

with both the public and private sectors of our economy. In fact, we have taken the first step in this direction by providing an extensive and essential salary increase for the State Police this year. The present graduating class will be the first to enjoy the benefits of this measure, for you of the graduating class will receive a starting salary that is 15% higher than that paid novice troopers in the past. I fully recognize that this is but one among many critical improvements required to attract and retain the qualified trooper. In the next year we shall work toward reducing the fifty hour work week to the more accepted forty hour standard.

Above all, the transition of techniques, technical capabilities and capacities must keep pace with the revitalizing transition in public attitudes and police professionalism. We are creatures of an electronic age and the State's law enforcement agencies must capitalize on the potential which modern technology can contribute to effective deterrence and enforcement. Computers have been proven as important to effective public safety as they have to efficient business management.

Police officers, no matter how well trained, cannot be utilized to the optimum nor produce to the maximum without rapid access to stored information. As this class has been taught, time is a critical factor in law enforcement. Many crimes can be solved if there is the rapid relay and response made possible by computerization. Early in 1967, Maryland joined the National Crime Information Center in Washington, D. C., which has enabled state law enforcement agencies to avail themselves of vital information stored and programmed by the N.C.I.C. computers. Even this link is, in and of itself, insufficient to accommodate total State law enforcement demands. Consequently, the 1967 General Assembly has approved funds to finance the first phase of a State Police computer system which will store all crime data collected by the State Police and local law enforcement units as well as vital statistics on all inmates in the correctional system and those offenders on probation and parole. This system, which should be operational within two years, will enable any officer in the State to receive rapid response to inquiries vital to effective law enforcement.

While the future of law enforcement has never been more promising, the technological opportunities to control and combat crime have never been more diversified, nor the challenges more formidable. We must realize that any significant reduction in the crime rate, or for that matter the appalling carnage on our roads and highways, does not depend exclusively upon the performance of our law enforcement agencies. It rests upon the revision, reform and revitalization of a mul-