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REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

98TH ANNUAL MINNESOTA FIRE DEPARTMENT CONFERENCE

DETROIT LAKES, MINNESOTA

JUNE 9, 1973

Barney Allen - 847-4611

MAUREE AYTON  
426-6040  
IRS.

CURLETTE

President Shortridge

James Thomas, Genl. Chr

S. Sgt. Don Peterson

Blowing Prairie Trees

District Lakes Fire Dept

V. P. Bob Carson

Tom Kennedy

Chairman

Luck Komer (Cloguet)

FACTS ABOUT THE SCOPE OF THE NATION'S FIRE PROBLEM

FIRE IS A MAJOR NATIONAL PROBLEM, WHILE I AM TALKING

98th Annual Nunn. Fire Dept Conference

TO YOU THERE IS A STATISTICAL LIKELIHOOD THAT MORE THAN 300

Col. James Crawford - Highway Patrol

DESTRUCTIVE FIRES WILL RAGE SOMEWHERE IN THIS NATION.

Melby 7/26

WHEN THEY ARE EXTINGUISHED, MORE THAN \$300,000 WORTH

OF PROPERTY WILL HAVE BEEN RUINED AT LEAST ONE PERSON WILL

HAVE DIED. THIRTY-FOUR WILL BE INJURED, SOME CRIPPLED OR

DISFIGURED FOR LIFE.

EACH YEAR, FIRE CLAIMS NEARLY 12,000 LIVES IN THE

UNITED STATES. AMONG CAUSES OF ACCIDENTAL DEATH, ONLY MOTOR

VEHICLES AND FALLS RANK HIGHER.

18,000 ~~fire fighters~~ fire fighters

Volunteers

1500 Salaries - Pd

✓  
L EACH YEAR 300,000 AMERICANS ARE INJURED BY FIRE. OF THESE, NEARLY 50,000 LIE IN HOSPITALS FOR A PERIOD RANGING FROM 6 WEEKS TO 2 YEARS L MANY OF THEM MUST RETURN OVER AND OVER AGAIN FOR PLASTIC AND RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY. L MANY NEVER RESUME NORMAL LIVES.

L THE COST OF DESTRUCTIVE FIRE IN THE UNITED STATES AMOUNTS TO AT LEAST \$11.4 BILLION A YEAR; AND THAT'S A CONSERVATIVE ESTIMATE. BEYOND CALCULATION ARE THE LOSSES FROM BUSINESSES THAT MUST CLOSE AND FROM JOBS INTERRUPTED OR DESTROYED.

✓  
L APPALLINGLY, THE RICHEST AND MOST TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED NATION IN THE WORLD LEADS ALL THE MAJOR INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES IN PER CAPITA DEATHS AND PROPERTY LOSS FROM FIRE.

L AMONG THE PEOPLE THAT SUFFER MOST FROM ~~THIS POOR RECORD~~ *all of this*

ARE YOU, THE NATION'S FIREFIGHTERS. YOURS IS THE MOST HAZARDOUS

PROFESSION OF ALL, YOUR DEATH RATE IS 15 PERCENT GREATER THAN

THE NEXT MOST DANGEROUS OCCUPATIONS, MINING AND QUARRYING.

~~IN 1971, THE INJURY RATE FOR FIREFIGHTERS WAS 39.6 PER 100~~

~~MEN -- FAR HIGHER THAN THAT OF ANY OTHER PROFESSION.~~

AMERICA'S POOR FIRE RECORD, AND ITS FAILURE TO MARSHAL  
*manpower, facilities, equipment*  
ENOUGH SCIENTIFIC AND MONETARY RESOURCES TO IMPROVE THE  
RECORD, CONCERNS NOT ONLY YOU -- YOU WHO WORK IN THE FIELD OF  
FIRE PROTECTION. IT ALSO CONCERNS US IN THE GOVERNMENT, IN  
PRIVATE INDUSTRY, AND EVERY AMERICAN WHO TAKES THE TIME TO  
THINK ABOUT IT.

