

sourcefulness of all segments of our society – of government at federal, State and local levels; of private institutions and organizations; of individual citizens. The privately owned and operated nursing homes which are represented here this evening afford as good an example as I know of the role private institutions can and do play in this common undertaking. You have cooperated with us in State government magnificently, and, on behalf of all the people of Maryland, let me applaud your fine sense of public responsibility.

It has been my pleasure this year to designate, by executive proclamation, this week – the week of July 7-13 – as “Maryland Nursing Home Week.” In this proclamation, I have noted that geriatric care is of primary public significance – is a principal unsolved public issue of concern to private groups and all levels of government. I have noted, also, that our State, with its efficient and effective system of licensing and supervision, has attained a position of leadership among the states in the maintenance of high standards in nursing home care, and that this Association, through its efforts to promote the very highest ethical standards and practices, deserves much of the credit for this achievement. And finally, I have asked that all individuals and groups in the State make an effort to become better acquainted with the ever-increasing importance of nursing homes in our society.

It was deeply gratifying to me to learn that this Association, in conjunction with the National Association and the American Medical Association, has established a system of nursing-home accreditation, patterned after the system of hospital accreditation. This system not only will provide the public with a yardstick to measure the merits of these institutions, but in general will serve to upgrade the standards of nursing-home care in our State. The inauguration of this program of accreditation marks a significant step forward in our effort to enhance the happiness and well-being of our senior citizens, and your organization merits the very highest praise for the accomplishment.

As I have said to this group before, it has been a source of profound satisfaction to me to have been identified rather closely with the movement in Maryland to embellish the “golden age” of so many of our Maryland citizens. It is a source of great satisfaction to me to have had a part in the creation of the first State agency whose function is to co-ordinate the various programs for the betterment of our senior citizens. I am pleased to report to you that this Commission on the Problems of the Aging continues to make progress in this field.

As I suggested in the beginning, the problem of adequate care and treatment of our older people is a continuing one. And though much