

valuable service to the people of Maryland by developing a sharp public consciousness, and by prodding the public conscience, in matters concerning the mental health of our people. And so, I am grateful for this opportunity to come here again this year to welcome those of you who have gathered for this annual legislative dinner of the Association, to extend to you my commendation for your untiring labors in a worthy cause, and to encourage you to continue the good work that you have been doing over the past several years.

It would be callous, or worse, on the part of any of us to harbor a sense of satisfaction about what we have done in Maryland in the area of mental hygiene, knowing, as we do, how acute the problem is and how far we have yet to go before we can, with any accuracy, say we have successfully met the challenge. I believe, however, that we are justified in taking a measure of pride in the fact that we have made, and are making, some progress in the field.

In my message to the General Assembly at the opening of the session, I called attention to "the paradox of a declining patient population in our mental hospitals and a new record high in admissions to these hospitals." This is a condition which has continued over the past years and, of course, it reflects a continued improvement in the treatment and discharge of patients in the hospitals.

In the budget which I have submitted to the General Assembly the Department of Mental Hygiene will receive an increase in appropriations of \$2,200,000—from \$30,300,000 for the current year to \$32,500,000 for fiscal 1966. I would point out that comparable increases for mental health have occurred every year since I became Governor in January, 1959.

It is worthy of some note, too, I think, that, with the exception of the University of Maryland, where unprecedented enrollment demands necessitate an enormous increase in staff, the Department of Mental Hygiene far exceeds all other State departments and agencies in the number of new positions that are provided in the budget for next year. In all, 190 new jobs are provided, including 75 new positions at Rosewood State Hospital to raise substantially the level of patient care there.

I should like to say here that much of the progress that Maryland is making in the field of mental health is due to the vigorous leadership of our Commissioner of Mental Hygiene, Dr. Isadore Tuerk.

While standards of care for the hospitalized mentally ill are improving year by year, community programs are being developed simultaneously to reduce the needs for hospitalization. Day-care centers for