

**ADDRESS**  
**of**  
**MILLS E. GODWIN**  
**GOVERNOR**  
**TO THE**  
**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 1976**



**SENATE DOCUMENT NO. 1**

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Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, Members of the General Assembly,  
My Fellow Virginians:

For the sixth time, it becomes my duty to report to you on the state of the Commonwealth and to suggest responses to her needs.

We began in 1966 with a great surge in education, followed in 1968 with a major bond issue for construction on virtually every Virginia college campus and mental hospital site, and in 1969 with the revision of our Constitution, including provisions for more flexibility in bond financing. During the next four years, our sustained growth and progress continued.

Then in 1974 and 1975 we marched to a different drummer. The economy of the nation turned sharply downward. Unemployment increased and our resources dwindled. The supply of energy suddenly became critical and energy in any form far more expensive. At the same time prices rose, making our people more conscious of their tax dollars.

In a few short weeks, our continuing order of business turned from innovation and expansion to preserving the fiscal integrity of the Commonwealth and protecting the quality of public services.

It became apparent that the revenue estimates on which your original 1974-76 appropriations were based did not fully anticipate the extent and depth of the economic downturn. Accordingly, I began a series of reductions in State expenditures in accordance with your directives in the language of the Appropriation Act itself.

As the revenue shortfall continued to grow, I ordered further reductions and asked our localities also to share in the budget balancing.

The reductions I ordered will reduce expenditures from the General Fund by almost \$100 million. On the first of this month, 10,000 authorized State positions remained unfilled.

These savings are enough to cover all the overruns in expenditures brought on by inflation over the entire two-year period, plus a modest shortfall in revenues.

However, by last November it became apparent that the shortfall might be substantially greater, leaving us with a deficit next June 30 of some \$25 million.

Let me reiterate that the possible deficit is only a projection, not a certainty. I am hopeful that the measures taken and a more rapid economic recovery will combine to give us a favorable year-end result.

Quite properly you have mandated the Governor to see that expenditures do not exceed revenues at the end of the biennium. Unless you direct me otherwise, it is my intention to do so. However, this involves critical decisions which it is my duty to share with you.

If further reductions in the remaining months of the biennium are confined to the budgets of State agencies, they will have to come from that one-third of the General Fund which is their province, less those items you have specifically removed from the Governor's reach.

Of that portion of the General Fund, some 70 per cent goes for personal services. Thus, further percentage reductions here will mean massive layoffs in State personnel.

If, instead, I ask our State employees to bear the entire burden, it would require an across-the-board salary cut perhaps exceeding the 15 per cent which the Appropriation Act permits.

Rather than undertake such draconian steps, I could turn to the two-thirds of the General Fund which flows to our localities in dollars and services. Coming at this time in their budget year, I leave to your imagination the cries of anguish from our constituents.

These alternatives pose for me the very real question of whether the best interest of our people would be served by such a serious impairment of the State and local services they have come to expect, or whether they would be better protected by spreading the impact evenly and over a longer span.

With these considerations in mind, I have included in the forthcoming budget a contingency reserve item of \$25 million, in the unhappy event that despite our efforts there should be a small deficit at the end of the biennium. Should you approve, I will assume that this option is also your preference.

If the deficit does not occur, I have included language for the contingency reserve item so that the money may be used for other purposes, or as a reserve against a still uncertain economy, which I feel would be prudent.

Let me emphasize to you and to the people of Virginia that I am not planning for a deficit. My aim is to conclude the biennium on June 30 in the black.

## THE 1976-78 BUDGET

So far as the coming biennium is concerned, I believe above all else that our people share my conviction that we must continue to live within our means, and to do so without imposing upon them the burden of a general tax increase, and at the same time without forsaking entirely the momentum they have so long endorsed in certain specific areas.

The budget I will present to you next Monday will include \$700 million in anticipated revenues for the General Fund above the total appropriations in the present biennium, an increase of more than 23 per cent.

It will not include a general tax increase.

It is based on an estimate of revenues as generous as any of my advisors have recommended. It assumes that our economy will continue to improve.

Included in the budget is approximately \$22 million for a 4.8 per cent increase across-the-board for our State employees, beginning the first year of the new biennium. Hopefully, when you meet again next year, I can recommend another increase in the second year.

Our retirees already have the benefit of an automatic cost of living adjustment which you provided. I would recommend for your consideration the inclusion of accumulated sick leave in an employee's length of service eligibility for retirement benefits.