- LaVern Freenk, Chairman  
Late Gene Weber - vic chr

I have read this Report -  
Its recommendations -  
for four problem areas  
Non Forest - areas - Urban + Rural  
Forest areas  
State Institutions  
Four source Educ + Research  
Four Committees -  
Considerable Progress -  
Councils Plan of action

Excellent  
Council

State Advisory Council on Fire Services  
Education + Research - created by 1969 State  
Legislature - First Report to Governor - Jay  
Feb 1971

GOVERNMENT ACTION TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM

RECOGNIZING THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE FIRE PROBLEM, CONGRESS

(X)

IN 1968 PASSED THE FIRE RESEARCH AND SAFETY ACT, WHICH

ESTABLISHED THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND

CONTROL. (Delay 2 yrs - no action)

IN THE LAST TWO YEARS THE COMMISSION HAS BEEN HARD AT  
WORK ON A REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT DETAILING THE MOST SIGNIFICANT  
FIRE SAFETY PROBLEMS IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY, AND THE  
GREATEST OPPORTUNITY FOR FIRE LOSS REDUCTION.

THE REPORT HAS JUST BEEN PUBLISHED, AND I HAVE A COPY  
OF IT WITH ME TODAY. Get it!

~~I HAVE READ THE REPORT WITH GREAT INTEREST, AND NOW I~~  
~~WISH TO PASS ON TO YOU THE COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS.~~

~~WHICH, BY THE WAY, WERE NOT MADE LIGHTLY,~~

~~IN PURSUIT OF ANSWERS TO THE FIRE PROBLEM~~ THE COMMISSION  
HELD HEARINGS OVER A TWO-YEAR PERIOD ~~IN FIVE WIDELY~~

~~SCATTERED SITES~~ <sup>It</sup> HEARD TESTIMONY FROM MORE THAN 100 WITNESSES;

~~AND SPENT COUNTLESS HOURS LEARNING AND DELIBERATING IN BOTH~~  
~~FORMAL AND INFORMAL SESSIONS.~~

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION

-- THERE NEEDS TO BE MORE EMPHASIS ON FIRE PREVENTION;  
MOST DESTRUCTIVE FIRES ARE CAUSED BY CARELESS ACTIONS OF  
PEOPLE, LARGELY THROUGH LACK OF CONCERN AND IGNORANCE.

MANY FIRES ARE CAUSED BY FAULTY EQUIPMENT, POOR WIRING,  
ETC. AND COULD BE PREVENTED IF PEOPLE WERE TRAINED TO SPOT  
THE FAULTS.

-- FIRE FIGHTERS NEED BETTER TRAINING AND EDUCATION TO  
IMPROVE THEIR EFFECTIVENESS AND TO REDUCE THEIR INJURIES.

-- THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH WE AMERICANS LIVE AND WORK  
PRESENTS UNNECESSARY FIRE HAZARDS. A MAJOR EMPHASIS SHOULD  
BE PLACED ON A LABELING SYSTEM FOR MATERIALS AND PRODUCTS, SO  
THAT CONSUMERS, AT THE TIME OF PURCHASE, KNOW WHAT FIRE RISKS  
ARE INVOLVED.

-- THE FIRE PROTECTION FEATURES OF BUILDINGS NEED TO  
BE IMPROVED.

MANY COMMUNITIES ARE WITHOUT ADEQUATE BUILDING AND FIRE PREVENTION CODES, AND MANY NURSING HOMES AND OTHER FACILITIES FOR HANDICAPPED CITIZENS ARE WITHOUT ADEQUATE FIRE PROTECTION.

-- MORE RESEARCH NEEDS TO BE DONE IN TREATMENT OF BURN AND SMOKE VICTIMS, IN THE ART OF FIREFIGHTING AND IN PROTECTING THE CONSUMER FROM COMBUSTION HAZARDS.

#### IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE RECOMMENDATIONS

THE COMMISSION FEELS STRONGLY THAT FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL SHOULD REMAIN PRIMARILY LOCAL RESPONSIBILITIES. LOCAL GOVERNMENTS -- THROUGH CODES AND FIRE SAFETY LAWS, AND THROUGH HEAVY INVESTMENTS IN FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT -- HAVE SHOULDERED THE MAJOR BURDEN OF PROTECTING CITIZENS FROM FIRE AND SHOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO.

THOSE GOVERNMENTS APPRECIATE SPECIAL LOCAL CONDITIONS AND NEEDS MORE FULLY THAN AN ARM OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ABLE TO DO.

NEVERTHELESS, THE COMMISSION STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR VIEWING THE NATION'S FIRE PROBLEM IN ITS ENTIRETY.

↳ TO ACHIEVE THIS, THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDED THAT A UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION BE SET UP IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT.

