

# BLACKOUT A SUCCESS

## DEFENSE LEADERS SAY FIRST TEST WELL CARRIED OUT

### City In Total Darkness For Half An Hour

Had enemy bombers flown over this section looking for Roanoke Rapids at about 9:30 Sunday night the chances are they would have failed to find the city. That is how complete the city's first test blackout and air raid drill was perfected by local Civilian Defense leaders, city officials, and residents of the town.

For almost half an hour the city was in almost total darkness, and only a few pin points of light here and there would have served to aid enemy bombers had they flown over the city while the blackout was in progress, so effective was the drill.

Viewed from atop the local high school building shortly after the air raid sirens had given their ear-splitting howls, city officials and Civilian Defense leaders watching could see the lights in the city and those in urban districts suddenly go out and within a few minutes after the sirens had given the warning scarcely a light was visible from any point in the city.

Civilian Defense Commander Frank Sherry said that he estimated the blackout at about 98 per cent complete. Lights were visible in a couple of buildings in the business districts where lights had been left burning as a precaution against burglary, and two or three residents had left lights or fires burning in their homes while they were away. With these exceptions, Sherry said, the blackout was carried out in fine style.

However, Mr. Sherry said, the blackout served to convince the Office of Civilian Defense that the ordinary blackout curtains are not definitely effective in refuge rooms. He stated that a survey was made of refuge rooms outfitted with blackout curtains and found that light could and did come through cracks in the space between the window panels and the blackout curtains.

"We find that the use of plywood in the refuge rooms will be much more effective in blackout of rooms where there must be lights in use. Sunday night's blackout revealed that the ordinary blackout curtains or drapes are not entirely effective in a complete blackout of the refuge room, although blackout curtains could be used in the rest of the house provided the refuge room, itself, is completely blacked out. By this we mean that blackout curtains could be used over remaining windows of the house to prevent light escaping from the house in the event a door in the refuge room is suddenly opened and light allowed to escape into other parts of the building.

"With this in mind we are preparing a mechanical drawing of the proper methods of completely blacking out the refuge room with plywood. This plywood method will allow ventilation and at the

same time will allow a window to be raised in the refuge room without letting light escape to the outside. We are expecting to have this drawing ready for publication in the Herald next week, and we suggest that each resident of the city prepare his refuge room accordingly".

Commander Sherry said that another blackout test would be held in the city sometime in the near future and that he hoped that a refuge room would be prepared in every home in the city by that time.

### CHURCH SUPPER

On Thursday night, the young people's division of Pleasant Grove Church served a supper in the Sunday School rooms of the church. The proceeds which amounted to \$20.00 will be used in buying a defense bond for their society.

## MINISTERS TO GET AUTO TIRES

Ministers may obtain new tires or retreads for use on their cars necessary to the performance of their religious duties, H. B. Speight, chairman of the local tire rationing board, stated yesterday.

The rule adding ministers to the list of those who may purchase new rubber is contained in revised regulations covering both tire and retreading rationing effective today. The new regulations were received this week by the local Board.

Under the revised regulation, the local rationing board may in their discretion and subject to existing quotas, issue certificates for tire replacements to ministers satisfying the following condition: "A vehicle operated by a regularly practicing minister of any religious faith and which is used principally in and is necessary to the performance of his religious duties".

Mr. and Mrs. L. A. Denton of Raleigh were business visitors here during the week-end.

## Lions Plan Ladies Night Program

Members of the Roanoke Rapids Lions Club at their regular meeting on Thursday night discussed their coming Ladies Night and Charter Night celebration, scheduled to be held at the time of the next meeting of the club on Thursday night, February 26.

Plans for the coming event call for a banquet in the basement of the First Baptist church, at which a speaker of note will be had, followed by a dance in the Veeco clubhouse. Wives and lady friends of Lion members will be guests for the occasion.

Plans for the forthcoming Mid-Summer Lions Carnival were also discussed. It was announced that a unit of the Kaus Exposition Shows has already been signed to appear at the Carnival, and that plans were underway to secure other attractions for the annual affair. It was stated that the Kaus show is the largest and most colorful ever signed for a Lions Carnival and that the show boasts of about 14 of the finest rides in the

show business.

A report on the recent President's Ball, sponsored jointly by the Lions Club of the county, and a further report that a light had been placed on the street in front of the high school building for the benefit of the skating rink across the street, completed the business session.

## Local Youth Is Raised To Navy Petty Officer

Zalph T. Cross, son of Ernest E. Cross of 410 Madison Ave., Roanoke Rapids, recently was advanced to Aviation Machinist Mate, Third Class, at the U. S. Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Fla., according to an announcement by that station's Public Relations office.

Cross enlisted in the Navy at Greenville in February, 1940, and was sent to the U. S. Naval Training Station at Norfolk, Va., for his elementary training.

He was transferred to Pensacola in June, 1940, and was assigned to duty with the ground crews of one of the flying squadrons stationed at the "Annapolis of the Air". His latest achievement gives him rating as a Chief Petty Officer, at a considerable increase in pay.

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