The budget contains an item of \$1.8 million for the biennium to increase the enforcement staff of the Department of Taxation, an investment which the Department estimates will earn us an additional \$17 million in the second year in taxes owed but not collected. This item is included in the total General Fund revenue estimates.

For capital outlays, there is included the sum of \$41 million. Of this amount, more than \$18 million is earmarked for Corrections. Together with the allocations in the present budget and the additional expenditures I have authorized, this should give us some 1,100 new beds by mid-summer of this year and about 900 additional beds by the end of the next biennium, for a total of more than 2,000.

This includes two more housing units at the new maximum security facility in Mecklenburg County while omitting the administration building, and the substitution of a youth correctional center for one of the medium security facilities requested by the Department of Corrections.

The balance of the \$41 million will go largely for major maintenance and utility construction, to complete projects already underway, or to provide energy saving alterations to existing buildings.

Together with the revenue bond construction contemplated, these will provide us with a substantial construction program without additional borrowing.

As you review the capital outlay proposals in the General Fund, you will discover unmet needs that cry for attention. Many of these you have already approved and plans have been drawn and construction could begin promptly.

If, in your collective judgment, we ought to proceed with the most pressing of these projects I offer you three additional sources of revenue.

First, the Revenue Resources and Economic Commission has long recommended that you end the exemption from income taxes of the dividends of Virginia corporations and banks. I suggest you now do so, retroactive to January 1 of this year. This should produce about \$7 million for the next budget period.

Secondly, I suggest that you increase the tax on a bottle and can of beer from two cents to three cents, with the entire proceeds going to the General Fund. This would amount to about \$10 million the first year and \$12 million the second year of the coming biennium.

Thirdly, I recommend that you apply a gross receipts tax of 4 per cent to the severance of coal, levied on the seller who has the benefit of the Federal depletion allowance, but without affecting those counties which now apply local severance taxes in lieu of property taxes. Such a tax will yield an estimated \$34 million each year if it is effective this coming July 1.

A 4 per cent levy would be about the same as that imposed by the State of Kentucky and somewhat less than the similar tax in West Virginia.

These revenue proposals would provide the means of financing an additional \$97 million of high priority building projects, which I will identify in a memorandum accompanying the budget document.

Such an approach will save us both time and money and avoid the hazards of a bond issue launched into a sea of public doubts.

The budget bill does not include revenue sharing funds from the Federal government, except those already committed. If Congress should continue that program in approximately its present form, those additional funds will be available to you or to our localities in 1977, as the legislation may direct.

You will recall that in your last session, we adjusted eligibility requirements and reduced some services in the Medicaid program, which had become a major budget item, thereby reducing the cost by some \$25 million.

The forthcoming budget will continue the Medicaid program at those adjusted levels. However, such factors as the reduction in Federal contributions, increased usage of the program, and the

escalating costs of medical services will require an additional \$76 million for Medicaid even at this reduced level of benefits.

If you are tempted to reduce this figure, I remind you that the \$76 million from the General Fund generates \$36 million in other monies flowing to our mental hospitals alone. Without these funds, they must fall back on our General Fund, or be threatened with degraded care and loss of certification.

The combination of economic recession, inflation, and Federal controls has increased our welfare budgets across the Commonwealth substantially, and this constitutes another major budgetary item.

## **EDUCATION**

I know you share my concern and that of our people that we dare not neglect education at any level, even in a time of drastically reduced revenues.

Accordingly, the budget items for public schools will show an increase of \$208 million, or about 17 per cent, reflecting a projected enrollment plateau the first year of the new biennium and a slight decline in the second year.

Included are new funds for the education of the mentally retarded and the emotionally disturbed. There is added emphasis on funding required by your Standards of Quality.

Enrollments in higher education apparently will continue to increase through the rest of this decade. Therefore, I have recommended an increase in funding of approximately 25 per cent in this area.

I am recommending the continuation of the present student aid program, but with a substantial increase in funding, pending further study by the State Council of Higher Education of the factor of need and the principle of tuition equalization for private colleges.

Meanwhile, we must give renewed attention through the Council to the range and character of college offerings, particularly those of limited productivity, and indeed all our State programs, including education, will face close monitoring of all expenditures.

## **CRIME**

A major and compelling concern that our people express to me is their fear of walking the streets at night and the fear that lingers even behind the locked and barred doors of their own homes and businesses—and they are right.

They share my own feeling of futility as pornography and

uncensored movies abound, violence becomes commonplace for all to see and read. Families break up, children are forgotten, discipline disappears, permissiveness prevails, the seeds of crime are sown and frustration and fear take over.

