

Expanded development of the economy of our State was a campaign pledge of mine, and in 1959, this General Assembly acted with commendable speed in establishing a Department of Economic Development. In its short time of existence, the Department has succeeded in bringing hundreds of thousands of dollars of new payrolls to the State, and already has established a national reputation for the manner in which it handles requests for information which come to it daily from interested industrial concerns. Through various media, it has focused national attention upon the many advantages our State has to offer in business and industry and to the traveler.

The State Coordinating Commission on Problems of the Aging, which you created also in 1959, is off to a good start in its noble mission of improving the lot of our elderly citizens. It has produced a master plan to give aged persons the self-sufficiency and independence they deserve by providing them with health services, suitable housing, employment when desired, adequate income and educational and recreational facilities. It has an ambitious program for the coming year, including the establishment of commissions for the aging in all counties.

The extensive State financial support of public education and the recent studies concerning higher education reflect our continuing concern for the education of our young people. The State's budget for the fiscal year 1962, which I will submit to you in a few weeks, illustrates, in detail, the extent of the State's commitment. And, an examination of the current 1961 budget discloses that in this fiscal year we have appropriated \$145,018,566 for education.

I am sure that all of you share my concern for higher education. I think it is no exaggeration to say that the future of our nation and of the entire free world may well depend on the quality of education we make available to our youth. I am determined that Maryland shall have a system of education second to none.

I know of no problem confronting us in Maryland today that offers a clearer challenge to our resourcefulness and ingenuity than that of the conservation and rehabilitation of the marine resources of our tidal waters. Through the years I have watched with dismay the gradual decline of our oyster production, until last year it sank to a new low mark of approximately 2 million bushels. Considered in its relationship with the peak year of production of 15 million bushels about 75 years ago, it can be calculated that at current values Maryland watermen lost \$40,000,000 last year by the failure to halt the decline in yield.