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MR. MABANE'S SPEECH AT FENGE

Mr. William Mabane, M.P., Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Home Security, speaking at the opening of Warship Week at FENGE to-day (Saturday) referred to the desire of whole-time Civil Defence workers to make a more active contribution to the war effort during the lull, and said that everything would be done to make this possible.

"The Civil Defence Services did a great job of work during the intensive raiding last year", said Mr. Mabane. "They proved themselves a great army. They saved thousands of lives and millions of pounds of war material. My message to them to-day is get on your toes and stay on your toes.

"There are facile optimists about who imagine that the German bombers will never return, just as there were those who said they would never come at all. Do not heed such people. Look instead at the pictures of our own raid on the Renault works in Paris. Read the speech of the Secretary of State for Air on bombing policy. Realise that a bombing offensive of unexampled force and fury against Germany is to be part of our contribution to the efforts of our gallant Russian allies in the spring. Then be ready for the German raids in reply.

"Then these raids come, when the German bombers return, then once more Wardens, First Aid and Rescue Parties, fireman and the rest will deploy into action again. They must be there in sufficient numbers, trained, and equipped. It has been our job at the Ministry of Home Security to see to this during the lull. We have not been wasting our time. We have been re-organising the services and putting into practice all we could learn from the long ordeal of last winter.

"We have in consequence moved from a defensive view of our function to an offensive view. Important though Civil Defence undoubtedly is we do not want it to divert men and material from the major purpose of the war, which is attack. So we have been striving, in our re-organisation, to move the Services so far as may be, back on to the part-time conception which was its foundation. 'Civil Defence' we said at the outset 'is the duty of the citizen'. So it is. It is everybody's duty, and a duty everybody must undertake.

"We have now a large body of men and women who for a long time have been occupied full-time in Civil Defence. They are now fully trained and efficient. While the lull lasts they want to be making a more active and vital contribution to the war effort instead of merely standing by. We are going to do all we can to make this possible. When the raiders return they will return to their posts, but meanwhile they, just so far as may be, will be released and their places filled by part-time members. Civil Defence is a business better performed by the small contributions of the many than by the large contributions of the few.

"Such is the guiding thought in the Ministry of Home Security, and we believe that our re-organisation will at one and the same time enable the dividend of the German bombers to be reduced and the active productive effort of the country to be increased."

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