↳ RIGHT NOW, MANY AGENCIES OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ARE INVOLVED IN SOME WAYS IN FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL. FOR

EXAMPLE:

-- BURN AND SMOKE RESEARCH IS BEING CONDUCTED BY THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH;

-- RURAL FIRE PROTECTION COMES UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

-- FUNDS FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRAINING AND PURCHASE OF AMBULANCE EQUIPMENT COMES UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION;

-- FUNDS FOR THE BUILDING OF FIREHOUSES IS SUPPLIED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT;

-- PURCHASING OF SECOND-HAND EQUIPMENT AT A DISCOUNT IS SUPPLIED BY THE GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION;

-- SURPLUS GOVERNMENT PROPERTY IS MADE AVAILABLE TO LOCAL FIREFIGHTING PROGRAMS THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE.

L THE PROPOSED UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION WOULD NOT REPLACE THE GOVERNMENT'S ONGOING PROGRAMS OF RESEARCH AND ACTION, BUT IT WOULD SUPPLEMENT AND REINFORCE THEM.

L TO CARRY OUT ITS FUNCTIONS, THE UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION WOULD ESTABLISH FOUR MAJOR DIVISIONS.

-- A NATIONAL FIRE ACADEMY -- TO PROVIDE A FOCUS FOR THE NATION'S FIREFIGHTERS. THE ACADEMY WOULD NOT SUPPLANT <sup>STATE</sup> ~~STATE~~ AND LOCAL PROGRAMS BUT WOULD ASSIST THEM BY PROVIDING COURSE MATERIALS, BY ACCREDITING LOCAL PROGRAMS AND BY LENDING

SPECIAL INSTRUCTORS. L IN GENERAL, STATE AND LOCAL PROGRAMS WOULD CONTINUE TO TRAIN FIREFIGHTERS, AND THE ACADEMY'S OWN SPECIALIZED COURSES WOULD PROVIDE HIGH-LEVEL MANAGEMENT EDUCATION FOR

FIREFIGHTERS.

- special training.

-- A NATIONAL FIRE DATA SYSTEM -- TO HELP COLLECT IN ONE PLACE ALL USEFUL FIRE DATA, INCLUDING DEATH AND INJURY STATISTICS, PROPERTY LOSS INFORMATION, INFORMATION CONCERNING CAUSES, LOCATIONS AND NUMBERS OF FIRES.

-- A STATE AND LOCAL PROGRAMS DIVISION -- TO PROVIDE GRANTS TO STATES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS SO THEY CAN ADOPT COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLANS FOR FIRE PROTECTION. THIS DIVISION WOULD ALSO PROVIDE GRANTS TO STATES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO STRENGTHEN ALL EXISTING FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL PROGRAMS, INCLUDING PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS, RECRUITMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF PERSONNEL AND FOR THE PURPOSE OF BUYING FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT.

-- A RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION -- TO DEVELOP NEW  
METHODS AND TECHNOLOGIES IN FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL. FOR  
EXAMPLE, THE COMMISSION FEELS STRONGLY THAT MANY LIVES COULD  
BE SAVED IF HOMES WERE EQUIPPED WITH EARLY-WARNING FIRE  
DETECTORS AND ALARMS.

COST OF PROGRAM

THE COMMISSION ESTIMATES THAT WHEN THIS PROGRAM IS IN  
FULL OPERATION IT WILL COST \$150 MILLION A YEAR. FAR LESS  
THAN THE ~~11~~ <sup>1</sup> BILLION DOLLAR LOSS SUSTAINED BY THE COST OF  
DESTRUCTIVE FIRE IN THE UNITED STATES. ~~HENCE, THIS PROGRAM~~  
~~WILL SAVE THE NATION OVER \$350 MILLION ANNUALLY, AS WELL AS~~  
~~THE LIVES AND PROPERTY OF UNTOLD THOUSANDS.~~

LEGISLATIVE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT PROPOSALS MADE BY THE NATIONAL  
COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

SENATOR MAGNUSON OF WASHINGTON HAS INTRODUCED A BILL  
TO ENACT THE COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS INTO LAW. I AM  
A COSPONSOR OF THAT BILL. A COMPANION BILL HAS BEEN  
INTRODUCED IN THE HOUSE BY CONGRESSMAN WRIGHT PATMAN OF TEXAS.  
THE HOUSE WILL BEGIN HOLDING HEARINGS ON THIS LEGISLATION  
WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. THE SENATE HOPES TO HOLD HEARINGS  
LATER ON IN THIS SESSION OF CONGRESS. THERE IS A GREAT DEAL  
OF BIPARTISAN INTEREST IN THIS LEGISLATION.

