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SENATOR THOMAS V. MIKE MILLER, JR.

GEORGE WASHINGTON BIRTHDAY ADDRESS-----INTRODUCTION

THE SPEAKER---ROBERT F. SWEENEY, CHIEF JUDGE, DISTRICT COURT OF MARYLAND

STATE HOUSE, ANNAPOLIS, FEBRUARY 20, 1995

Bio of Judge Sweeney attached

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THE REVEREND T. DONALD RINFRET, S.J.
DIRECTOR, JESUIT MISSION BUREAU
BALTIMORE, MD

GUEST OF THE HONORABLE ROBERT F. SWEENEY

One---Washington

It was a dark and tempestuous night----March 25, 1791.

Annapolis was waiting for another visit from an old friend, a good neighbor to some many Marylanders, and the first President of the United States.

George Washington had not paid a formal or an official visit since that historic day eight years earlier when he had resigned his commission as commander-in-chief of American military forces.

This time, Washington was crossing the Chesapeake from Rock Hall. The storm was fierce. The welcome party led by the Governor George Plater waited in vain. There was no vessel-----no Washington.

Washington's vessel did not enter the Severn until 10 that night.

Then it stopped --- struck on a bar or a point. It gave a signal of distress ---- about a mile away from the city.

But it was impossible under the rough conditions to go to her aid.

Washington rode out the storm ---- as so many other sailors have from that time to this time.

As a local account described it ---- "the Guardian Angel of America was still watchful." Washington was in good enough shape to join a large dinner at Mann's Hotel that very evening.

We usually focus on that grand ceremonial day when Washington handed over his commission to the Congress assembled here and reverted back to civilian life.

Two---Washington

That was a grand assembly.

We forget that four future Presidents of the young republic were in the Old Senate Chamber that----along with Washington, there were present --- Jefferson, Madison and Monroe.

So were all of Maryland's signers of the Declaration of Independence and the state's warriors, John Eager Howard, General Smallwood, Joshua Barney ---- and some spectators like Eldridge Gerry and Alexander Hamilton.

Tonight we have a dazzling assembly as well.

I don't know how many future presidents we may have ---- but a future governor or two ---- is not out of the question.

To honor Washington ----- as we have by tradition for so long -- ---I present a speaker who is well known to all of you.

He is a true son of Baltimore ---- born there, raised there, educated there at Loyola High School and Loyola College as well as the Law School of the University of Baltimore.

He has an omission from his official biography. He did serve in the House of Delegates, appointed from the Third District of Baltimore City, in the June 1958 special session of the General Assembly.

I can't understand why he doesn't trumpet out his brief ---- but I am sure brilliant ---- legislative service.

The Third District was still electing Republicans. Only after he left did they stop that regrettable practice.

Three---Washington

Our speaker chose another rode to stardom ---- beginning with ten years in office of the Attorney General ---- rising from a humble assistant to Deputy Attorney General.

Almost a quarter-century ago --- in May of 1971 --- He was given the pioneering task of shaping and building and creating an effective District Court system --- replacing the antiquated collection of police court magistrates.

He has succeeded ---- with style.

Our speaker now reigns over a judicial empire of some 97 judges, 1,200 clerks, scattered in some 35 courthouses all over the state.

He has already matched Washington in years ---- some 68 I understand.

He has a wicked sense of Irish humor ---- a talent beyond that of a Washington.

And he plays golf and restores antique automobiles --- sometime Washington never dream of -----

I give you THE FATHER OF THE MARYLAND'S DISTRICT COURTS -----

CHIEF JUDGE ROBERT F. SWEENEY

ROBERT F. SWEENEY
CHIEF JUDGE
DISTRICT COURT OF MARYLAND

Judge Robert F. Sweeney was born in Baltimore City on September 17, 1926.

Judge Sweeney attended parochial school, Loyola High School and Loyola College of Baltimore. After a ten year career in private industry, he decided on a legal career, and in 1957 he graduated from the Law School of the University of Baltimore. He was admitted to the practice of law in October of that year.

In 1961 Judge Sweeney was appointed as an Assistant Attorney General of Maryland. In 1964 he was appointed as Chief of the Criminal Division of the Attorney General's Office, and in 1966 he was appointed as the Deputy Attorney General of Maryland. During his ten years in the Attorney General's Office, Judge Sweeney served as the legal adviser to almost every agency and commission of State government, and he appeared on behalf of the State in hundreds of cases in both the State and federal courts, including four cases before the Supreme Court of the United States.

In May, 1971 he was appointed by the Governor of Maryland as the first Chief Judge of that state's newly created District Court, and was charged with the responsibility of establishing this newest addition to Maryland's judicial system. The Court over which Chief Judge Sweeney presides now consists of 97 judges and 1,200 clerks, and sits in thirty-five courthouses in every part of Maryland. Although Judge Sweeney is a resident of Baltimore City, his offices

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and chambers are in the Courts of Appeal Building in Annapolis.

Judge Sweeney is married to the former Elizabeth Lee Andrews of Baltimore and they are the parents of two children and the grandparents of six. Judge Sweeney is an avid reader and an ardent golfer, and he and his son share an interest in restoring antique automobiles.

In addition to his official duties, Judge Sweeney maintains an active speaking schedule. In 1960 - prior to his appointment to the Bench - he was the Chairman of the Speakers Committee in Maryland for the presidential campaign for John F. Kennedy, and he served in that same capacity for President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964. Over the past twenty-five years he has given more than 500 addresses on a broad variety of topics, in and out of Maryland.