Here in Virginia, we are virtually helpless before puzzling Federal court decisions that seem more zealous to protect the criminal than his victim. Federal decrees strike down our laws, encourage the criminals, and disrupt our moral standards and inhibit us from taking action on our own.

For cities and towns in this area in 1974, all crimes increased by 17 per cent, in cities by 15 per cent, in suburbs by 20 per cent, in rural areas by 21 per cent. And these are but the latest in a continuing trend.

Furthermore, the best studies tell us that half, or perhaps two-thirds, of the serious crimes committed are never reported to the police.

They tell us that of those reported in the southeastern portion of the nation, only one of four results in an arrest.

And court records show that of those arrests, only one in three results in a conviction.

These are dismal odds. We must reduce them.

I implore you to join with me in a frontal assault on crime with the straightforward purpose of getting the criminals off the streets and into custody, and of keeping them there until we can be reasonably certain that they no longer pose a threat to their fellow citizens.

As a beginning, if all crime is to be reported to the police, the citizen must be free from the fear of retaliation by the criminal himself and from the fear that nothing will come of his complaint.

In this connection, I remind you that not a single sworn trooper position has been added to the authorized complement of our State Police force since I left the Governor's Mansion in January, 1970.

We are fortunate in Virginia that our State Police not only patrol the highways, but have general criminal jurisdiction. Its highly trained, highly professional and highly proficient forces are available to our local governmental officials.

In the budget I will speak of pressing needs in the Department.

The first is for more sergeants and first sergeants as supervisory personnel. The ideal ratio, and one observed by most states, is one sergeant to fifteen troopers. In Virginia, our ratio runs higher than one to thirty in some areas.

In addition, I suggest at least fifty more troopers, plus those needed to replace the new sergeants, to round out the increasing

responsibilities of the entire force.

The State Police operate a communications network which embraces not only their own activities, but those of local law enforcement officers and several other State agencies.

The equipment currently in use is inadequate and obsolete. The trooper in a patrol car can talk to the central communication center but not to fellow troopers, a serious handicap.

I have recommended funds to renovate, expand and modernize their communication system.

Within the boundaries of our major cities, the control of crime falls within the province of municipal police, and they perform their jobs well.

But crime is now part of the life style of some of our suburbs and even our rural areas and is increasing more rapidly there than in the traditional core cities.

Additional troopers would give our towns and some of our rural counties greater access to additional well-trained law enforcement personnel and up-to-date equipment.

One major reason for the frightening increase in our crime statistics is the use of drugs. Records show that half of those admitted to the State penitentiary have a record of drug abuse.

There are currently major drug programs in four of our State agencies. Twenty-eight drug treatment programs are sponsored by State, local and private agencies across Virginia, many of them funded by the Federal Government.

I suggest that by statute you authorize me to reorganize the planning, funding, licensing, and inspection of our treatment programs for drugs, including alcohol.

Currently we have drugs being dispensed, counseling given, and even amateur psychiatric treatment being offered by personnel over whom the State has little or no control and whose qualifications are often questionable.

Drug and alcohol abuse often start in our schools, even our elementary schools. Our teachers should be afforded far more training in how to deal with this menace in the classroom and beyond.

Our total capacity for drug treatment is woefully inadequate, perhaps reaching as little as 10 per cent of heroin addicts alone.

At present, the Federal government is financing most of these efforts, but there are major straws in the wind telling us that this support will soon be greatly reduced. We must be prepared to pick up the tab for what is essentially a Virginia problem.



When we consider that a heroin addict may steal \$100 worth of merchandise a day in order to support a \$40-a-day habit, we could hardly quarrel with the cost of such a program.

In that connection, I offer you my view that there should be no diminution of the penalties for the use of marijuana or similar drugs.

Medical authorities still have not agreed on whether these drugs lead to hard drug addiction or serious physical impairment. It would be a mistake to declare them innocent while the jury is still out.

One of the most heinous of criminals in my judgment is the purveyor of hard drugs for profit. I suggest that you prescribe a mandatory penalty of ten years, with no suspension, probation or parole, for the first offense on the part of the manufacturer, importer, or wholesale distributor of the most dangerous drugs and those most often connected with criminal activity.

From the days of Cain and Abel, the criminal and his weapon have been inseparable. If we can make that association more difficult and dangerous to the criminal, perhaps we can eliminate some of the danger to his victim.

