

recognition you have given me. I shall cherish this event as one of the fondest remembrances of my last year in the Office of Governor of Maryland. I hope that in some small way I am deserving of the tribute that has been paid to me here. Although not a farmer myself, my background, in Somerset County, Maryland, is rural, and I believe I have an understanding of the farmer and his problems.

Our State — Maryland — has achieved no renown beyond its borders as agricultural; our image abroad is not that of an agricultural community. Our friends in other parts of the country never think of us as a wheat state, a corn state, a hog state, a cattle state, or even a poultry state. And yet, as we know, agriculture has been from the beginning, is now and from every indication will continue to be in the future, the bone of sinew of our Maryland economy. It is not an accident that the Great Seal 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 the cultivation of the soil has been, from the very beginning, a basic part of Maryland life.

Maryland, as I have suggested, does not vie with many other states in the total production of its farms, but it does rank high in production per farm and production per acre. And this, it seems to me, is very important. Our farmers, for the most part, are progressive and prosperous. Our farms are well-tended, well-kept and scientifically operated. And farming remains a vital part of our economy. To illustrate that point, in 1965 the gross cash sales from farms in Maryland amounted to \$321 million.

We take great pride in Maryland in the great social, geographical and economic diversity of our State. We have farms, villages, towns and big cities. We have towering mountains, rolling hills, plains and the ocean. Our transportation system — water, land and air, — is unexcelled anywhere. Something vital would be missing from this whole if we did not have our farms and our agricultural enterprises.

The Creator smiled upon our lovely land in many ways; endowing it especially with gifts of geography. It has been called a land of pleasant living, and verily it is that; but it is also a land of abundant living. History and geography have combined to bring this about. Our agriculture has prospered because we have a fertile soil, and equable climate, adequate water resources, proximity to markets, a good transportation system. And more important than this, we have men and women with the intelligence, the vision and the industry to us these resources to supply their wants — for the betterment of