

statistics on highway deaths. Just this week, I received a report from the Maryland Traffic Safety Commission that 129 persons have been killed in traffic accidents in this State since last January 1. Another 2,813 have been maimed in the same period. This is a shocking condition that cries out for remedy. This appalling sacrifice of human lives is all the more horrible when we consider that most of it is unnecessary. It is a condition that demands not just words but positive action.

During my campaign for Governor last year, I stated repeatedly that I favored legislation to promote safety on our highways. I naturally was quite gratified when the newspapers, in reviewing the 1959 session this week, gave credit to the General Assembly and to my Administration for the steps we took to reduce the accident carnage.

Said the *Washington Post*, in a news article:

"Its (that is to say, the Legislature's) most dramatic forward step was enactment of the Administration's highway safety program which establishes a point system to weed out habitual traffic offenders and voluntary chemical tests for suspected drunken drivers."

The *Baltimore Evening Sun*, in an editorial, rated the highway safety program and reform of the lower court system in Baltimore as the "two chief legislative accomplishments" of the session. The editorial went on to say:

"Mr. Tawes's point system for drivers will, if efficiently administered, go far to dramatize the danger of carelessness on the highways and to eliminate careless drivers from the state's roads."

All the information I have been able to obtain indicates that speed is the greatest single cause of highway accidents. The question then arises: How can we make the motorist slow down?

Most of us know from experience that the presence of police patrols on the highway tends to make the driver check his speed. The strengthening of the Maryland State Police over the past several years, in my opinion, has been an important factor in holding down the highway death toll. And so, in the budget I submitted to the General Assembly a week after I took the oath of office as Governor was the recommendation that 40 troopers, 20 for a full year and 20 for the last half of the fiscal year, be added to the present force of 511.

I may say here, incidentally, that among the first executive orders I issued was one having to do with traffic safety. Complaints were made to me of speeding and reckless driving by the operators of State-owned vehicles. In a letter that went out to all departments and agencies of the