

In discussing the Department of Health, I would bring to your attention the fact that substantial progress has been made in raising the standards of care in nursing homes. Under the program which you approved last year, 143 homes, with a capacity of 4,835 beds, have met the new requirements set up by the State Board of Health and Mental Hygiene.

As you all will recall, during the first year of this administration we set up a new state agency to perform a hitherto neglected service to the people of Maryland—the Department of Economic Development.

I strongly supported the creation of this new service, in the belief that it would help to guarantee Maryland's continued growth and prosperity.

The achievements which have been made up to now have confirmed my belief to the extent that I now predict that this act will be regarded in the future as one of the extraordinary accomplishments of this administration.

From my observation of it—and I have watched it closely—I am convinced that a sound economic development program—one that will produce results year after year—is made up of hard and patient work, with little glamor and less ballyhoo.

It consists, among other things, of fostering and developing local economic development groups, for in the long run no program can succeed at the State level without a strong network of local programs.

It consists, furthermore, of hard labor in digging out facts, interpreting them and making them accessible—facts about Maryland people, the State's natural resources, its community assets and characteristics, markets, skills, educational facilities, roads, waterways, taxes, governmental services and an almost infinite variety of information. An importantly, it consists of building a reputation for accuracy, honesty and reliability—a reputation for information and assistance that can be depended on.

This is the foundation upon which we are building our economic development program in Maryland. It is a relatively new agency, and we can expect our highest rewards from it to appear in years to come. But even now, in terms of cold financial facts—in terms of new industrial plants representing multi-million-dollar investments, new jobs, new payrolls worth millions of dollars annually—the program has been a success.

It is clear to me, then, that on all counts our economic development