

If the worst should come to pass, and Maryland communities should begin to feel the horror of enemy bombing, we at least will not be taken unawares. We shall be prepared to endure the ordeal with as little losses through injury or other causes as through preparedness can insure. This isn't to say that the job is complete. By no means is this so. Your County Defense Chairman still needs volunteers and plenty of them. There isn't a county in the State that can't use men or women for practically everyone of its important defense functions.

And I am here to say that there never was a more direct obligation laid upon the conscience of any American citizen than the duty now upon our people with regard to this vital need of Civilian Defense.

Fortunate for us it is that, in addition to the efforts put forth within the State, the Federal Government is prepared to afford us the utmost protection against attack of any nature. It can be said that, as we meet today troops are stationed at points along the Eastern Shore. While their particular missions are part of the general defense plan, and, therefore, of course, are not to be divulged, we know from military headquarters that the two service branches have established a closely coordinated defensive and offensive network system to protect America's Eastern Seaboard from attack.

Land, sea and air patrols for the detection and repulse of hostile forces are jointly directed by a command group of top-ranking Army, Navy and Air Force officers. Through elaborately prepared methods of liaison, these officers are available to each other twenty-four hours a day. The forces under them can swing into unified action within a matter of seconds after the receipt of an alert, or after the report of activity of enemy forces along the Coast. Details of the plan must still continue to be secret. It must be a comforting thought, however, to all the people of the Eastern Shore of our State, to know that this close and continuous cooperation between all defending forces is working night and day to protect them.

Keeping step with the patriotic tempo of our people, both with regard to service in the armed forces and in the field of Civilian Defense, is the third great branch of Maryland's defensive effort, our war industries. Our people do not begin to realize fully the tremendous contribution being made by Maryland to the general pattern of National Defense preparedness. To say that Maryland industrial accomplishments are far out of proportion to our relative size among the states, is putting it very mildly, indeed. Through our great airplane, shipbuilding and steel plants; through our explosive and chemical and other vital defense industries; through our agricultural and farming enterprises, we are accomplishing mightily in the interest of that service of supply which in the final analysis will mean victory in this struggle-to-the death.

Maryland planes are in action on many fronts; Maryland ships are carrying the product of Maryland and of other states to the widely scattered bases of American and Allied forces throughout the world. Maryland steel is sheathing