My first thought in this respect was to ban the sale of small, cheap, easily-concealed handguns, but I find it impractical to isolate them and keep them out of the hands of the criminal.

Instead, I suggest uniform statewide record-keeping and identification by dealers of all new handgun purchases, with copies of such records sent to the Superintendent of State Police at regular intervals.

This would not affect the firearms our citizens currently own. It would not apply to rifles and shotguns. It would enable law enforcement officers to quickly trace handguns used in crimes and thus help apprehend the criminal.

At your last session, you made the use of a deadly weapon in the commission of a felony a separate offense. I suggest you now prescribe a mandatory sentence of at least one year with no suspension, probation or parole for the first offense of using a deadly weapon in the commission of a felony, with a separate mandatory sentence of at least three years for a second or subsequent offense, such mandatory sentences to be served in full before the beginning of any sentence for the criminal act itself.

You have already prescribed a mandatory death penalty in some aggravated instances. I would add others, including the killing of a police officer or a judge in the course of his duties, homicide in conjunction with the sexual molestation of a child, and homicide in connection with rape, arson, robbery or burglary.

Across the nation, two-thirds of those arrested for criminal acts have been arrested before. I suggest that for repeated crimes of violence, you require a mandatory sentence of at least one year,

with no suspension, probation or parole for the second or subsequent convictions, as distinct from whatever penalties apply for the crime itself.

If indeed we are to protect society, I suggest that a person who escapes from official detention, be it a local jail or one of our State institutions, be tried and, if convicted, given a sentence of at least one year for the escape with no suspension, probation or parole.

Our sentencing process itself contains a major inequality. If a citizen pleads guilty to a crime and the judge so finds, the court has access to his criminal record in determining his sentence. If he pleads innocent and the jury finds him guilty, its members cannot review his past record in arriving at his punishment.

Virginia is one of only a few states which still retain sentencing by the jury in criminal cases. In the interest of fairness to society, I would recommend that the finding of guilt or innocence remain the province of the jury but that you place the sentencing of convicted offenders in the hands of the judge.

If crime is to be reduced, justice must be swift as well as certain. One of your committees is currently studying ways in which the time between arrest and trial can be reduced. Its conclusions, soon to be presented, will be worthy of your earnest consideration and my support.

I have so far suggested what those of us in government might do in order to reduce the mounting toll of crime across Virginia. If we are to accomplish much, we must also involve the citizens themselves as volunteers within the criminal justice system.

Fortunately, Virginia is already wealthy in this respect. Many of our organizations work with men and women behind bars, with probationers in the court system, or in volunteer efforts to extend the eyes and ears of our law enforcement agencies.

There has already been initiated in the State Office of Volunteerism a concentrated effort to increase this participation and to give it trained direction.

In approaching the looming question of crime, I have moved to strengthen our laws, our law enforcement capabilities, and our corrections system, each in several directions. My fear is that the results may be a thing of bits and pieces unless they can be given direction.

Accordingly, I intend to appoint a high level officer to coordinate our efforts, with the prestige of the Governor's Office behind him. This will be consistent with the recommendation of the Commission on State Governmental Management concerning a new Secretary of Public Safety, should you see fit to act favorably on that proposal.

My thought is that this person would keep in touch with law enforcement at State and local levels, with corrections at both

levels, with our courts, and will develop and coordinate citizen support and involvement, in order that the efforts we have jointly undertaken may produce prompt and positive improvement in our crime rates.

I am well aware that some of these proposals constitute a radical departure from precedent. But I am determined to turn our crime picture around, and I am certain the people of Virginia feel the same urgency. Their eyes will be upon us in this session of the General Assembly. They must not be disappointed.

## CORRECTIONS

Over the past two decades, our corrections system has attracted a great deal of attention in the press. Because good news seldom makes the front page, most of what we have read has been negative.

Recognizing that the system has suffered from years of neglect, a great deal has been accomplished.

The system has been reorganized administratively and capable new personnel brought on board.

Probation and parole have been materially strengthened.

Escapes have been reduced by almost one-fourth from facilities themselves and by almost one-half from work release and furlough programs.

Training of adult correctional officers has been more than doubled, and 2,200 employees have received drug abuse awareness training.

Education and vocational training of inmates have been transferred to an independent Rehabilitative School Authority. I am impressed with the progress being made by this group and with the operation of its programs.

In the Department of Corrections, prisoner records are being overhauled.

A 20-bed ward at the Medical College of Virginia hospital has been provided to improve security and reduce cost.

