

NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION'S POLICY.

The following statement of policy was adopted by the National Fire Protection Association, at its annual convention held at Chicago last week:—

1. The adoption by municipalities of the Standard Building Code of the National Board of Fire Underwriters to the end that fire resisting building construction may be encouraged, the use of inflammable roof coverings prohibited, adequate exit facilities from buildings assured, and interiors so designed and fire-stopped as to make easy the extinguishment of fires therein.

2. The adoption by all States of minimum building requirements for the protection of State and County hospitals, asylums and similar institutions outside city limits and of small communities in which the establishment and enforcement of a building code is impracticable.

3. The enactment by each State of the fire marshal law advocated by the Fire Marshal's Association of North America to the end that official investigation may be made of the causes of all fires, preventable fires may be eliminated by public education, and the crime of arson stamped out.

4. The adoption of the Association's suggested ordinance providing for the systematic inspection of all buildings by city fire marshal or local firemen to insure the vigorous enforcement of rules for cleanliness, good housekeeping, and maintenance of safe and unobstructed exits, fire fighting apparatus and other protective devices.

PERSONAL LIABILITY.

5. The enactment of ordinances similar to that of Cleveland, Ohio, fixing the cost of extinguishing preventable fires upon citizens disregarding fire prevention orders, and a more general legal recognition of the common law principle of personal liability for damage resulting from fires due to carelessness or neglect.

6. The wider general use of the automatic sprinkler as a fire extinguishing agent and life saver and the more general adoption of the fire division wall as an important life-saving exit facility.

7. A careful study of the technical surveys of cities made by the engineers of the committee on fire prevention of the National Board of Fire Underwriters covering the items of water supplies, their

adequacy and reliability, fire department efficiency, fire alarm systems and conflagration hazards; and of the possibility of co-operation among neighboring cities through mutual aid and the standardization of hose couplings.

8. The adoption of the Association's suggested laws and ordinances for State and municipal regulation of the transportation, storage and use of inflammable liquids and explosives.

9. The universal adoption and use of the safety match and legislation prohibiting smoking in all parts of factories, industrial and mercantile buildings except in such fireproof rooms as may be especially approved for the purpose by fire departments.

10. The education of children and the public generally in careful habits regarding the use of fire.

THE PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS FIRE.

Mr. R. A. Pringle, K.C., and Judge D. B. McTavish, who were appointed a commission to inquire into the Parliament Buildings fire at Ottawa, have presented their report.

"Your commissioners," they state, "are of the opinion that there are many circumstances connected with this fire that lead to a strong suspicion of incendiarism, especially in view of the fact that the evidence is clear that no one was smoking in the reading room for some time previous to the outbreak of the fire, and also to the fact that the fire could not have occurred from defective electric wires. But while your commissioners are of such opinion there is nothing in the evidence to justify your commissioners in arriving at the conclusion that the fire was maliciously set."

The commissioners find that the ventilating system in the reading room and in the hall, together with the amount of inflammable material in the corridors, such as the wooden racks for members' clothes, etc., was responsible for the speed with which the blaze made its way and state that no evidence of explosions was found.

The commissioners suggest that it may be possible to obtain evidence later, not now obtainable, which might establish beyond all question whether the fire was incendiary or accidental, and they therefore suggest that the commission be left open.

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