

that the quality of a people is also demonstrated by the degree of fealty that people pay from time to time to the memory of its leadership.

This occasion then may be more than ordinarily significant, serving as it does to revive and emphasize civic interest in the life and career of the great Governor, of whom we were all so proud.

At any rate, the citizens of this portion of our State, in my judgment, have done honor to themselves by providing this occasion. I, for my part, both as a citizen and as your Chief Executive, am glad to be able by my presence to lend support to its success.

DEFENDERS' DAY AND ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER

Radio Station WFBR, State House, September 11, 1939

Annapolis

MARYLAND, as a State, advances to the forefront of the Commonwealths of the Country this week in public attention. By reason of the glorious event, the anniversary of which we are about to celebrate, the attention of the country will be focused upon our State and, as always, because of the outstanding achievements of our sons and daughters, Maryland is rated higher whenever the Nation's attention is centered upon it.

On Thursday of this week we celebrate the 125th anniversary of the writing of the Star Spangled Banner. As befitting the occasion the President of the United States and Congress have taken unusual steps to join with the State of Maryland in glorifying the occasion which gave birth to our national anthem. National representatives and dignitaries from foreign lands will join with the people of our State in paying homage to Francis Scott Key and the stirring stanzas which for a century and a quarter have expressed the spirit which is America.

Defenders' Day—is a holiday peculiar to Maryland, it might well be said to merit rank among the holidays of our Country. The bravery and heroism displayed by the defenders of Fort McHenry not only inspired their compatriots of 1814, but they have remained inspirations to the defenders of American interests throughout the intervening 125 years.

There was a great poet and patriot once, who said:

"Let me make the songs of a country, and I care not who makes its laws."

Perhaps we ought to allow some poetic license to that statement by Robert Burns of Scotland. As one whose life and work have been largely concerned with the making and the enforcement of laws, I am constrained to believe that they have a large importance in the social scheme of things.

Still going back to Burns, we must admit that his observation was well founded. It is a happy thought to link those two things—a country's songs and a country's laws—in the same sentence. For isn't it true that they spring from a common source—that is to say, from the very heart and soul of a people, from their personality and character?

The song which was written in Baltimore 125 years ago—our national anthem—was born of the same elements as our national Constitution. Both came into being at a time of—and because of—a crisis in our Country's history.