

Politicians eulogize Tawes

Democratic Party leaders across the state and the county took time Tuesday to remember Gov. J. Millard Tawes, 85, as a traditional political mentor and a strong executive. Tawes, 85, died yesterday morning of an apparent heart attack at his Eastern Shore home.

Some of Anne Arundel County's older political experts said Tawes was a cautious but determined leader.

John McNulty, who led the county's legislative delegation while Tawes was governor, said the man was "a determined man. He didn't jump at something, he really researched things thoroughly and he took advice. But once he made up his mind, he was straight forward."

Now 70, McNulty was a state senator for 17 years, including Tawes' eight years as chief executive beginning in 1958. And like Tawes, John McNulty was a native of Crisfield.

"We were very close. In fact, I was involved in his first campaign for comptroller," McNulty said Tuesday that Tawes leaned hard then on the state's volunteer firemen "and they gave him the vote."

According to McNulty, and others, Tawes was an old-time grass-roots politician "and we spent a lot of time at the (American) Legion halls and fire departments across the state."

McNulty listed the outlawing of slot machines, and civil rights legislation as Gov. Tawes highest achievements. "He was a good Christian man," he said. "And it was with his leadership that those civil rights bills were passed."

Louis L. Goldstein, Maryland comptroller, and well known personality around Annapolis, was first elected to his present office when Tawes won his first term as governor. Goldstein, 66, said he and Tawes "were like father and son." He credited Tawes with "being the first to really emphasize economic development."

But perhaps Court of Special Appeals Judge James Morton of Millersville is the county resident who worked most closely with Tawes. As his executive assistant, Morton began every working day with then Gov. Tawes.

"He would come in at about 7 a.m. I was the early staffer, so I was there at about 6:30," said Morton. "He would say, 'Well, how is our image this morning' fully expecting I had read the papers and watched the evening news the night before."

"If I tried to protect him a little bit, and say 'We're doing just fine,' he'd come back and say, 'Well you obviously didn't read the papers yet.'"

Morton said Tawes "knew his budget

(Continued on Page 14, Col. 3)

Tawes was a political enigma

(Continued from Page 1)

from A to Z." He credits Tawes with "bringing business practices to government. He ran a streamlined, corporate form of government."

Tawes had "a good sense of humor, but he wasn't a clown or a great wit," added Morton. "He was a genuine, good character with none of those Hollywood attributes."

According to Morton the governor "always said the community colleges were his greatest accomplishment. He was the one who put them together. They brought education to the back yards of a lot of communities."

State Sen. Jerome F. Connell, D-Pasadena, said Tawes provided advice and inspiration to Democrats long after he left the governor's office. "He was totally active up until the past year or so," he added.

Connell said that while the 1960s were a turbulent time for America, in Maryland during the Tawes administration, "for eight years it was pretty quiet."

Tawes, who had suffered recent heart trouble, was found unconscious in his Crisfield home, according to Truman F. Painton, administrator of Edward W. McCready Memorial Hospital here.

Doctors and ambulance crews arrived at the house about 10 minutes after the 8:20 a.m. call and spent approximately 55 minutes trying unsuccessfully to revive the former governor, Painton said.

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

Tawes had been released two weeks ago from Peninsula General Hospital in Salisbury after suffering a slight heart attack. He had also been hospitalized there last month after complaining of chest pains, although doctors said he did not suffer a heart attack that time.

Gov. Harry Hughes, like Tawes a native of the Shore, ordered all flags flown at half staff in honor of the longtime Democratic officeholder.

Tawes is survived by his wife, two children, four grandchildren, two brothers and a sister.

There was no word on funeral arrangements.

Tawes, a Crisfield native, served two terms as Maryland's governor, riding into office in 1958 by the largest majority ever given the state's chief executive at 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, state

banking commissioner and and Maryland's 59th chief executive.

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

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

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

Tawes was a political enigma.

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

Known as a fiscal conservative, Tawes' gubernatorial tenure still encompassed a rapid expansion of government.

Despite his mild-mannered appearance, he was given to occasional temper outbursts which were legendary 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 higher education system, upgrading of the status of state mental institutions and creation of the state Department of Economic and Community Development.

The governor was generally regarded as a fiscal conservative and he prided himself on keeping spending in line with revenues.

Nevertheless, his eight years in office were a period of remarkable growth for the state, with total spending more than doubling from \$448 million to more than \$1 billion.

One of the most vexing problems of Tawes' two terms came not from the legislature or elsewhere in state government, but from the city of Cambridge on his native Eastern Shore.

The racial crisis of 1963, and his hesitancy to deal with the problem, brought the governor some of the sharpest criticism of his career.

As the conflict became more intense during the early summer, Tawes was urged to send in the National Guard to restore order.

But with characteristic reluctance to extend the powers of the governor outside the political and legislative realm, he waited until state and city police lost control of the situation before bowing to demands to put the city under military control.

Acting against the advice of many, he pulled the guard out as soon as peace was restored, only to have to send it back again a few days later.

But finally convinced of the necessity for using the National Guard, he gave its leaders a free hand in dealing with the situation and left them in Cambridge until there was no doubt that order could be maintained by the police.

Tawes served as comptroller, his first state-wide office, for 17 years, beginning in 1939.