

ever ready to help in the fulfillment of these needs, are to be commended for paying special recognition to this important segment of our economy—farming.

Generally speaking, Maryland has achieved no renown beyond its borders as a farming state, or, that is to say, our image abroad is not that of an agricultural community. Our friends in other regions do not think of us as the wheat state, the corn state, the hog state, the cattle state or even the poultry state. And yet, as we know here—and especially those of us who were born and reared on this Eastern Shore—agriculture has been from the beginning, is now, and we expect will be in the future the very backbone and marrow of our Maryland economy.

It is no accident that the Great Seal of the State of Maryland bears the figures of a fisherman and a farmer, and these symbols are as appropriate today as they were when they were devised centuries ago. For, as I have said, the cultivation of the soil has been from the very beginning a basic part of Maryland life. We have 25,000 farms in Maryland today, with an annual productivity of approximately \$285,000,000. And although, being a relatively small state, Maryland does not vie with many of the other states in the total production of its farms, it ranks high in terms of production per farm and production per acre. And this, to me, seems to be very important. Our farmers, for the most part, are progressive and prosperous. Our farms are well tended, well kept and scientifically operated.

We pride ourselves in Maryland in the great social, geographical and economic diversity of our State. We have farms, villages, towns and big cities. We have mountains, plateaus, plains and the ocean. We have an unexcelled transportation system—water, land and air. We have both big industry and small industry. Something very important would be missing from this picture if we did not have our farms and our agricultural enterprises.

Maryland has been richly endowed in many ways, and in none more significantly than in geography. We have surroundings conducive not only to pleasant living, but to abundant living. Our agriculture has prospered because we have fertile soil, and equable climate, adequate water resources, proximity to markets, a good transportation system. More importantly, perhaps, we have men and women with the intelligence, the industry and the vision to use the resources to supply their wants—for the betterment of themselves and their communities. And so, we have produced tobacco, poultry, truck crops, livestock,