

THE STATE AND DISTRICT COUNCILS OF DEFENSE— PRODUCTION MEETING

State House, July 25, 1941

Annapolis

I HAVE invited representative citizens, county and city officials, and persons active in industry to assemble here today in the interest of National Defense.

It is reassuring to have noted the response which followed the invitation to so many busy individuals. To each of you I desire to express sincere appreciation for your manifest willingness to give to the State the benefit of your knowledge and of your counsel. The evident purpose of giving such assistance to the State is in order that we, together with other States, may stand as a solid phalanx in support of the Nation.

It would seem to be in order to review briefly what has taken place in the way of organization within the State to effect cooperation for the general purposes of National preparedness. Just one year ago, after the Governors of the several States of the Union had pledged to the National Government the use of all the resources of the States for the preservation of our national unity, a definite program was outlined in Washington. The Advisory Commission of the Council of National Defense requested the various States to form Defense Councils. Maryland was one of the first in the Union to adopt this suggestion. This very week, one year ago, a call was issued to the Council to meet in this State House.

At that time and in accordance with the national plan, I requested the Council to proceed toward three objectives. These objectives were, *firstly*, a survey covering the entire Maryland situation insofar as its relates to adequate National preparedness and, also, concerning industrial mobilization; *secondly*, to study and to project plans for the effective and timely use of manpower, the natural resources and the industrial capacities which may be desired for National Defense; and, *thirdly*, to effect plans for cooperation, as Maryland's representative agency, with the Advisory Council of the National Defense Commission and other authorized commissions of the Federal Government.

Requesting the citizens to serve as members of the Maryland Council, I gave assurance that no consideration would enter into any of the plans or activities of the Council except that which would be for the public good. In other words, no selfish purpose, no political consideration, nothing would be permitted to interfere with or to color or to divert the attention of the Council from the all-important question of the Nation's welfare.

Mr. W. Frank Roberts, a leading citizen and industrialist of the State, consented to serve as Chairman. Mr. Isaac S. George was selected as Executive Director and the plan was adopted whereby the seven or eight general