New facilities have been added including:

A geriatric center at Floyd Correctional Unit;

Vocational buildings at four field units;

A community youth home in Richmond for children 11 to 15, and one for girls in Martinsville;

A crisis intervention home in Virginia Beach for runaways and

children with family crises;

Temporary security cottages at three learning centers to reduce runaways and provide short-term intensive programs for students;

Two security cottages at the Reception and Diagnostic Center.

I would not imply that the work is complete. Much more needs to be done.

We might include classification facilities at local lock-ups and regional jails, separate facilities for juveniles, and a graduated, flexible State corrections system dovetailed to local and regional facilities.

To achieve the goals we all seek obviously requires both time and money, and we are short of both. But we are on the move and there will be no turning back.

There is included in the budget additional sum sufficient funds for both operation and construction and for improvement of local jails.

Since these funds are allocated to localities individually, they will be multiplied where they are used in construction and maintenance of regional jails.

I also have provided for additional classification personnel in the State's correctional system and for the completion of our diagnostic and reception centers.

I cannot guarantee that even with additions that are funded we can accommodate adequately the backlog of State prisoners now awaiting transfer in local jails across the Commonwealth, plus the general increase in criminal activity and the frontal attack on crime I am recommending to you in this message, unless you see fit to amend some of our criminal statutes.

I suggest that as a general policy, we limit the offenders in the State correctional system to felons and leave the misdemeanants in the custody of our local jails.

This should include men convicted of non-support, who must now go to the State system. It would be far more productive if they were kept in local jails and assigned to work release programs.

At this point, I would commend the exhaustive work of the State Crime Commission, which has been most helpful to us. The Commission will have additional crime and correctional legislative proposals which lend themselves to your consideration and my support.

## **GOVERNMENTAL REORGANIZATION**

You have seen the various interim reports prepared by the staff of the Commission on State Governmental Management with their far-reaching proposals for the reorganization of State government.

I commend the Commission members and staff for the herculean labors they have undertaken and for the continuing review of the way the public business is conducted in this Commonwealth.

Theirs is a healthy and a rewarding undertaking.

The recommendations of this Commission are extensive, and I agree with its members that some of these should be acted upon during this session.

## **COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

In this recitation of current issues, I must place collective bargaining for public employees high on the list.

If there be any doubt, let me say again that I oppose on principle collective bargaining for governmental employees, or steps that would ultimately lead thereto.

I have many grounds for that belief. I will mention two.

First, collective bargaining ultimately means that the power to change public policy will be placed in the hands of those who are not directly responsible to the public. It diminishes the sovereignty of every unit of government which participates.

Secondly, despite what the law clearly states, or what the courts have decreed, collective bargaining by public employees elsewhere has led again and again to the disruption of public services. Virginia would not likely be an island unto itself in this respect.

The public's right to determine public policy through its elected and appointed representatives, and the public's right to the uninterrupted flow of public services supersede whatever rights may be claimed by the advocates of collective bargaining.

I remind you that successive Attorneys General of Virginia, including the incumbent, have said that Virginia statutes do not authorize collective bargaining by any governmental unit.

## **MASS TRANSIT**

For the past two decades, the resurgence of Virginia has been accompanied by vast urbanization, until today, 63 per cent of our people live in urban areas and must move about in them. To that end, there developed a philosophy that the ultimate answer should

be highly sophisticated and very expensive mass transit.

In more recent days, the experience elsewhere, and to some extent within our own confines, has cast increasing doubt on this solution. We must now concede that mass transit of any extent will require not only tremendous capital expenditure, but major and continuing subsidies from taxation.

For instance, the operating deficit of the bus transit system in Northern Virginia last year was about \$40 million, and for 1977 the projected deficit is \$55 million.

In that area, there is presently under construction one of the largest public works in the world, a ninety-eight mile metro rail system designed to transport the citizens of those suburbs in and out of the nation's capital.

That system is now projected to cost perhaps twice as much as the entire interstate highway system in Virginia. Beyond that, the projected operating deficits will be astronomical.

Our general approach to mass transit has been through local transit authorities in areas where they are needed. I believe this is the route to follow. I would need to be persuaded to use our General Fund for the metro rail system.

Negotiations by the State are continuing with local authorities and with the Secretary of Transportation in Washington on alternatives to completing Interstate 66 into the nation's capital. Agreement might lead to further financial relief for those localities committed to the metro rail system. I do encourage such an arrangement.

There is in the highway budget a total of \$15 million over the coming biennium to aid regional transportation bodies with capital improvements to bus transportation, including fringe parking lots, bus shelters, and access roads.

