

housing which older persons can afford and that a campaign be waged to eliminate age discrimination in employment.

In Maryland, steps have been taken to remove some of the barriers against the employment of elderly persons in our State service. And recently I sent out inquiries to key business figures in the State, asking them for suggestions about how we may go about providing more employment opportunities for older people.

It has come to my attention that the Baltimore City Council has passed a resolution asking the General Assembly to authorize real-estate tax exemptions for home-owning pensioners. Within the several subdivisions of the State, varying conditions prevail which would make it difficult for the General Assembly fairly to set a specific and uniform figure of exemption. Upon the recommendation of the Commission on the Aging, however, I am advocating the passage of legislation which would empower the subdivisions to grant the kind of real estate tax exemptions they feel will meet their requirements.

I should like to touch briefly on another aspect of the problem you are studying at this conference—"The use of leisure time."

I like to think of leisure as work without pressure. Certainly leisure does not mean idleness.

Oliver Wendell Holmes once said that "to be seventy years young is sometimes more cheerful and hopeful than to be forty years old." But it can be neither cheerful nor hopeful if the added years granted us are to be spent in loneliness and uselessness.

We are enjoined not to forsake the sick and the weak, but at the same time we must remain aware of the needs of the healthy, cheerful and hopeful persons in retirement. In the interest of such persons, we must ask ourselves these questions:

Are there vital opportunities within communities for making use of the wisdom and skills of older persons—of bringing together the old and the young for the benefit of both?

Is there a place for them to gather, to work, to study, to exchange ideas?

Are our churches, civic clubs, libraries, community centers aware of the need of older persons for inclusion in their programs?

Is the great human need to contribute being met within our communities with respect to the older citizens?

I am advised that four counties have established local commissions