

and political matters with the members of the United Democratic Women's Clubs and their guests. You have paid me a high honor by asking me to come here and speak to you today.

The year that has past since last we met has been one of the most eventful ones in the history of the Democratic Party in Maryland. The greatest single victory in Party annals was achieved last November when Republicans were swept out of office everywhere, leaving us in undisputed control of the executive and legislative branches of our State government. Our majorities in the State House and the House of Delegates are the largest any of us can recall. We captured all seven of Maryland's Congressional seats in contests that stunned Republicans and even surprised some Democrats.

This tidal wave of popular approval moved on, and last May a Democratic ticket in Baltimore, headed by J. Harold Grady, repulsed what the Republicans thought was their most formidable challenger in a triumph as brilliant and as impressive as that of November. There is every reason for Democrats to feel elated by this string of successes, but as much as we deserved this indorsement of our Party, its principles and its candidates, it would be foolhardy on our part if we considered it something to which we are entitled, without responsibility. The voters who went to the polls last November not only sanctioned our program and our candidates, but they also wrote a mandate in which we were enjoined to establish and maintain a strong, sound, progressive State government at a cost the taxpayers of the State can afford. It was no simple task we were called upon to perform.

It is only seven months ago now that we assumed the authority in Annapolis, and any attempt at this time to pass definitive judgment on what has been done by this Administration would be premature. The record is being written, however, and I believe enough has been achieved already to indicate that if we continue on the course that has been set, we may expect fruitful results. I began my term as Governor on a general assumption that the people of the State were entitled to a tax breather. Additional sales and income taxes had just been imposed upon them by the preceding administration, and I felt it would be an undue hardship upon them to ask them to pay still more. I was determined, however, that State institutions should not be weakened nor State services impaired, but on the contrary, that these institutions and these services should be strengthened and improved wherever possible. This posed a difficult problem, for, as you