).

Labor's role can be pieced together from several articles. Very useful is Richard B. Morris, "Labor Controls in Maryland in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Southern History,* 14 (August 1948): 385–400. A good study of one large laboring group can be found in Katherine A. Harvey, *The Best-Dressed Miners: Life and Labor in the Maryland Coal Region* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969). See also M. Ray Della, Jr., "The Problems of Negro Labor in the 1850's" *MHM*, 66 (1971): 14–32; and, in another look at labor and the race question, Clement Eaton, "Slave Hiring in the Upper South," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 46 (1960): 663–78.

Maryland Negroes

This study is essentially centered on white Marylanders as the primary decisionmakers in the 1850s; Maryland's black population figures primarily as an influence on the mind of the whites. A good study of Maryland's blacks is needed, but for the present we will have to work with two standard old volumes: Jeffrey R. Brackett, *The Negro in Maryland,* The Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, extra vol. 5 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University, 1889); and James M. Wright, *The Free Negro in Maryland 1639–1860,* Columbia University Series in History, Economics, and Public Law, vol. 97, no. 3 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1921). See also Stanton Tiernan, "Baltimore's Old Slave Markets," *Baltimore Sun*, September 13, 1936; Elwood L. Bridner, Jr., "The Fugitive Slaves of Maryland," *MHM,* 66 (1971): 33–49; and the studies by Della and Eaton cited above in the section on economic history.

Maryland and the Election of 1860

Only a few secondary works are of much help on Maryland in the election of 1860. See Ollinger Crenshaw, *The Slave States in the*

Election of 1860 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1945); and Reinhard C. Luthin, *The First Lincoln Campaign* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1944). One good reference is Willard King, *Lincoln's Manager, David Davis* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960); David Davis was a cousin of Henry Winter Davis. Brand new and very competent is Jean H. Baker, *The Politics of Continuity: Maryland Politics from 1858 to 1870* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973).

The Coming of the Civil War in Maryland

A wide variety of sources are necessary for a proper understanding of the secession winter and the crisis of decision in Maryland. A good start, beyond the legislative debates, the Executive Letterbook, newspapers, and relevant manuscript collections, is George L. P. Radcliffe's *Governor Thomas H. Hicks of Maryland and the Civil War,* The Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, ser. 19 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1901). Next best is Carl M. Freasure, "Union Sentiment in Maryland, 1856–1860," *MHM,* 24 (1929): 210–24. See also George Beall, "The Persuasion of Maryland to Join the Federal Union," typescript, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore. Invaluable is William B. Catton's work on Baltimore businessmen in the secession crisis, cited above among the works on economics. For the efforts of Maryland's secessionists, see William C. Wright, *The Secession Movement in the Middle Atlantic States* (Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1973).

For the efforts of Marylanders in Washington the leading works focus on Henry Winter Davis and include Henry Adams, "The Great Secession Winter of 1860–61," in *The Great Secession Winter of 1860–61, and Other Essays,* ed. George Hochfield (New York: Sagamore Press, 1958); and David M. Potter, *Lincoln and His Party in the Secession Crisis* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1942). See also Gerald Henig, "Henry Winter Davis and the Speakership Contest of 1859–1860," *MHM,* 68 (1973): 1–19. Marylanders also participated actively in the "peace conference" held in Washington in February, which was reported in Crafts J. Wright, *Official Journal of the Conference Convention Held at Washington City, February 1861* (Washington: M'Gill & Witherow, 1861); and in Lucius E. Chittenden, *Debates and Proceedings of the Conference Convention, 1861* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1864).

For the dramatic events of the spring of 1861, see George William Brown, *Baltimore and the Nineteenth of April, 1861* (Baltimore: N. Murray, 1887); Norma Cuthbert, *Lincoln and the Baltimore Plot,*

1861 (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1949); Frank Moore, ed. *The Rebellion Record,* 9 vols. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1861–68); and the works by the most prominent military figure operating in the state that spring, Benjamin F. Butler, *Private and Official Correspondence of General Benjamin F. Butler,* 5 vols. (Norwood, Mass.: Plimpton Press, 1917), and *Butler's Book* (Boston: A. M. Thayer & Co., 1892).

An adequate picture of the events of the spring of 1861 cannot be obtained, however, without recourse to primary materials—newspapers, the letterbook and correspondence of Governor Hicks, legislative journals and documents, and the correspondence of leading figures like John Pendleton Kennedy and Henry Winter Davis.

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Because no one ever does it alone, this book is dedicated to those who prepared the way:

To my father, Charles Evitts, and the memory of my mother,

and

to Irene and Walter Allen