

"Mr. Cannon thinks the proposal will be practical, not only for Southern Maryland but also for other areas of the State where counties may want to join in such an effort," Governor Agnew said.

"Such detention centers could relieve State correctional institutions of many inmates committed for minor crimes, and would also serve as a center for prisoners on work-release programs. It would enable those detained for non-support, for example, to work in the area and be confined overnight and on weekends."

Mr. Cannon advised the Governor that the plan would be the first of its kind in the nation and said officials of the Federal Bureau of Prisons expressed a keen interest and willingness to assist in planning such facilities. There is a good possibility, he said, of obtaining Federal aid to supplement the 50-50 sharing costs now required for the State with any county which wants to construct a new jail or make improvements.

A 1966 State law requires the Department of Correction to set minimum standards and make annual inspections of jails, and a 1967 law created within the Department the new position of jail programming and inspection officer. Mr. Cannon said this official will work with local authorities in planning such facilities and recruiting competent personnel to man and operate them.

The Governor said authorities in several other counties which have critical jail problems have expressed an interest in the regional detention center idea, and that these possibilities are also being explored by State correctional officials.

"I compliment the officials of Southern Maryland, who conceived of this approach to a common problem and who have furnished other excellent examples of regional cooperation through their Tri-County Council," Governor Agnew said.

"The Commissioner of Correction has my approval to further explore and develop this innovative plan that will benefit the State as well as its counties, and to extend it to other areas of Maryland that show a similar interest."

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