

and commissions, have been turned into channels undreamed of a few months ago.

Today ninety per cent of our time and efforts is being devoted to State defense and war problems. In less than two months, the program of the State Administration has been completely rearranged. Defense is by all odds the first item and the biggest item in Maryland's affairs. Other ordinary matters must take second place to the all-out effort in which we, together with the other states, are engaged.

And certainly, this is as it should be. Every one of us must respond to the call for service, wherever best fitted, just as the cream of our youth is responding for active defense in the armed services. Thousands of Maryland homes already have seen their boys go into uniform. Some already have made the supreme sacrifice. But many will not get the full significance of the war effort until, through the loss of a loved one, it strikes home.

From several angles Maryland is a most important cog in the National Defense machinery. In the first place, we have many essential war industries in the State, whose one hundred per cent, uninterrupted production is essential to successful prosecution of the war. Second, we are adjacent to the National Capitol, in the target area for attack. Beyond this Maryland is on the Atlantic Seaboard, with a coast line to defend, vulnerable to attack from the water, and it is therefore of foremost importance that State protection be guaranteed as far as possible by our own efforts.

Aside from the above, the very war economy which necessarily has been thrust upon us dictates that our State machinery be geared up to that tempo and adjusted to operations which the all-out war effort requires. Every business has been affected, many habits of living, aside from the mere question of automobile driving, already have felt the effect of the changed economy.

I have attempted to adjust the State Administration to these changes and to anticipate them as far as possible, and in the general effort we are necessarily acting in close cooperation with Washington in order to have effective coordination.

With few exceptions, the State's daily program now has to do with various questions of State and local defense councils, transportation facilities, water supply, sanitation, the State Guard, tire and other rationing, medical services, production in war industrial plants, and all the intricate problems that stem from them.

Not many weeks ago, on the Sunday just one week after the treacherous surprise attack upon Hawaii, Dorchester County staged a practice blackout. It was successful, beyond any expectation, and helped to set up a fund of experience that later was to be drawn upon by the other counties of the State, as one by one they staged their own blackouts to accustom their people to the exigencies that might arise at any time. Let me say here that the true spirit of cooperation encountered in Dorchester County is deserving of the highest commendation. Our people have reacted to the call of preparedness in magnificent manner.