

any emergency anywhere in the State of Maryland. This is our objective and our responsibility and we're going to do it.

Q. Governor, General Celston said this morning that the Independent Fire Company will refuse to go into a conflict, and it is a pretty independent company. Are there any plans to do something about independent fire companies?

A. I'm awfully glad you raised the question of that fire company, because I think they're in an effort to avoid what possibly one fireman thought would be criticism by admitting that he was afraid to go into this riot area. He looked for another excuse and indicated that he didn't want to go in, he wanted to watch the place burn down. I think there was a very basic reluctance and fear to go into this area right after shotguns had been fired, right after reading of what had happened to firemen in the Newark area, and I don't think that we can forget that in Cambridge itself during the past uprising, firemen were pelted with bricks. These people were genuinely afraid to go in. I don't think there was any thought-out idea of letting the Negro properties burn down. I understand that there is some feeling about this. My talk with the firemen would indicate it isn't justified. On the other hand, I want to say very straight-forwardly and unequivocally that I think that the fire protection in Cambridge, where there are so many Negro citizens, should be on an integrated basis. This is a volunteer fire company. There are many fine Negroes, I'm sure, in Cambridge who would like to serve in a volunteer fire company. And since they have part of the property ownership and the protection is for their benefit as well as for the white citizens, I think they are entitled to be in the fire company and should be in the fire company.

Q. Governor, on the question of Rap Brown again, I have heard it suggested by the people who have been in Cambridge in the last few days that those members of the Negro community there, the militants who invited him, said they did so partly as a retaliation on their part for your having invited Mr. Wilkins and your having criticized the militant stand.

A. I find that hard to believe. If this is their thinking, they are not thinking very straight. I think Mr. Wilkins performed a very fine service to the State by coming here and making known views which are, while possibly less militant than some Negro leaders, nonetheless constructive and wholesomely dedicated to the advancement of conditions in their behalf. I'm not saying Mr. Wilkins or any other moderates such as Mr. Young are the only leaders in the community. I think