

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU DINNER
LORD BALTIMORE HOTEL

January 8, 1942
Baltimore

A LITTLE more than a year ago, at the National Farm Bureau Convention, which we were privileged to hold here in Baltimore, I took occasion to express the high regard in which the people of the State hold our farm people and farm groups. These farm people and farm groups constituted, I declared at that time, the very backbone of our conservative democratic institutions, and their membership was indelibly associated with the basic doctrines of American civilization.

Within the past month again it was my privilege to be associated with your honored National President, Mr. Edward A. O'Neal, in a declaration of fealty and support to the President of these United States, following the outbreak of war with the Axis powers.

It was fitting, indeed, that the American Farm Bureau Federation was one of several leading national organizations to join in this declaration of loyalty. While unquestionably the farm people of our Country are contributing in the most splendid manner to the program of war preparedness, there still devolved upon your shoulders, as members of the Bureau, and as leaders in your various communities, a very grave responsibility in this hour of crisis. You must assume and assert leadership in the matter of organization of our defense within the State.

The Farm Bureau, in its contacts with so many thousands of persons throughout the State, many of whom are not readily reached by the usual publicity media, can be a most important and effective factor in registering forcibly the needs of the hour, and the part that every single Marylander must play in efforts to prepare against any and every type of emergency.

Naturally, the farmer must give first thought to his No. 1 responsibility. Not only must we, as a Nation, produce all the foodstuffs possible for our own use, but we must bear in mind that we are one of the United Nations whose total resources have been dedicated to the defeat and destruction of militarism throughout the world.

Thus, while we are producing the thousands of tanks and planes and guns, the millions of tons of shipping that will be required to supply our allies as well as ourselves, it must be borne in mind that the same maximum production must be attained in foodstuffs as well.

The 125,000 planes which President Roosevelt has promised that the Country will produce for use against the Axis nations in 1943, must be matched by a correspondingly overwhelming production of farm products during that same twelve-month period. The whole system of defense activity is so thoroughly