

A PROCLAMATION

The time has come for the annual resurvey of the nation's enormous wastage, alike in human life and in property, and for the annual appeal for the lessening of this huge loss. I am informed that during 1924 fires caused the loss of approximately 15,000 lives, and of property exceeding \$548,000,000 in value. The figures are startling; they are yet more so when it is added that this is declared by competent authorities the greatest fire loss in any year of our history.

This waste results from conditions which justify a sense of shame and horror; for the greater part of it could and ought to be prevented. Not only was the 1924 fire loss greater than that of any preceding year, but the loss for the first half of 1925 exceeded that for the like period of 1924. As a result of careful inquiries, I am informed that whereas the absolute as well as the per capita fire loss of this country tends to increase from year to year, the same losses in comparable European countries tend to decrease. For the most recent comparable periods fire losses in Great Britain are calculated at less than \$1.00 per capita per annum, while those of the United States are placed at approximately \$5.00 per capita. Comparisons with other European countries are similarly to our discredit.

It is highly desirable that every effort be made to reform the conditions which have made possible so vast a destruction of the national wealth. To this end, for a long time past it has been customary to set aside a week in each year, during which the need of fire prevention may be emphasized. It is important that this practice be continued.

THEREFORE, I, Calvin Coolidge, President of the United States recommend that the week beginning Sunday, October 4th, be observed as National Fire Prevention Week. To State and municipal officials, civic organizations, school authorities and all citizens and organized bodies, I appeal for the fullest cooperation in improving conditions. There is need for earnest study of the principles of fire protection, as a practical measure of national economy.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

DONE in the city of Washington on this 11th day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred twenty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the one hundred and fiftieth.

CALVIN COOLIDGE