

rich in the culture and the traditions we cherish—to Charles County where so many glorious chapters of the history of our country were written.

For some three centuries, this county has produced and nurtured the kind of leadership that has made this nation the great force for justice and *freedom* that it is. To recite the surnames of eminent Charles Countians is like calling the roll of the illustrious men of American history.

The soil on which we stand here today is hallowed by one such name—the name, Smallwood, that figures so prominently in the early struggle of the British colonies to attain independence and stature as a new nation. In Smallwood's Retreat, the State of Maryland has taken steps to preserve for posterity this house and these acres that once were the property and the residence of one of the most renowned of the heroes of our War of Revolution. William Smallwood as much as any Marylander exemplified that portion of our State Motto which acclaim "manly deeds." His exploits as a soldier and a patriot were mainly in every sense of that term. What he and the men who served under him achieved in this great struggle for freedom is imbedded forever in the annals of Maryland and in the annals of the United States of America.

Maryland, as we all know, is called the "Old Line State," in tribute to the courageous and heroic performances of General Smallwood's command which was nicknamed "The Maryland Line." Maryland's part in the American Revolution was outstanding, just as it has been in every war in which our country has fought. The Maryland Line was engaged in more than half of the major battles fought in this War for Independence. There were Maryland men on nearly every battlefield of that war. It has been estimated that Maryland furnished more than 20,000 soldiers in the conflict.

The story of the Battle of Long Island, in which Smallwood's troops displayed such remarkable valor, has been told many times, but the story is worth repeating in a setting and on an occasion such as this. Here is how one historian described the situation as it was at the time. The British, he said, had "32,000 trained, disciplined, professional soldiers, completely armed, fully equipped, abundantly supplied—the greatest expeditionary force Great Britain had ever sent out from its shores. It was supported by a fleet of ten ships of the line, 20 frigates armed with 1,200 guns and hundreds of transports manned by more than 10,000 seamen. Britain had drawn from her war chest the staggering sum of 850,000 pounds."