

ADDRESS, GIRLS STATE

ANNAPOLIS

June 24, 1963

It is a privilege for me, as you Governor, to welcome you to Annapolis and to extend official greetings to this eighteenth annual Assembly of Girls State. As many of you know, I have been accorded this same privilege in previous years and I always look forward to the occasion with a great deal of pleasure. It is my feeling that such occasions arise too infrequently.

Naturally, I express my feelings on various matters affecting State government to the members of the General Assembly as they convene here in this very chamber annually. But, to a large degree, the men and women of the Maryland General Assembly are concerned with problems that affect the here and now. It is you, and the young people throughout this State and nation, who will be concerned with the problems of the future. It most certainly is not premature then to prepare yourselves to face these problems.

I think that all of us gathered in this chamber today share a certain sense of obligation. We share an obligation not only to the Maryland of today and the future but also to the Maryland of the past. Standing within these hallowed walls seems to instill each of us with a feeling of reverence for the heritage upon which the great democratic traditions of this State and nation are founded. Here is the oldest State House still in continuous use in the United States. It was here that George Washington in a tearful ceremony resigned his commission as Commander of the Continental Army following the Revolutionary War. It was here that the adoption of the American Constitution was first advocated and it was here that Congress ratified the treaty that brought an end to the Revolutionary War. These are historical events of almost majestic proportions and I truly believe that they serve to inspire in each of us the desire to build an even greater State and Nation than was provided for us by our ancestors.

The Maryland of today is, of course, not the same Maryland that these men knew and loved. But if we learn but one thing from our ancestors, then let it be the knowledge that those who preceded us were not afraid of change. For it was these very individuals who perhaps proved to be history's most enlightened innovators. They were men and women willing to exchange a certain present bound by chains for an uncertain future unfettered and free. This is perhaps