

FIRE PROTECTION HISTORY-PART 66: 1909 (NFPA ANNUAL MEETING RESOLUTIONS)

By Richard Schulte

The 13th annual meeting of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) held in New York in late May, 1909 opened with the President's address, followed by the presentation of the Executive Committee Report. These two presentations were followed by a presentation of proposed "resolutions" of the Association. The following is the text of the resolutions proposed for adoption by the Association:

"RESOLUTIONS FOR ANNUAL MEETING, 1909

The National Fire Protection Association welcomes to its Thirteenth Annual Meeting all those members, honorary, active, associate, and subscribing, and all delegates from other associations, who have cast aside the demands and cares of their private business and have come here to assist in fulfilling a duty which they owe their country.

In 1896, when our association was formed, little did the few charter members realize that the modest organization, limited at the beginning as to its membership and its scope, was to extend into almost all corners of the world and number among its members representatives of both hemispheres. But as time goes on, we are impressed each year more strongly with the fact that prevention of fire and protection against fire comprise a work which must be done. Otherwise, with our ever increasing congestion of life and values, calamities must come before which all ordinary disasters will pale into insignificance.

*This association, therefore, in convention assembled, again places itself on record unani-
mously with the principles for which it stands, as follows:*

- 1. We believe that the restriction of the destruction of property by fire furnishes a practical means for the conservation of our natural resources.*
- 2. We urge the adoption of proper building laws by states and municipalities.*
- 3. We call attention to the fearful consequences that may follow a fire unless all buildings in which people congregate, such as colleges and schools, hospitals and asylums, churches, hotels, department stores, and theatres, are built of superior construction and equipped with apparatus for the automatic extinguishment of fire.*

4. *We ask the public generally to be willing to lend its aid in reducing the fire waste, believing that at least \$100,000,000, and perhaps more, of the annual fire waste is due to easily preventable causes, mainly to lack of appreciation of what may be the results of carelessness.*
5. *We ask the acceptance and adoption of all standards which the National Fire Protection Association has promulgated, believing as we do that they comprise the best known practices and that their general introduction will guarantee better conditions.*
6. *We bespeak of our members, from the greatest to the least, that whole-souled and hearty cooperation which will evidence an earnestness of purpose to reach the goal of our desires.*

In this manner, therefore, the National Fire Protection Association goes before the public, feeling, as it does, that the adoption of these principles guarantees results which will be for the good of the nation and for the good of humanity. (Applause.)

The Chair: Gentlemen you have heard the report of the Committee on Resolutions; what is your pleasure?

*Mr. Merrill: Mr. President, I move you the adoption of the resolutions, and I would like to add a word. I believe that thanks of this association are due Mr. Phillips and his committee for the careful preparation of this document, and I will ask that it be given the usual publicity. There was no one feature of the last meeting which met with such general approval from the public and those interested as the publication of what might be termed our **annual platform**.*

Motion seconded and unanimously adopted."

Once again, the objectives of the Association were laid out at the annual meeting. Of most interest is the fifth resolution. This resolution suggests that the building construction and fire prevention practice standards developed by the Association should be adopted to limit fire losses. This resolution implies the standards developed by the NFPA should adopted by state and local governments and legally enforced.

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