

CUMBERLAND CIVILIAN DEFENSE BLACKOUT
RADIO STATION WBAL

December 26, 1941

Baltimore

THIS evening is a most important one to the people of Cumberland and its immediate neighborhood, because tonight your Civilian Defense Committee, stages its first practice "blackout." As the Director of Civilian Defense for the State of Maryland, I have been given the utmost cooperation from the officials of the Western Maryland Council of Defense and the local defense officials from the City of Cumberland.

It is an unusual privilege for me to be in Baltimore and yet be participating in your first practice "blackout" in the Cumberland area. The conditions under which we must be willing to accept some inconveniences are not those of our own choice, but war has been forced upon our Country. The treacherous assault of the Japanese brought us into the conflict. Possibly, only those living upon the West Coast really expected to see the day when America and Japan would be engaged in a death struggle.

America is today challenged as she has never been before. The American spirit will take on the ardour which moved our forebears and which today clothes all our people in unity.

These are troublous times no one can deny and although our Christmas was clouded the people of Maryland yet observed the age old custom of greetings to one another, extending the feeling of good will and brotherly spirit with our neighbor in the street. One immediate attention is absorbed by the perilous surroundings in which we live. With passionate effort it is our aim to serve and safeguard that part of our future which is yet to be written by our own actions in the next and succeeding years.

Although Japan is the most aggressive of our present enemies, homes in Maryland and the other states of the Eastern Seaboard are likely to be affected in this war with Germany and Italy, which has been looming upon the horizon these past two or three years. We're in war, total war, and we're in to the end. There can be no doubt but that the complete cooperation of every one of the millions of Americans is going to be necessary before we bring these wars to a successful conclusion.

For many months we have been busily engaged in planning for hostilities, in laying the foundation, here in the State for the type of complete civilian defense that the experience of England has shown will be necessary in case of hostile attack. The activities of the Maryland Council of Defense along these lines during the past year have been hampered somewhat, however, because so many of our people refused to believe that war would come. All their thinking was based on a great big "IF." Surely there is no one who had any doubt in their mind and now does not realize the grave necessity for all-out cooperation.