

I want to make one thing clear — everything possible was done to avoid the need to make these arrests. I consulted with Dr. Samuel Myers, the president of the College. And I want to commend him throughout the entire crisis for extremely perceptive analysis and handling of the situation. I consulted with Mr. Wilson, the Chairman of the Board of State College Trustees. Mr. Wilson in turn consulted with the other trustees, and they backed the action I have taken to the fullest extent. I want to commend the members of the Board for their reinforcement during this very difficult period of decision that's taken place over the past several days. And I don't want to forget in my commendation those students who exercised commendable restraint in remaining on the campus and refusing to participate in this defiance of law and order. It's really a shame that they must suffer.

There are two things that bear emphasizing. Point No. 1: This is not, repeat not, a racial dispute, but a dispute between students and college authority. Point No. 2: My refusal to knuckle under to the demands of students is not a point of personal pride with me, but pride and respect for this democracy and the law and the office of Governor of this great State. I'd like to briefly review the circumstances which led up to today's occurrences. The matter began on March 25th and, as I understand it, the students' displeasure evoked from the refusal of the faculty to grant tenure to a member of the College staff. Other complaints were triggered from this, involving general complaints of conditions at the College which I am the first to admit need great improvement. I did not refuse to respond to these complaints. I immediately dispatched one of my top staff people, Mr. Charles Bresler. He spent a whole day at the College, meeting with the students and the faculty to explain what is taking place in the College and what our aims are.

I want to reemphasize at this time my commitment to higher education in Maryland and my desire to see all of our colleges reach the highest academic standards. The problem became confused by the influx of certain students from another institution, by the taking up of the cudgel through misconstruction of the protest, by certain militant civil rights organizations and, unfortunately, all of the connotations of a racial quarrel have begun to surface.

I repeat — this is not a racial question, but a question of students disputing college authority. The budgets at this College have increased to a greater extent than any other institution in the State. In two years, the operating budget of this college has increased by nearly 100 percent from a little over a million dollars to a little over two million