

ADDRESS, MUNICIPAL POLICE ASSOCIATION BANQUET

RIVERDALE

January 23, 1962

As law-enforcement officers, I know you share with me a keen interest in traffic safety, and this evening I should like to review with you some of the activities that have taken place in this area of endeavor during the past three years.

At the beginning of this Administration, the problems arising out of the deplorable traffic safety record, then existing in our State, were given careful consideration by my office. In discussions with safety leaders and with members of my official family, two facts continually came to light. The first of these was that the several State agencies charged with responsibility for the public safety had few basic, long-range programs that are needed to come to grips with modern traffic conditions. The second fact was that these agencies lacked the required machinery—namely, legislation and official policies—to put such programs into effect.

Armed with this knowledge, we decided to survey the entire State safety program, with the view to enacting legislation and inaugurating policies which would provide immediate, yet lasting, solutions to the problems then facing us. After considerable study, we embarked upon a 14-point, two-phase program of traffic safety for Maryland. While both phases of the program were launched simultaneously, each concerned itself with different, though related, areas of endeavor.

The first stage was intended to create an environment *within our* State departments—an environment lending itself to the continued support of fundamental and long-needed safety programs. As a result of the study given to this first stage, steps were taken to modernize both the State Police and the Department of Motor Vehicles, as well as to open the way for the thoughtful development of motor vehicle legislation. Over the past two years we accomplished the passage of legislation which made possible the complete reorganization of the Department of Motor Vehicles. The salaries of State Troopers have been increased substantially, and there have been annual increases in the strength of the force since I took office as Governor.

In addition, a Motor Vehicles Committee was created in the Senate, and the position of Commissioner of Motor Vehicles was placed under the Merit System. Safety regulations governing the operation of school buses were tightened, and the special position of Assistant Superintendent