

ADDRESS, COMBINED MEETING OF SERVICE CLUBS
OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

COLLEGE PARK

March 16, 1960

I am grateful for this opportunity to speak to a group such as this which collectively constitutes the core of the business and civic leadership of this pleasant and progressive county. You and your families are living in the very heart of what is at once the most interesting and most challenging social development of our time—a changing America whose population, predominantly rural only a few years ago, now is four-fifths urban or suburban.

In few places in this country is this condition so manifest as it is in Prince Georges County, where the population of a big city spills over in torrents into what just a few decades ago were the peaceful farmlands of Southern Maryland

Within Maryland there are two gigantic metropolitan areas—the City of Baltimore and its suburban environs and the Maryland portion of suburban Washington, the two being separated by a distance of only about 40 miles. Together, they account for well over two-thirds of the estimated population of our State. Such drastic change in the complexion of our terrain and our way of living creates many perplexing problems. I should like to enumerate a few of them:

1. An ever-increasing school population, accompanied by serious financial dislocations and rapidly rising tax rates.
2. Demands for adequate water supply, sewers, garbage and trash disposal, fire and police protection and numerous other public services required by people in thickly populated communities.
3. Transportation difficulties and traffic congestion.
4. Planning and zoning requirements to protect open-space and recreation areas and prevent the blight and decay of neighborhoods.

I should like to discuss with you this evening some of the views I have about measures we can take to resolve these difficulties A basic concept of our form of government is that governmental authority should reside as closely as possible to the people—that power or authority should be vested in the smallest possible jurisdiction. It follows, therefore, under that concept that a greater part