

strategically located in every section of our State. 15,000 loyal Marylanders have sacrificed their time and have forgotten personal comfort to safeguard your comfort. Their "Business as Usual" is scanning the skies twenty-four hours of every day to report the presence of airplanes in their respective districts.

Coincident with the establishment of Ground Observer Posts the Council undertook the recruiting of several hundred volunteers for duty in the Information Center of the Army Aircraft Warning Service located in Baltimore. Here again the traditional characteristics of our people to respond courageously to the call of duty was admirably shown. On September 16, 1941, the Council turned over 511 volunteers to the Commanding Officer of the Filter Unit.

This Unit is the nerve center of our home defense. Here every plane is plotted, identified, and cleared. Precision and accuracy are the requisites of this all-important and tedious task. Literally every minute on the clock finds this service feverishly at work. To witness this vital service in operation fills one with a sense of security. These volunteers carry out their duties with the full knowledge that one mistake may be fatal.

By June of 1941 the organization of Local Civilian Defense Organizations had begun in our State. By December 1, several of the counties had set up complete Civilian Defense Organizations and the others had organized skeleton units. Although at that time the danger of bombardment seemed somewhat removed, it was gratifying to observe the desire of the people to marshal their resources for the protection of their communities.

In the belief that a general demonstration would spur all interested to even greater action, on December 1, 1941, I called a State-wide meeting of all Local Directors of Civilian Defense and Chief Air Raid Wardens to convene in Annapolis on December 14, 1941. The combination of Pearl Harbor and the meeting caused intense activity during the following few months, as a result of it is fair to say that today and for many months past, Maryland is in an excellent state of preparation against hostile attack with every area fully prepared.

The picture of Maryland of the last twelve months is a picture of a State growingly conscious of the danger of war and preparing itself with vigor to meet them.

Months ago a State Communications Center was inaugurated. This Control Center is designed to serve the entire State. Here the Chiefs of all Emergency Services, in case of an emergency, will be in constant contact with every County Control Center through either telephone, radio, teleprinter, or teletype, ready to dispatch needed service wherever demanded. Major General Milton A. Reckord, after inspecting this operation, commented that it was "unique" and one of the most important developments yet conceived in Civilian Defense preparations.

Too often, in our thinking about Civilian Defense, the greatest stress has been placed on its personal aspects. We think in terms of protecting ourselves against the enemy bombers—or protecting our personal property. But there is really a military aspect in its implications. Civilian Defense is actually a very important defensive weapon against the enemy. Its purpose, in this sense,