

large in numbers. Again, this is no accident. It is our intention and our earnest desire, Ladies and Gentlemen, to involve as many knowledgeable people as possible in the planning function and thus avoid the pitfalls of having one group or another complain after an action has been taken that it had no advance knowledge of such plans. For the first time, we will try to work as a group to get the *total* interest of the health community behind a program and thus assure achievement. Heretofore, nearly every decision in public health has met resistance because certain groups were *not* included in the planning stages.

For far too long, the fragmentation of health services in Maryland, as elsewhere, has taken its toll in effectiveness — in dollars, even lives — by the very fact that these health services have been piecemeal.

Comprehensive health planning is an opportunity not only to coordinate but to bring modernization and uniform quality to Maryland's health services. Right now a disparity exists between personal and environmental health services. Personal health programs have been around for almost two centuries and in two hundred years their growth has been both enormous and unguided. Environmental health services are a relative newcomer and have benefited from modern administrative concepts. Efforts to coordinate personal health programs have been largely ineffective, while environmental health programs have been improving as a result of administration on a state or regional basis.

Now we are about to develop a planning mechanism — through this Advisory Council — to encompass both environmental and personal health services. Public Law 89-749 charges you with this dual responsibility. "Fulfillment of our national purpose," it says, "depends on promoting and assuring the highest level of health attainable for every person, in an environment which contributes *positively* to healthful individual and family living." You thus will be developing a plan that will not only affect the health care of the individual, but a plan that will affect the very environment in which we live and work.

I caution you that the planning process which you begin today will be continuous. It will require your sustained interest and your dedication.

This plan must designate and provide for the establishment of a single State agency solely responsible for administering the State health planning function. It must provide direct contact with and feedback from the consumers of these health services.