

to have this opportunity to speak to you today about your future as citizens of this State and nation.

During the five years as your Governor, I have watched with pride and satisfaction the splendid work that is being done in the Maryland Training School for Boys in the training and education of our youth. Under the able and effective leadership of Mr. E. L. Fletcher, your Superintendent, the members of his staff and the Board of Managers, the school has attained a point in its development where it must be ranked as one of the finest institutions of its kind in the entire country.

The one main objective of the Maryland Training School is to help you to return to your families, your homes, your communities and take your rightful place in the society in which you were born. I emphasize the phrase, "to help you", because the school itself cannot do the job without your cooperation.

Over the years, many of the boys who have gone out of here have developed into successful business and professional men—have become good citizens earning for themselves a feeling of self-pride and the respect of their communities. Any number of boys from the Maryland Training School have been enrolled into the military service and have distinguished themselves, both in time of war and in time of peace, as good soldiers, good sailors, good airmen and good marines in the defense of our country. Any number of boys also have taken their place in their communities as honest, trustworthy, hard-working citizens, raising families, going to church, sending their children to school and doing all the assortment of things that good American citizens do.

My remarks here today of course are being directed primarily at the boys who have come here for training from Baltimore and the twenty-three counties of our State. Boys make mistakes, as do men and women—all of us. For who is there among us that is without sin and error? Sometimes these are very serious mistakes. The really gratifying fact is that sins can be washed away, errors can be mended, mistakes can be corrected. Otherwise the future would be hopeless for most of us. It is the responsibility of this school, which your State government has set up and is maintaining, to help you in facing your mistakes and in giving you the guidance you need to get back into the channels of good citizenship just as quickly as possible.

In recent years, the Maryland Training School has continued to make gratifying progress in the reduction of the average length of stay here for boys. The Department of Welfare advises me, for example, that in the eleven months preceding May, 1963, 1,245 boys were sent here and