

Later this evening it will be a privilege to review a drill of the local company of the State Guard. The State Guard is one of the basic units of any State Defense program, and in the event that hostilities should ever occur within our State, the members of the Guard will be called upon to assume duties of the utmost importance.

It was my good fortune on Armistice Day to review some of the State Guard units in Baltimore, and other reviews were held on that day throughout various sections of the State. Uniformly, the reports from them were most laudatory, showing that splendid progress has been made in a very short time in the organization and training of the Guards units. All who witness tonight's ceremony will be deeply gratified, I am sure, at the military bearing and splendid condition of your local company under Captain Callahan and the other officers.

A second phase of defense activities which cannot be over-emphasized in a section so exposed to air attack as is the Eastern Shore, is the Air Raid Warning Service and the Air Warden's group. As no less a personage than the Commander-in-Chief of our Army and Navy, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, pointed out some months ago, the Eastern Shore of Maryland is one of the likeliest spots on the Eastern Seaboard for attack by air.

Not only is this so physically, because it would be so accessible to planes of an opposing fleet, but strategically, this route would offer the greatest possibilities to a hostile bombing force, for attacks upon Washington as well as upon the vital Defense Industry areas of the entire Middle Atlantic section.

When and if bombs actually begin to fall on any part of Maryland, and people are injured, buildings are demolished, huge conflagrations started, perhaps water and light and gas services disrupted, it doesn't take a very imaginative mind to comprehend how much work—speedy, intelligent, well-planned and well-supervised work—will be required to safeguard the health and other interests of our population during such a crisis.

That is why the Maryland Council of Defense, appointed by me more than a year ago, with the assistance of the Baltimore District Council of Defense, the Eastern Shore Council, and similar groups in the other sections of the State, which I later named, already have done most intensive work in preparing for whatever type of invasion or disaster might accompany our forced entry into active hostilities.

As an example of what has been going on throughout the entire State, let me give you a brief review of what has transpired on the Eastern Shore with regard to Civilian Defense preparations. The local Directors of Civilian Defense have been appointed for all counties, and a number of Chief Air Raid Wardens have been designated. Local organizations are progressing steadily in each county, and, in fact, one of the best records made to date in this respect was in our own county, Worcester, at the county seat, Snow Hill.

Pursuant to the expressed desire of the Federal Director of Civilian Defense, that Fire Protection be given precedence, Maryland is exceptionally well advanced in this work. In fact it is considered ahead of practically any State in the Union. Our State plan has been adopted by the Federal agency as a