

resolution. The leadership of the General Assembly merits special recognition. House Speaker Marvin Mandel, Senate President William James, majority leaders Senator Harry Hughes and Delegate Thomas Hunter Lowe, and the minority leadership including Senator Ed Hall and Delegate J. Glenn Beall, Jr., worked conscientiously toward the passage of all critical legislation and deserve a vote of confidence and a word of thanks from a grateful public. I can assure you they have mine. In three short months, we have moved Maryland out of the past *into the present and even several paces into the future*. And if in the process some have experienced an ounce of pain, I am here to assure you that the expected pound of pleasure will soon be forthcoming. For the pain is more imaginary than real, and the pleasure of doing what is right by all of the people is an accomplishment to be shared and valued by governors, legislators and citizens.

When men of honest intention pledge themselves to the public good what is achieved is legislation that insures progress if not immediate popularity. I have already alluded to the political pressure brought to bear against passage of the priorities bill but our lawmakers, to suggest a poor pun, took the enlightened short view and not the uninformed Long one, assuring the eventual construction of bridges that will bring new prosperity to Maryland. And they did something else, too, which proved that their interest in your future is greater and deeper than in their own political destiny. They voted for tax reform.

This issue of taxation has seldom been so honestly and openly debated. There have been times in the past when leadership failed to lead and when public opinion was viewed not as a dynamic force for progress but as a cover to excuse deliberate abdication of duty. The fact that the flat three percent tax levy assessed was unfair and intolerable to those on low or fixed incomes was and still is commonly acknowledged, but the courage to right the wrong was lacking until now.

We have a new tax law that's going to protect a man on a pension from being forced to sell his house. It's the law that's going to help young married couples to avoid diminishing their savings because of sales taxes. It's the law that asks a lot less of the poor man and somewhat more of the rich man. It's the law that enables your county government to build new schools, hire better teachers, train more policemen. It's the law that returns one hundred million dollars directly to local governments to insure that your children will have the finest educational opportunities from kindergarten through col-