

On December 7, National Civil Defense Day, I called a meeting of my top advisers in State departments to review the entire civil defense picture of our State. I was pleased at that time to hear their endorsement of the civil defense program as it was being run and to also hear their recommendation that we continue to gradually expand our activities in that field. I have been pleased to hear from Sherley Ewing and others that these department heads have been doing what was promised and are daily offering more and more assistance to the State Civil Defense Agency in its work. Civil Defense is part of government and State government must do its share in the defense program. Tomorrow at your civil defense directors meeting, I understand you will hear more specifically about what certain State departments are doing.

Not only government, but industry and business as well, are pursuing the civil defense program. We are happy to hear about these concerns which are interested in the welfare of our nation. As examples we can cite public utilities and the banking, food and transportation industries. This is as it should be—business and government working together.

I would like to give recognition to the splendid work that is being performed by our county civil defense directors. They work in many cases with no or only a minimal remuneration. We have been most fortunate in Maryland in having top-notch people for these jobs. Nine of the directors have served since the inception of the Maryland civil defense program. On the other hand, we have had several vacancies to fill during the past year and it has been my pleasure, acting on the recommendation of the county commissioners and the mayor of Baltimore, to fill these vacancies. These new directors are leading citizens in their communities and have been appointed only after great care by the county and city officials concerned.

Tomorrow is the day for the county directors to have their say at your all-day meeting. I trust that you will have a most successful meeting, and I am looking forward to hearing the results of the deliberations. The door of the Governor's office is always open if I can be of assistance to you in your work.

I know fully well that in some of our counties the financial support of the civil defense program is not all that it should be, and it is my hope that where it is possible the counties concerned will rectify this situation when the new budgets come up for consideration. I hope that the people in these counties will speak up if they are not