

Let me first welcome our guests from the Office of Civil Defense and the Office of Emergency Planning. I would like to assure them and the other federal officials present that the State of Maryland is supporting the President's civil defense program.

Since we met in Annapolis, where we took a good look at the Maryland civil defense program, much has been accomplished. I know that you will agree with me that Maryland was most fortunate in persuading Major General Rinaldo Van Brunt to assume the post of Director of the Maryland Civil Defense Agency. All of us present have come to know him quite well. His dynamic leadership is inspirational. His warmth and sincerity is evident. To use a cliché—the Army's loss was Maryland's gain.

To the officials present here from the Office of Emergency Planning, may I repeat the thanks of all Marylanders for the fine work done by them in coordinating the work of the federal agencies following the storm which struck our seashore. Also, I want to express my deep appreciation and admiration for the many persons and agencies who played vital roles in the rehabilitation of Ocean City, which has now resumed its role as a vacation and convention mecca for the people of Maryland and nearby states. I would be remiss if I did not offer a special word of praise for the county civil defense directors on the lower Shore who did so much to protect life and property and to assure the welfare and safety of the residents of the stricken area.

I see with us this evening members of the Civil Defense Committee of the Legislative Council. Certainly, I cannot miss this opportunity to thank and praise them for their excellent work.

The last regular session of the General Assembly enacted a record number of significant civil defense measures and the budget included a number of extra positions that will enable General Van Brunt and his staff to provide substantially more assistance to the local civil defense units. The action of the Legislature was due in large measure to the fine work of this Committee. Taking cognizance of the requests for further State support of the civil defense program, the Legislature provided \$50,000 in State matching funds to expedite the program at the local level.

I have always felt that Maryland had one of the finest civil defense organizations in the country and I have told you so before. Tonight I know I am correct in saying that we have even bettered our previous position. You know of my great interest in this and other public safety programs and I share with you pride of achievement.

Departments of our State government, likewise, have shown an