

It has been said that "the past is prelude." We have faith that Ocean City's past and present triumphs are but the beginning of a bright and brilliant success story. As an individual and devoted visitor to Ocean City, I congratulate you. As Governor of Maryland, I salute you.

REMARKS AT NATIONAL FLAG WEEK CEREMONIES,
FORT McHENRY, BALTIMORE

(Read by C. Stanley Blair, Secretary of State of Maryland)

June 9, 1968

Our flag is a symbol of freedom and hope. Wherever it flies, Americans take notice and to each it may evoke a different memory, yet the feeling sparked will be the same. No other visual symbol so quickly and clearly means America. No other symbol can embrace the many meanings, hopes and pride that unify our nation.

To Marylanders, the American flag has special meaning, for it was the flag flying above besieged Fort McHenry that inspired the poetry of our National Anthem. Thus, as the flag is very much our nation's, it is very specially ours.

Today, as never before, this ceremony takes on a great and grave significance. Today, we officially celebrate the beginning of National Flag Week, and today we officially mourn the loss of a vibrant national leader. Today, the Star-Spangled Banner shall not wave proudly on high — but stands half-staff as a somber reminder of this senseless tragedy.

If National Flag Week is to have real meaning, let us celebrate it as a week of rededication to the purposes and principles upon which our nation was built. Each time we see our flag, let us remember that it stands for a nation built upon the rule of law and the premise that all men are created equal. Let us remember that equality means civil rights *and* civil responsibilities, and it means, as one of our great Presidents wrote, "... no man is above the law and no man is below it."

Respect for the flag is not reverence for a piece of cloth, but reverence for a nation forged from the wilderness and founded upon principle. Respect for the flag is respect for our laws and our way of life;