

As good as our record in the State is, it is not, in my judgment, good enough, and as your Governor I shall not be satisfied until that record is improved.

As I have said, a very great part of the credit for what we have done must go to volunteers like yourselves. The paid departments, of course, share the credit with you. Much credit, too, must go to the excellent Fire Extension Service which has been offered at the University of Maryland for more than a quarter of a century. Great emphasis has been placed on the value of fire fighting instruction since the firemen's training program at the University was placed in the College of Engineering, under a full-time director, in 1937.

I am sure that many of the members of this company have had the advantage of the fine training that is offered in the extension program. Since it was started, more than 38,000 persons have participated in the training to the extent of a minimum of ten hours of instruction. The annual short courses have been attended by more than 5,000 persons. More than 2,000 fire fighters take part in firemanship training every year, and, of all our Maryland fire departments, paid and volunteer, 75 per cent will have men in training in any given year.

These are impressive figures, for they show that Maryland is concerned, and very deeply concerned, with the problem of fire safety.

Significant improvements to the physical plant of the Fire Extension Department of the University are well under way at this time. Involved in this project are an addition to the existing Fire Service Extension building, the erection of a new drill tower in the training area and additions to the structural fire fighting building and the rescue training building. Funds for the project in the amount of \$200,000 were appropriated by the General Assembly as a part of the University's capital improvement program. An additional \$150,000 was made available by the Maryland Civil Defense Agency. These new facilities will make it possible for the Department to offer better training and a more comprehensive program. I hope as many of you as possible will take advantage of it.

The facilities will be used for programs of the Maryland Civil Defense Agency, which has had a close working relationship with the Fire Service Extension Department for many years. The project will serve to improve the program of the academic fire protection curriculum. In addition to providing more classroom space, the facility will be used to display demonstration equipment used in fire protection and for research projects in the field of fire control.