

portions of the State lying in the metropolitan area of the District—are the problems of the District of Columbia.

So, we are eager to strengthen and intensify the effort that is being made by the various governments represented in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments to find the solutions to our common problems.

Those of you who are here know the history of the District of Columbia—that it occupies an area ceded by the State of Maryland to the federal government as a seat of government. This was after Maryland had attempted unsuccessfully to induce the federal government to use Annapolis as a capital, offering it our State House, which we still use, the Governor's Mansion as a residence for the President of the Continental Congress and 13 other buildings for the use of representatives of the 13 states. Periodically since the Federal District was established, there have been suggestions, usually in the form of bills before Congress, that the land now comprising the District be returned to Maryland. It has occurred two or three times since I have been Governor.

Maryland is flattered, of course, by such gestures of confidence and good will, but so far as I know there is no sentiment in our State for reclaiming the territory we so willingly donated to the then homeless and impoverished federal government.

We are pleased and proud of our proximity to the Nation's capital. The benefits which we derive from the affinity are very nearly incalculable. Maryland is something more than just a neighbor of Washington. The imaginary lines that are drawn to delimit political jurisdiction and political authority have little meaning in the lives of the people. So that, more than 500,000 Marylanders, I know, consider themselves Washingtonians. Many of them work here, do their shopping here, seek pleasure and recreation here.

All of this, of course, implies the necessity for regional cooperation, and the State of Maryland is happy to work with the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Virginia for the mutual welfare of the citizens of the three jurisdictions.

Let me say again that it is a high honor and a real pleasure to be here at this 1965 conference, and, as I have done in the past, I pledge the continued support of the State of Maryland in the effort that is being made to further our common interests and resolve our common problems.