

The Evening Capital 3/17/81

## Mansion \$\$

Sir:

Your news coverage and editorial concerning the household budget of Government House have been extremely misleading. While it is uncontestable that the budget for Government House was recommended to increase 19 percent, there are two distinct issues: first, the purposes for which the additional money is to be spent, and, second, the break from the past in forthrightly accounting for the monies that are spent in the upkeep of Government House.

In past years, the costs for Government House (such as a chef or silver and china) were buried somewhere within the budget of General Services or the Department of Natural Resources. Frankly, I believe that Gov. and Mrs. Hughes are to be commended for honestly stating what the needs of Government House are in the upcoming years.

It is discouraging to realize that the press has not had the industry nor ingenuity to burrow out "hidden" budget costs in the past. Unfortunately, it is

easier to take a cheap shot at a forthright attempt to be honest with the people.

On the issue of whether these items are suitable expenses, it is a decision that each individual must make. However, it is evident that the Gov. and Mrs. Hughes care very much about Government House and are attempting to restore it. It is a beautiful house and the Hughes have done much to make the house a showpiece for Maryland; the vast majority of the funds for this improvement has been private funds.

However, for official entertainment, it is obvious that the proper silver and china are needed. While others may disagree with the expenditure of funds at this time for the silver and china, I do not believe that anyone can quibble with the Hughes' forthright and honest attempt to set forth a budget of the Government House. I think that they are to be commended and not condemned.

W. MINOR CARTER  
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