

portance at the present moment, is what might be called the international phase of National Defense preparedness. This includes the production, and delivery to the nations now engaged in fighting Hitlerism, of immense amounts of war material, clothing and foodstuffs, without which it would be impossible for these countries to continue their fight against the legions of that war-crazed Dictator who has set out to enslave the whole world under the banner of his self-proclaimed Nordic supremacy.

Here again our State is achieving most remarkable results. Several weeks ago we had a double launching of merchant ships, and another such twin ceremony is scheduled in the near future at one of the Baltimore shipyards. I doubt very much whether anyone in Maryland, outside of the men actually working in the shipyards, has any idea of the tremendous contribution Maryland is making towards the up-building of the American Merchant Marine to the level required by the present emergency.

Third, important as these two phases of defense are, however—and, truthfully, their importance cannot be over-estimated—they do not so nearly touch the hearts and persons of every individual citizen of our State as does the third great phase of warfare as it is practiced today. That third phase has won for itself the very descriptive title of Civilian Defense. It is no exaggeration to point out that, if the worst should happen, and hostilities should be brought to within the borders of our own State, as they well might be, there is no able-bodied adult resident of Maryland who would be untouched, or whose assistance could be spared in coping with the results that would follow any such development.

All too frequently, it is feared, the people of our State, particularly of the outlying sections, may have said to themselves as they continued to read about plans for civilian Defense, "Well, that's all right for those people who live in the cities or around defense industries, but it certainly will never touch us."

Perhaps some of the people of England said that two years ago, but I can assure you they don't feel that way today. They know, just as surely as everyone of us know if hostile bombers ever attack any spot in Maryland, that there will be not only room for, but absolute need of, their services in some one of the many urgently necessary divisions of this Civilian Defense.

So free have we been here in America from embroilment in the wars of the world, so apparently remote have we been from the world's trouble spots, that even now, despite all the increasing tension, many of our people still find it difficult to believe that we ever actually will be involved in shooting.

This very year, as I witnessed the United States Naval Academy graduation in Annapolis, and heard Secretary Knox tell these young men that they might well be called upon to make the supreme sacrifice, there was a possible feeling of doubt that any such dire happening would occur.

Today, however, Secretary Knox's prophecy has been fulfilled in the case of at least one of these newly-commissioned ensigns, whose fate it was to be aboard the destroyer Reuben James when it was sunk by a Nazi torpedo off the coast of Iceland. Only one instance, of course, but it strikes home very definitely, and I am sure to all who were present at that graduation, as a reminder that these are, indeed, tragic times facing us.