

## DEDICATION OF MONUMENT MAY 15, 1969

May 15, 1969  
2:00 p.m.

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
3600 North Eastern Avenue

Commissioner Lester, Mr. Bivins, officers and friends of law enforcement in Oklahoma.

By proclamation of the President, this day is set aside each year in our nation, as is fitting, as a special memorial day. It is a Memorial Day for the *peace officers* of the nation; a Memorial Day to sacrifice and service they give constantly—a Memorial Day to the profound achievements that peace officers make possible—the security of our families, our homes, our places of work, our property, and the security of our daily lives.

Each year this day means much to all of us. *This* year this day carries special meaning here in Oklahoma. For today the living peace officers raise this monument to the fallen officers who laid down their lives in service as guardians of law since the beginning of territorial days.

This special monument is raised to those who now are known to have died in service as law officers—360 today known from 111 years of Oklahoma history. But a place is reserved here too at this monument for those others whose sacrifices will become known as time passes.

As you know Mr. Bivins has searched out the records of history showing the astounding roll of 360 fallen officers—100 in territorial days and 260 since statehood in Oklahoma. They include sheriffs and deputy sheriffs; police chiefs and police officers; state Bureau of Investigation agents—special railroad agents; wardens and deputy wardens; security officers at our Oklahoma penal institutions; special agents of State Banker's Association; Oklahoma highway patrolmen; deputy United States marshals—62 of them—and federal possemen; territorial sheriffs and deputies; federal defense police and federal prohibition officers—federal postal inspector—wildlife conservation officers; Indian tribunal territorial officers; and others. This is a saddening roll call and a

shocking toll that has been taken of gallant officers. It should wake us all up to the fact that *yesterday's* history as well as in *today's* headlines, law officers have put their lives on the line for all of us.

The sacrifices are not all old history. The 1966 Uniform Crime Report of the Federal Bureau of Investigation showed 57 law enforcement officers killed in line of duty that year in the United States, making a seven-year total at that time of 335 slain officers in the nation. In 1966 there were over 23,000 assaults on officers in the nation inflicting over 9,000 injuries on them. With such sacrifices written in our history and continuing today, these questions haunt us:

How would civilization have come to Oklahoma without these officers fighting for it?

How long would any security exist for our families without those officers serving today?

*And the Deadly Question Is:*

Are we ordinary citizens matching in any way these sacrifices by appreciation and dedication to the worthy aims of law enforcement and to the men who bear its burdens?

On this Memorial Day, let us find worthy answers to these questions. This should be a dedication day for the rest of us. For all of us as ordinary citizens and the law enforcement officers in service today owe our heritage of civilized society to such great men as those whose names are on your monument. We must remember them and their sacrifices. We must pledge to those who serve us *now*, and to those who will serve us as officers of law enforcement in time to come, that measure of support which they *surely* deserve. We must pledge our every effort to support law enforcement so that such sacrifices may be reduced; and so that the *decent* and *secure* communities which these sacrifices have bought may be *preserved* for the generations of Oklahomans yet to come.