

ADDRESS AT COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES, 58TH
RECRUIT CLASS, MARYLAND STATE POLICE ACADEMY,
PIKESVILLE

May 26, 1967

Colonel Jarman, Mr. Lally, Attorney General Burch, Members of the Graduating Class, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Congratulations are due to the 1967 graduates of the State Police Academy for their achievements and performance during the past months, and their individual dedication to the career of law enforcement and public service which has brought them to this day. This class is particularly fortunate to be entering the field of law enforcement, their chosen vocation, at this time. Although a measure of public apathy exists and occasional disrespect persists among some segments of the general public, the climate of public opinion toward the law enforcement profession has definitely improved within the past year. There has been a gradual awakening and an increased awareness of the population to the shocking escalation of crime throughout our nation. As a direct consequence, the public is prepared, at last, not only to support law enforcement agencies, but to applaud the State and Federal governments' efforts to finance public safety improvements. As one distinguished law enforcement official wryly noted: "this year law enforcement is IN."

The vital transition of public opinion has manifested itself in various ways. The President's Safe Streets Bill of 1967 will provide \$50 million in Federal funds to subsidize state and local law enforcement agencies' efforts to combat crime. While the sum does not correspond to the proportion of the problem, averaging only \$1 million per state, this legislation must be lauded for its recognition of Federal responsibility, its precedent in policy, and its demonstration of intent to fulfill an obligation.

The State of Maryland, too, has taken dramatic action in recognition of the compelling challenges confronting our State and local law enforcement agencies. Through the enactment of fiscal reform legislation, the 1967 General Assembly has provided almost \$15,850,000 in State funds to be directly distributed to county and municipal governments to expand and improve police protection.

The increased interest on the part of the public has been clearly reflected by the energetic participation of private citizens, devoting their