

COMBINED CIVIC CLUBS

November 25, 1941

Pocomoke City

OF all the momentous questions facing the State and Nation in this hour of crisis, undoubtedly the one that dwarfs all others in importance is the question of adequate National Defense. For that reason and because, as Director of Civilian Defense for the State, it has been my function to initiate many of the steps in regard to Defense here in Maryland, it would seem that the most immediate matter concerning which I could talk to you tonight would be the question of Defense preparedness.

America has faced war before, and many of its people have known the intimate horror of battles staged within sight of their very homesteads. Our history recounts many incidents, too, where our women, and our boys, have taken active part in efforts to repulse enemy attack.

Down through the pages of history other nations, too, have known the terrible consequences of invasion and complete subjugation. All too many records there are of whole peoples being dispersed or carried into slavery, or maltreated in savage fashion. In every instance, however, the treatment visited upon the women and children of conquered towns and countries has come as a result of victory, and only after the warriors on opposing sides had settled the issue by force or arms.

Today, however, many countries of the world have faced, or are facing, assaults upon their non-combatant populations, such as even the most ruthless barbarians of ancient times never conceived. These attacks, moreover, are not an aftermath of conquests, but as the result of devilish advance planning. They are being carried on as part of a general all-out plan to destroy entire peoples. . . .

One man, a mad man—but in many ways a genius—has done the impossible. Having seized the control of the German people and their resources, Hitler has, within a few years, without provocation, attacked, terrorized and conquered fifteen proud and ancient nations. With tyrannic fury he has wrecked the homes, ravaged the commerce, seized the property, and destroyed the liberties of four-fifths of the people of Europe.

His will alone holds the fate of hundreds of millions—and without any restraint of law, morals, or religion, such as for hundreds of years the civilized world has depended upon for individual and national protection. With the accumulated resources of men and materials thus obtained, Hitler and his Germany are now engaged in the bloody process of attempting to master the world.

The ruthless fanaticism with which his course has been attended, together with the almost unimaginable success he and his revolution have so far attained,