

We have a solid foundation from the 1967 session on which to build in the 10 weeks ahead. If we approach our task in the same spirit of bipartisanship and creativity that we molded into State policy last year, our challenges will be met and conquered.

I have every confidence in your ability and your willingness to do this.

Let me leave you with a final — and perhaps somewhat startling — thought. I want to make you proud of this administration, whatever your party. I want to be proud of this Legislature — of the creativity, the independence and the statesmanship that you have developed and have the ability to enhance. Let not the few who mock lofty aims destroy our course to progress.

You have my very best personal wishes as you begin writing this second chapter in the history of the most productive General Assembly Maryland has ever known. I stand by ready to assist you in any way I can.

BUDGET MESSAGE TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

January 17, 1968

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the General Assembly:

Last year the fiscal policy of this administration and of the General Assembly emphasized the long overdue need for the State to meet its responsibilities to local governments. The 1969 budget which I present to you today can best be characterized as one of consolidation and economy, a conscious restraint on spending policies and programs to reflect fiscal realities but at the same time provide reasonable increases in essential services to our citizens.

The success of the fiscal reform program enacted last year is now a matter of public record:

Over \$70 million in additional State aid for public education was distributed to local governments.

Almost \$16 million in State aid for public safety for Maryland counties and municipalities reflected the first effort by any state to directly assist communities in development of better law enforcement.