

Under the first heading, of things requiring immediate action, the most pressing need is for increased production. Everyone understands that this is a problem of the highest importance in the defense program at the present time. District Councils can well aid in increasing the productive capacity of the Country, first of all, by aiding in the activities of the Defense Contract Service, the purpose of which is to have the prime governmental contractors farm out to sub-contractors all possible work, thus bringing such work to the machines and the men rather than bringing the men and machines to the work.

Anything that can be done to encourage and assist prime contractors to farm out work, and anything that can be done to encourage small plants and companies to undertake farmed-out contracts, will be a real contribution to the production program and will help greatly in relieving the strain on centers of production like Baltimore.

Again, District Councils can help this production program by giving every possible aid to those activities which are seeking to develop skilled and semi-skilled labor for defense contractors. First among such agencies are the vocational schools. Youth all over the State should be encouraged to take this training for the lines for which they are best fitted. Secondly, we have specialized schools, such as the Johns Hopkins University, the University of Maryland and other institutions for up-grading men already employed. Literally hundreds have qualified for better jobs through these schools.

District Councils also can aid in the production program by encouraging all available persons to register with the State Employment Service, which is a reservoir for the defense contract labor.

Now as to Item 2, those things which are important but not of such immediate urgency and which should be planned for and possibly trained for, but which we hope we will never have to use—these come under the broad head of "civilian defense."

First of all, we have the problem of fire protection. It is a much broader problem than many people believe. It will require a large organization of auxiliary fire fighting forces. District Councils can well give attention to the encouragement of competent and able volunteers for this service, who will be very soon called upon under the direction of the State Fire Coordinators, Chief J. W. Just and Mr. John McNulty.

Secondly, in certain communities there will be need for air wardens—not to be confused with the "air warning" service, which, under the direction of the Maryland Council of Defense, is now about organized and is cooperating with the Interceptor Command, Army Air Corps.

The air warden service is designed to serve in densely populated communities for the protection of people if that community is approached by enemy aircraft. District Councils may well advise and assist local authorities in the solution of this problem.

It may be well to say in passing, now that I have mentioned local authorities, that in all matters of civilian defense, District Councils should recognize that local authorities are responsible for such service as fire protection, police, air warden service, etc.