

Watching a city burn, walking through blocks obliterated as if by bombs from an enemy air attack, is painful. One cannot emerge from such an experience untouched. I came through convinced that, until we can provide a total environmental change, we cannot assure an end to the deprivation and frustration that breed the toleration of violence. This means a redoubled effort by all levels of government, a dynamic infusion of private initiative, and total commitment to this cause on the part of every citizen.

The potential for violence and destruction will always exist in a free society. The exploiters and extremists will strike their self-serving flints, hopeful that the sparks will ignite in an explosive atmosphere of despair. We cannot condone the actions of the professional law-breakers—fortunately they are only a few—but neither can we allow the climate of frustration to continue. The violent voices will be repudiated by the community if we do our part to provide an environment of opportunity and understanding.

I am convinced there is no cause more urgent in America. Permanent resolution will only be achieved in a climate of disciplined dedication and peace. It is my fervent prayer that the next Governor will have the full cooperation of all citizens in this momentous task.

Beyond the violence in Maryland's cities, one action stands out above all others as a source of personal anguish. This was the decision to withdraw medical assistance to 20,000 Maryland citizens, needy but above the welfare level. The fact that I was virtually compelled to do this because of an unpredictable budgetary crisis does not diminish the pain. The fact that a similar crisis provoked a similar reaction in almost every one of the fifty States does not lessen my sorrow. I can find justification by citing the escalating costs to the States of the federally enacted Medicaid program, but I cannot find comfort.

But in the balance, our successes far outweigh our failures. We have been able to accelerate State highway construction through revisions in the gasoline tax distribution formula. We have been able to launch Maryland's first statewide highway safety program. We have been able to expedite interstate highway construction. And we shall have three new bridges across the Chesapeake Bay and a second tunnel beneath the Baltimore Harbor paid for exclusively by users' tolls.

Certainly, one of the greatest of our achievements of the past two years is the massive water quality control program, financed through a \$129 million bond issue. This project is designed to combat, eliminate and ultimately prevent the pollution of Maryland's waters. It is my hope that this program will be remembered as our contribution to posterity, for it has been developed to safeguard the health, livelihood and recreational opportunities for future generations of Maryland citizens.

At the same time, I would be remiss if I did not express my pride in the Air Quality Control Bill prepared by members of the General Assembly and enacted during the first year of this Administration.

Now I would like to turn to the 1970 Budget, which takes into account another crisis and another set of hard decisions. According to the Board of Revenue Estimates report submitted to me on December 17, 1968, Maryland, without major alteration in its revenue receipts policy, would face an estimated deficit exceeding \$33 million at the close of the 1969 fiscal year. In addition to this deficit, budget requests considered only in terms of essential minimums would compound the fiscal crisis.