

stantial progress in preparing the State to meet any threat of catastrophe.

My Administration, working in conjunction with the Maryland State Bar Association, prepared legislation providing for an orderly succession to the Office of Governor in the event of a nuclear disaster. The need for this legislation was quickly recognized by the General Assembly, was easily passed and then was signed by me. It went to a referendum and the people approved it by an overwhelming majority. This to me is one clear indication that our legislators and the people of Maryland understand the value of civil defense preparedness.

Working with the State Department of Assessments and Taxation and the staff of the Maryland Civil Defense Agency at the regular session of the Legislature this year, we were able to get introduced, passed and signed into law legislation exempting fallout shelters from property taxation. It is my understanding that only a few states have similar legislation and that the Maryland law is the most workable one yet passed. This is another milestone in the history of civil defense in Maryland.

At the dedication ceremony I referred to, I urged that our counties devote more attention to disaster preparation. It is most gratifying to me to note that they have taken this advice seriously. Just recently I journeyed to Hickory, in Harford County, to attend the dedication exercises of a splendid new county civil defense control center. That underground installation closely resembles the one in which we are meeting today. I am informed that still another such structure is planned for Queen Annes County, and there may be others of which I am not aware. I do know, however, that in almost every county of the State, civil defense work is progressing at a faster pace than it was a year ago.

We are deeply appreciative of the help the federal government is giving us by sharing administrative costs with the State agency, and with Baltimore City and many of the counties. Civil defense is a part of the whole national defense picture, and we hope for further help from the federal government. . . .

Next week, I shall go to Hawaii to attend the 1961 National Governors Conference, where we expect to go deeply into the matter of civil defense. I shall be happy to report to the other governors the great progress we have made in Maryland in civil defense.

Perhaps you know that today is graduation day for another recruit class of the Maryland State Police. I am going from this meeting to