



Judge Harry A. Cole shakes hands with a well-wisher after being sworn in by acting Governor Lee (right) to the Court of Appeals. AP

Judge Cole takes Appeals Court oath

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Annapolis—Judge Harry A. Cole of Baltimore was sworn in yesterday as the first black to sit on the Maryland Court of Appeals.

In a unique ceremony in the state Senate chamber here, Judge Cole took the oath of office from acting Governor Lee in front of more than 250 persons representing a cross-section of the black political power structure in Baltimore.

Observers here said it was the first time they could recall a judge being sworn in in the Senate chamber. Judge Cole, a Republican, had requested that the oath be

administered there because he once sat in the Senate as its first black member.

In fact, acting Governor Lee noted that it was 23 years ago that he was being sworn in as a member of the House of Delegates while Judge Cole was being sworn in across the hallway to serve his first term as a member of the Senate.

The date yesterday also marked the 200th anniversary of the state's Court of Appeals, and Judge Cole noted in an interview after the ceremony that "the fact that this appointment comes after 200 years could be an indictment in itself" of the state's judicial system.

But there was little indication at yesterday's ceremony of any disaffection with the system or the candidate the acting Governor eventually chose.

Mr. Lee's first choice for the job had been Judge Joseph C. Howard of the Supreme Bench, but he could not appoint him because Judge Howard, a black, was not included on the list of recommended candidates put together by the Judicial Nominating Commission.

Judge Cole, 56, was the only black to make the list, and Mr. Lee clearly felt politically obligated to appoint a black.

Judge Cole, who is filling the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Frederick J. Singley, Jr., has served on the Su-

preme Bench in Baltimore since 1968.

He is a graduate of Morgan State University and the University of Maryland.

He will have to run for election to a 15-year-term on the Court of Appeals next year, when Judge Singley's term would have expired.