

REMARKS IN TRIBUTE TO GOVERNOR
ALBERT C. RITCHIE

BALTIMORE

May 25, 1960

Of all the great names that grace the pages of Maryland history, I know of none more capable of evoking in the hearts of Marylanders a feeling of respect and esteem than that of Albert Cabell Ritchie. The few who remember him well speak of him in the hushed tones of reverence. But no matter whether we knew him well or slightly, or whether we may just have heard of him as the great four-term Governor, all Marylanders respond alike in a kind of hero-worship to the name.

The portrait of Governor Ritchie hangs above the desk of my office in Annapolis, and, as I glance at it from time to time at my work, I am inspired to emulate in my humble way the bold deeds and the high thoughts of this illustrious man.

The people of Maryland perceived the qualities of statesmanship he possessed, and honored him for these qualities by electing him Governor for four terms. The people were repaid manifold for their confidence in him. He was one of the most progressive governors the State has ever had. He nurtured and developed a public school system that was the equal of any in the country. He was a pioneer in road building, laying the foundation for our present excellent system of highways. He established the merit system for State employees, and inaugurated a business system for the purchase of State supplies. He drafted legislation on the subject of cooperative marketing, and redrafted and liberalized the State's laws on workmen's compensation. He repulsed President Harding's call for troops to settle a miners strike, taking the position that the dispute should be settled by negotiation and not by bayonets. He saw the fallacy and the hypocrisy of prohibition and sponsored legislation to end it in his Free State. His abilities were recognized far beyond the boundaries of Maryland, and his counsel was sought by the great national figures of his day.

It is a privilege and a high honor to be asked here today to participate in this program in which we pay tribute to this eminent Marylander, Governor Albert C. Ritchie.