

Skylight Hazard

I should like to call your attention to a matter which, I believe, merits serious and immediate consideration.

As director of a club for service men, I find myself more keenly alert to every aspect of national defense than I was as a private citizen. The recent blackout here in Washington was a splendid demonstration, and I am very proud of the efficiency of our air raid wardens. However, there is one condition which exists, because of building practices here in the District, of which they are doubtless unaware, but which seriously threatens the protective measures we are taking.

This condition is the existence of skylights in a very large proportion of the city structures, some of which are indirect so that the occupants are not even aware of them, but which, although not visible from the street level, must be glaringly apparent from above. During the blackout I went on the roof of the apartment house where I live, and from there counted 91 skylights which went on and off during the blackout period. The air raid wardens in the street could not, of course, see them, and the residents of the buildings were probably unaware of their visibility, but a plane flying overhead would have seen a checkerboard of light all over the city, which would certainly aid an enemy bomber.

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