

touched and enhanced by the special grace and beauty of the Tidewater Region. All of us who appreciate history and share a particular pride in our State's heritage can imagine the benefits of a campus where classrooms are but a brief walk from Maryland's first capitol, where the natural beauty of Captain John Smith's "delightful land" has been preserved.

Yet, the future as well as the past provides a powerful force and intellectual stimulant. The evolution of St. Mary's College from a "finishing school" to a four year college reflects the space age emphasis upon higher education. The growth of the student population from eighty-five to five hundred within the span of two decades is indicative of the College's progress and success.

The expansion of curricula and campus has kept pace as well, and the College has been extended to serve as a cultural and intellectual center for Southern Maryland. I understand that in addition to the evening adult education program, plans are under way—in cooperation with the Patuxent Naval Air Test Center—to develop a special program leading to an engineering degree.

The enthusiasm of St. Mary's College to exist for and contribute to the total community is not only commendable, but essential. If we are to attract, retain and expand commerce and industry in Southern Maryland, we must provide the broad spectrum of educational services necessary to support this development.

Higher education has an immediate and vital part to play in sustaining economic progress. Since commerce has become more complex, and technological knowledge at once more profuse and prolific, our undergraduates require more training and our adults require additional training or retraining.

In fact, the very rate of scientific advance leads experts to estimate that 70 percent of all knowledge required to support and sustain our present school population during its collective lifetime is as yet unknown and undiscovered. Statistics suggest that 50 percent of the technical knowledge possessed by today's graduating engineers will become obsolete within the next five years; that any student expecting to earn his livelihood with his hands will have to learn new techniques at least six times before his retirement.

In addition to the phenomena of the knowledge explosion, our colleges will be challenged to teach more knowledge to more students as well as to provide new knowledge to the returning student or community residents in need of new skills.