

Along the same lines is the matter of air-raid shelters. District Councils may well advise as to methods to be pursued in solving this problem locally. Again, along the lines of civilian defense, we have the question of plans for disaster relief and hospital preparedness. This matter has had much attention in some communities and has had little attention in others. District Councils may well give thought to the problems presented and be prepared to pass on to the communities plans and programs as they are received from the office of Civilian Defense in Washington.

Along entirely different lines, but growing more important every day, are the consumer problems. Let us take first of all the question of gasoline. Recently I issued a proclamation to the State, at the request of Mr. Ickes, Federal Coordinator suggesting that everybody voluntarily economize. Later on a more definite program for economizing will be developed and District Councils will be expected to aid in encouraging communities to conform to the suggestions. Certain phases of this general question should have the attention of the Consumer Division of the District Council. In the State Council, they are handled under the Women's Division and could probably be best handled by the Women's Division in the communities.

While it is not true throughout the entire State, in some sections the housing problem is giving difficulty and, in those sections, it is perfectly proper and desirable for District Councils to manifest an interest and to confer with parties interested to form committees, if necessary, in an effort to solve these problems. In this connection, again in certain communities there have been unjustifiable increases in rents. Where this happens, it is only proper and desirable for District Councils to take the lead and to communicate with the proper organizations to the end that a Fair Rent Committee may be established in order to prevent profiteering.

One thing many people have overlooked is the tremendous amount of waterfront in this State. Certainly District Councils may well give consideration to an organization that will make use of the water craft and the personnel available to effect a waterfront protective service.

In outlining all of these matters I do not want to be misunderstood. It has been the policy of the State and the Maryland Council of Defense from the first to work in conjunction with Washington on the matter of these problems. We have encouraged thought and consideration of them but we have discouraged any elaborate plans which may conflict with Federal plans because we have known that practically every phase has been or would be studied and a definite program submitted for adaptation to local conditions.

These programs have been under way for a short while and probably will go very fast in the future. When they do, they will be promptly cleared through the State Council and the District Councils will then be in a position to proceed.

Transportation and road problems, questions affecting agriculture and industry, material and raw products and assistance for home defense all are subjects which may require the attention of the District Councils. It will interest you to know that the organization of our State Guard is rapidly being