

To combat the blight and deterioration, it has developed a course of action which has been named "urban renewal." The first effects of its program for slum clearance and redevelopment are visible now in the area surrounding the Fifth Regiment Armory, in which our new State Office Building stands as a pinnacle, and in the sections which have been rebuilt around the Johns Hopkins Hospital. The boldest of all of Baltimore's renewal schemes is the Charles Center Project, in which the city has undertaken to rehabilitate 22 acres in the core of its downtown business district. It might be of some satisfaction to us if we could recline in the knowledge that blight and slums are problems for the big cities and are of little concern to those of us who live outside them. But such is not the case. Even now we hear reports about suburban slums and how blight spreads to suburban areas before they are fully developed.

Some time ago, *Fortune* magazine published an article describing what it called the "urban sprawl." The kind of progress we are experiencing, it said, will produce "the paradox of prosperity lowering our standard of living." The whole metropolitan area of the future could be ruined by the unplanned, hit-or-miss type of development that we sometimes see in today's suburbia. Sprawl, as the author of the article calls it, is bad esthetics and bad economics. To quote the magazine further: "Five acres are being made to do the work of one, and do it very poorly. This is bad for the farmers, it is bad for communities, it is bad for industry, it is bad for utilities, it is bad for for the recreation groups, it is bad even for the developers."

Good planning, let me emphasize, is a prime requisite of good government, and it is of particular importance to local governments dealing with the problems I have outlined. It is not too late for us to do something about the problems now, but the opportunities to solve them will become scarcer as times goes by. Certainly, I believe that we still have time to lay down sensible guide lines for communities of the future. A step in the right direction has been taken, in my opinion, by the Legislative Council of the General Assembly in its proposal to amend the Constitution to extend urban renewal and redevelopment powers to counties and municipalities of the State. As you know, Baltimore City now is the only political subdivision of the State which has the authority to engage in this program of clearance and redevelopment with federal subsidization.

I am advised that other counties and municipalities would welcome the opportunity to share in this program. I can see no reason why they should be deprived of this opportunity.