

Memorial for Mitchell

One week after the death of Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr., is not too soon to begin planning an appropriate memorial to this great Baltimorean. As chief architect of the historic civil rights laws of the 1960s, Mr. Mitchell was one of the outstanding Americans of our era. The presence of three presidential candidates, members of Congress, state and city officials, and other dignitaries at a service in his memory last Friday attests to the fact that he was truly a national figure.

The Sun recommends that Mayor Schaefer promptly establish a citizens commission to plan a proper way to commemorate Mr. Mitchell's service to his country. To avoid dithering and delay, the commission should be directed to launch whatever project it selects on Mr. Mitchell's next birth date, March 8, 1985. A statue, a park, a public building, a highway, a square — these are some of the ways that this community could express its appreciation. The commission, however, should have

wide discretion in making its choice.

In appointing members of the Mitchell Memorial Commission, we anticipate that Mayor Schaefer would want to give pride of place to leaders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. It was as head of the NAACP's Washington office that Mr. Mitchell became the "101st senator," a determined and sensitive lobbyist in the cause of delivering equal rights to all Americans. The commission also should include representatives from labor, business, religious, inter-racial and community organizations plus individuals and foundations likely to be helpful in raising funds for the memorial.

At last Friday's service, many speakers made the point that Mr. Mitchell's spirit and ideas are as alive as ever. Let this generation instruct future generations by establishing a tangible reminder of his efforts toward freeing both black and white Americans from the blight of racial bias.