## **HIGHWAYS**

Lamentably, our highway construction program continues to fall behind the schedule you have prescribed, despite emergency action.

Last April, I authorized the State Highway Commission to borrow up to \$25 million from the General Fund to match available Federal aid.

I am pleased to report that a slight improvement in the flow of highway funds has made it unnecessary to take advantage of this opportunity.

Attrition has already reduced the department's manpower by more than 900 employees since January of last year.

I recognize the value of our highways. My hope is that the gradual upturn in the economy of which we now see signs and the increase in travel during the Bicentennial will carry us to the time when economic recovery will diminish our problem.

### **ENERGY**

As a result of our joint efforts, the energy picture across the Commonwealth is now generating more light than heat.

The combination of a mild season and certain regulatory moves has eased the threatened shortage of natural gas.

Supplies of fuel oil and gasoline appear adequate and apparently will continue so.

The exhaustive studies by the Electricity Cost Commission have convinced our people that there is no quick and easy way to an abundant supply of electric energy at cheap prices.

The major recommendations of the Commission have been largely carried out, insofar as it was within our province to do so. Those which required legislation are now under study by various legislative committees, and we await their recommendations.

I should reiterate the strong recommendation by the Commission, subsequently endorsed by the Commission on State Governmental Management, that there be created a Consumer Advocate within the Governor's Office. Such legislation would have my support.

### **GENERAL LAWS**

In the area of general laws, I would support a reasonable and workable medical malpractice insurance act. Otherwise, I fear that our people will find it even more difficult to obtain proper medical attention.

In the past, you have wrestled at length with no-fault automobile insurance without reaching agreement. Yet the concept offers possible major savings to automobile owners.

If you reach a responsible consensus at this session, I will support the result.

I would offer you what assurance I can with respect to the recent infusion of the poisonous chemical kepone into the lower James River basin.

After considerable inquiry, I am satisfied that our State agencies acted with dispatch, once the danger was recognized.

There is currently no evidence of a serious threat to the health of the general public.

Arrangements have been made to clean up the plant area and its vicinity, and to safely dispose of deposits.

State and Federal laboratories are cooperating in testing samples of air, water and soil to determine the exact extent of the contamination.

A task force representing all State agencies involved has been created to continue the work and monitor results.

I have asked our State officials to advise me of immediate steps we can take to ensure that a similar catastrophe does not again occur in the Commonwealth, and I will be recommending such legislation as may be needed.

There are many other areas of concern that I might address. I refrain from doing so out of consideration of your physical endurance rather than any lessened concern or change of heart on my part.

It may be that I will have other proposals for you during the course of your session, as needs arise.

You are aware I am sure that our State agencies and institutions have found the past year an unusual test of the loyalty and productivity of their employees. I am happy to report that with few exceptions, these faithful men and women have willingly accepted heavier loads and oftentimes longer hours to help us perform essential tasks with lesser numbers. I salute them for the spirit they have displayed, which I know will prevail in the months ahead.

I would conclude by reminding you that this year is the two-hundredth anniversary of the first General Assembly of Virginia under her Constitution as a sovereign state. Through those years, our predecessors have earned for Virginia an enviable reputation for responsible and innovative government.

The principle reason for this has been our firm adherence to what is best for Virginia, regardless of partisan considerations of any kind. In this most difficult year, I am certain that we will all continue in that same tradition.

If there are sacrifices and adjustments that must be made to meet the problems of the present, we have before us the example of our predecessors through the years, many of whom struggled with difficulties far more demanding and pressing than those we now face.

I have presented to you today a program to meet our most pressing needs, but I seek no partisan credit.

When bills to accomplish these results are forthcoming, I care not from which part of the political spectrum they may emerge.



They will have my support and that of the people of Virginia.

The State's budget, which is our most pressing and continuing order of business, is not, and must not be, a partisan document.

The spectre of crime which haunts our streets and our neighborhoods is not the special province of Democrats, Republicans or Independents. The voices calling for an improved corrections system carry every possible political coloration.

Collective bargaining for public employees poses repercussions that transcend partisan political philosophies or programs.

Two centuries ago our forebears put aside their personal and their local considerations to pursue the public good.

I hope and I trust that in the give and take of legislative debate to follow through these sixty days, each one of us will be guided in the end by their example.

Throughout your session, you will have my prayers as I turn often to that Source which sustains us all.

May God bless you, and may the people of Virginia have good reason to do the same when your work is done.

