

assessments, will reflect additional savings of \$1,400,000.00 for our people, and will bring to a grand total of \$24,000,000.00 the reductions which have been made in these two forms of taxes since 1941. The State real property tax is now as low as it has been in the past one hundred years.

In addition, the bonded debt of the State, which was well above \$48,000,000.00 at the beginning of this Administration, is now considerably less than half that amount, and is scheduled for a further decrease to about \$20,000,000.00 by the end of this fiscal year. At the same time, funds to the amount of \$9,000,000.00 have been allocated to the Post-War Construction account, to reduce by that total the amount of new bonds that would be issued to finance the State's important Post-War Capital Improvement Construction program.

As another indication of the State's preparedness to meet any employment problems the next few years may bring, it should be noted that funds totalling \$500,000.00 have been allocated to the Post-War Commission by the Board of Public Works to assist the local governments of the State to program post-war building projects, so that plans and specifications might be completed to permit initiation of actual building whenever employment or other conditions might seem to warrant.

The effect has been remarkable. At present, county, municipal, city and State post-war projects for which plans have been completed or are in process reach a total of \$225,000,000.00, a total, by the way, that will provide many millions of man-hours of employment, while at the same time assuring for the people of the State a carefully planned series of public buildings, hospitals, schools, utilities, roads and bridges that will be of lasting benefit.

The past six and one-half years have witnessed a complete transformation in Maryland's fiscal affairs. Budgets have been continually in balance, despite the greatly increased amounts allowed for education, health, salaries of State employees and other very necessary purposes. Your Honorable Body has been a party to this change-about, which, as you know full well, has been brought about without neglecting a single important phase of the State's operations.

Intelligent care in allocating funds, efficiency in Administration and economy in husbanding resources, all have contributed to place Maryland in an enviable financial position. Let us maintain that desirable situation.

I beg to remain,

Very truly yours,

HERBERT R. O'CONNOR,

*Governor.*

*Which was read.*