IN ADDITION TO COSPONSORING THIS LEGISLATION, I HAVE  
INTRODUCED A BILL, S.294, TO MAKE THE ASSAULT ON OR THE MURDER  
OF A STATE OR LOCAL POLICEMAN, FIREMAN, OR PRISON GUARD A  
FEDERAL OFFENSE.

THIS LEGISLATION IS PENDING BEFORE THE SENATE JUDICIARY  
COMMITTEE, AND I AM HOPING FOR EARLY ACTION ON IT.

MY REASONS FOR THIS BILL: PEOPLE LIKE YOURSELVES, PUBLIC  
SAFETY PERSONNEL, PUT YOUR LIVES ON THE LINE FOR THE REST OF  
US EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR. I THINK IT IS UP TO CONGRESS NOW TO  
ASSURE YOU THAT YOUR SAFETY IS PROTECTED. WE CAN NEVER HAVE  
A JUST SOCIETY WHEN MEN CHARGED WITH SAFEGUARDING THE PUBLIC  
WELFARE -- POLICEMEN AND FIREMEN, LIVE IN CONSTANT DANGER OF  
PHYSICAL ATTACK. DURING THE FIRST MONTH OF 1972, FOR EXAMPLE,  
44 FIREMEN WERE SLAIN IN THE LINE OF DUTY.

*also legal to provide for  
Widows & families of  
Police & Firemen killed in  
line of Duty.*

SPECIFIC EFFORTS TO HELP FIREFIGHTERS IN RURAL AREAS

↳ IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE-MENTIONED MEASURES TO HELP FIREFIGHTERS, I HAVE BEEN IN THE FOREFRONT OF EFFORTS TO ENACT LEGISLATION TO SPECIFICALLY HELP FIREFIGHTERS IN RURAL AREAS.

FATALITIES IN RURAL FIRES ARE 11 TIMES GREATER THAN IN URBAN FIRES. THE VALUE OF FARM PROPERTY DESTROYED IS 6 TIMES GREATER THAN LOSSES OF URBAN PROPERTY.

LAST YEAR, ON DECEMBER 12TH AND 13TH, I PARTICIPATED IN A CONFERENCE IN MOORHEAD, MINNESOTA TO DISCUSS RURAL FIRE PREVENTION. THE INTEREST IN THIS SUBJECT WAS GREAT.

MINNESOTA HAS DONE A GREAT DEAL TO ASSESS ITS RURAL FIRE

PROTECTION NEEDS AND DEVELOP GUIDELINES FOR BETTERING ITS

SYSTEMS. THE STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON FIRE SERVICE

EDUCATION AND RESEARCH HAS BEEN MOST HELPFUL.

UNDER TITLE IV OF THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1972,

A RURAL COMMUNITY FIRE PROTECTION PROGRAM WAS ESTABLISHED.

THE MONEY APPROPRIATED WAS \$7 MILLION FOR EACH FISCAL YEAR

1973, 1974 AND 1975. HOWEVER, PRESIDENT NIXON CUT OUT FUNDS

FOR THIS PROGRAM IN HIS BUDGET REQUESTS THIS YEAR.

THIS IS A TRAGEDY; MANY PEOPLE IN RURAL AREAS WHO

WERE EXPECTING SOME FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN DEVELOPING

THEIR FIRE FIGHTING PROGRAMS WILL NOT BE GETTING IT.

↓ our farm bill includes  
language to appropriate <sup>69</sup> million  
also money for Training + Equipment  
to communities under 2000.

THE ACT CALLED FOR ASSISTANCE IN ORGANIZING, TRAINING  
AND EQUIPPING LOCAL FIRE PROTECTION FORCES. THE ASSISTANCE  
WAS BOTH TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL, WITH THE FEDERAL  
GOVERNMENT ASSUMING UP TO 50% OF THE COSTS. FULL AND  
CONTINUED FUNDING OF THE FIRE PROTECTION PROVISIONS OF THE  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT ACT, IS, IN MY JUDGMENT, AND IN THE  
JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND  
CONTROL, ESSENTIAL!

CONCLUSION

I AM PROUD OF ALL OF YOU. I WANT TO PRAISE YOU FOR  
YOUR WORK. EVEN WITH ALL THE ADVANCES OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY,  
THE RISKS TO FIREMEN HAVE NOT BEEN MARKEDLY DIMINISHED.

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THERE STILL COMES A MOMENT WHEN YOU, THE FIREFIGHTER, MUST  
TURN AWAY THE LASHING TONGUES OF FIRE. THE STRUGGLE IS  
THERE AND IT'S A HEROIC ONE. I WANT TO COMMEND YOU.

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