

Gary Perkins
Ally T.V. - KCMIT-TV
763-5166

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.

CORVETTE

President Shortridge

James Thomas, Genl. Chr
District Lakes Fire Dept

Sect. Don Peterson

Blowing Rock
Trees

V.P. Bob Caron

Tom Kennedy
Fairmont

Chairman
Lusk Koen
(Cloquet)

FACTS ABOUT THE SCOPE OF THE NATION'S FIRE PROBLEM

FIRE IS A MAJOR NATIONAL PROBLEM, WHILE I AM TALKING

98th Annual Minn. 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.

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

OF PROPERTY WILL HAVE BEEN RUINED. L AT LEAST ONE PERSON WILL

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

DISFIGURED FOR LIFE.

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

UNITED STATES. L AMONG CAUSES OF ACCIDENTAL DEATH, ONLY MOTOR

VEHICLES AND FALLS RANK HIGHER.

18,000 ~~Station~~ Fire fighters / Volunteers
1500 Salaries - PD

1st May
1946

✓ 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.

✓ 1 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.

all 7 this
L AMONG THE PEOPLE THAT SUFFER MOST FROM ~~THIS POOR RECORD~~

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.

- La Vern Fries, 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
For Service Educ + Research
Four Committees -
Considerable Progress -
Councils Plan of action

Excellent
Council

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

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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 7 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~~
~~I want to~~
~~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 PLACES~~ ~~It~~ 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.

2 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 ^{STATE} ~~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 FIRE FIGHTERS, AND THE ACADEMY'S OWN SPECIALIZED

COURSES WOULD PROVIDE HIGH-LEVEL MANAGEMENT EDUCATION FOR

FIRE OFFICERS.

- *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~~ 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

L 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.

L 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

4 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 \$7 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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