

Religions and government are the primary basic institutions of our society and both have performed mutual roles in the lives of the people. Church and state deal with the same people, each rendering to them a vital and indispensable service, the former, law and order; the latter, moral and spiritual values. The church supplies the ideals and inspiration that will produce worthy citizens and keep the ship of state moving towards its highest goals. This, of course, is one of the highest functions of the church—to provide the motivation for our citizens to serve in positions of public trust for the benefit of their fellowman. I am not in the least fearful that the church will ever cease to perform this vital function in society, but I do think that, from time to time, it is necessary that we re-dedicate ourselves to the proposition that here on earth God's work must be our own.

We have a continuing obligation to provide the moral and spiritual climate that will insure that future generations of Americans and Marylanders are reared with a respect for those institutions we revere—church, government and family. And while we must continue to insist on the principle of separation of church and state, that insistence must be tempered by the knowledge that those to whom the churches minister spiritually are the very same people who comprise the governmental and social structure of this land. And this is why I am glad today to see your interest in political processes. Surely to be politically aware and to urge political awareness on your congregations is not a violation of separation of church and state. As you know, this subject is very complicated and we do not have the time here today to explore all of its ramifications. Suffice to say that people have an obligation to be interested in, aware of the functions of their government. For the church to advocate this interest and awareness in all matters, political or otherwise, affecting the general welfare of the people, is entirely proper.

I know that you have an interesting and informative program remaining today and so I won't take up any more of your time. I hope that my remarks were of some value to your program and I sincerely thank you for the opportunity to be here with you again this year.