

ADDRESS, ROSEWOOD STATE HOSPITAL
OWINGS MILLS

June 30, 1964

Doctor Tuerk, Reverend members of the clergy, Doctor Cambell, Mr. Backhaus, ladies and gentlemen :

We have met here this afternoon to dedicate two new buildings which are to be used by the State of Maryland in its effort to provide facilities for the care and treatment of the victims of mental illness and mental retardation. The specific use of the two structures, Spastic Buildings 5 and 6, is of course, to serve the needs of severely handicapped spastic children. They represent a part of the building and renovation plan designed to strengthen and improve the program here at the Rosewood State Hospital.

Since I have been Governor of the State, I have had numerous opportunities to take part in ceremonies of dedication connected with the expansion of our physical facilities for the care and treatment of the mentally ill and mentally retarded. It is both satisfying and encouraging to watch the progress that is being made in this field. I know of no function of State government of more importance than that performed by the Department of Mental Hygiene and the other agencies which are cooperating with it to relieve the suffering caused by mental illness and retardation. It has been recognized generally that these disabilities constitute the most serious health problem of our time, and it is gratifying to all of us that this national problem with federal participation, is now acknowledged by all levels of government.

We recall the words of the late President Kennedy on the subject. In his message to Congress in February of last year, he said: "Mental illness and mental retardation are among our most critical health problems. They occur more frequently, affect more people, require more prolonged treatment, cause more suffering by the families of the afflicted, waste more of our human resources, and constitute more financial drain upon both the public treasury and the personal finances of the individual families than any other single condition."

The buildings which we are dedicating here today are designed to bring relief to the victims of these disorders who probably suffer most—whose families bear the heaviest burdens. They will house the spastic patients—the severely handicapped whose muscular coordination is so poor that most of them may expect to spend all or a greater part of their lives in a hospital. Erected at a cost of nearly \$700,000, the two struc-