

ADDRESS, ON THE OCCASION OF THE AWARD
OF AN HONORARY DEGREE
BY CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

PETROPOLIS, STATE OF RIO, BRAZIL

November 18, 1965

President Sa Earp words cannot adequately express my feeling on receiving the honor which you have bestowed upon me today. I thank you from the bottom of my heart, not only for myself but for the people of Maryland whom I represent. For I know that in bestowing this honorary degree upon me, you are also expressing your faith in the partnership and brotherhood which exists between the people of the State of Rio and the people of the State of Maryland.

I count it among the supreme moments of my life to be here today with you in this splendid institution of learning and in this beautiful and breathtaking city of Petropolis. My visit to this wonderful country of Brazil has been a succession of one momentous experience after another, and this ceremony today is indeed a fitting climax to an unbelievably rewarding and stimulating journey. At the very outset I feel that I must tell you—though I am sure that you have heard it many times before—how fortunate you are to live in such a beautiful place as Petropolis. No wonder it was chosen by the Emperor as the setting for his most handsome palace. As I approached here on the scenic highway, the mountains pointing skyward seemed to be beckoning me and all other visitors to this exquisite spot. Even before coming here to Petropolis, I had heard of your beautiful and generous city from my fellow Marylanders who visited here a year ago. I remember very well the reports they brought back with them of the hospitality and warmth extended to them by the Lions Club here and other groups. As for the beauty of the city with its imperial museum and imposing cathedral; I thought perhaps—frankly—that my Maryland friends might be exaggerating—I can now see for myself that they were not.

I have read that the site upon which Petropolis now stands was first explored in the year 1531. That was a century before the first settlers arrived on the soil of Maryland in 1634. Yet there is an interesting parallel between this honor which the Catholic University of Petropolis pays me today and the early history of my State of Maryland. Curiously enough, Maryland was the only British colony in the New World founded by a Catholic family, the Calverts by name; one of