

Fortunately, much has been accomplished already in the all-important work of preparing for the defense and protection of our civilian population in case of attack. Since the Maryland Council of Defense was appointed by me in August of 1940, following conferences with Federal officials in Washington, the vastly complicated scheme of protective measures has been developing continuously and increasingly under the direction and supervision of the State Defense Council, and of the District Defense Councils that later supplemented the original body.

The progress made in initiating and developing the various phases of defense preparations throughout the State has been particularly gratifying because it was accomplished despite a lack of any general appreciation by the people of the State of what we were attempting, and without any widespread acceptance of the necessity for intensive defense planning such as the Council of Defense had undertaken.

Up till last Sunday, America was living in what may properly be called a state of "IF." We said to each other that *if* war comes—*if* this crisis materializes—*if* this or that should happen, why then, of course, we all would be willing and able to do this and so.

Well, today that state of "IF" is over. We have suddenly and violently been hurled into the black chaos of reality. It is no nightmare. It is a night where the enemy skulks and out of which we shall have to fight our own way with all the cunning and courage at our disposal. The time has come,—and now is—when all the "IF's" have come home to roost; when all the things we were going to do have got to be done—now and with all our might.

We are, therefore, gathered here for what is in every literal sense a Council of War. Because, as each of us knows quite well, wars are no longer fought exclusively between and by the armed forces of conflicting nations. Danger is no longer confined to the front line of fighting. The growth of airpower has overleaped any form of barrier. Distances from the enemy's headquarters is no guarantee at all of physical safety. A man, a woman, a child killed by an Axis bomb in Baltimore is just as great a loss as the soldier struck down in Asia or on an island of the Pacific. Yes—and the chances of death by Axis weapons are almost as strong in one place as in another.

We have raised our flag against international gangsterism. Wherever that flag flies is a target at which the enemy shoots—and shoots to kill.

So be it! A nation like a man, deserves credit for the enemies it makes. As Americans we can be proud to have cultivated the hatred of murderers and marauders. Neither as a Government nor as individuals has this Country made any bones about our feelings towards these barbarians. And they have fully justified the low opinion in which we held them.

They have struck, as a desperado will strike—without warning and with the fury of guilt and hatred and desperation. Had we been afraid we should never have invited the Axis wrath by voicing disapproval of Axis methods. Not being afraid we have spoken our minds and we are prepared to take the consequences, always in the full knowledge that the final settlement, when it comes,