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MEMORANDUM

TO: Karen Fernicola
FROM: Peter G. Sparber
RE: Trip Report: November 11-13, 1990

From November 11-13 we attended the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) fall meeting in Miami, FL. Our goal for the trip was to obtain information about possible federal and state legislation affecting the industry. Of all of the national fire service groups, NFPA is clearly the most hostile and bears close watching.

NFPA meetings vary considerably. Some are poorly attended. This one was exceptionally well attended and provided many opportunities for information gathering.

Overall, we found no evidence of official action on our issues although the NFPA -- which serves as the standard-making body for fire protection -- spent some time debating upholstered furniture and bedding flammability standards (a subject closely related to our concerns.) At issue was the choice of flammability tests: a less rigorous test devised by Underwriters Laboratories versus one developed in California by Gordon Damont. Damont's version appeared to be favored although a decision was not made at this meeting.

We met with literally scores of fire officials. Highlights and selected notes follow:

NFPA staff and officers: Tony O'Neill, Jack Gerard, Rick Mullhaupt, Bill Neville, Robbie Robertson and Chief Alan Brunacini were cordial but evasive. All but Mullhaupt (who runs the NFPA foundation) spend much time privately criticizing the tobacco industry. Gerard is, as you well know, on the TAG if not the rag.

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State Fire Marshals: SFMs from NY, CA, MN, WY, FL, VA, MI and WV were in attendance and exceptionally friendly. The new Michigan SFM -- Wade Schaefer -- invited us out for a visit. Michigan is a priority state.

Federal fire officials: Jack Snell of CFR and Olin Greene of USFA both spent time with us. Snell expressed his appreciation for our help on several political measures. Greene is concerned about recent deterioration in relations between the SFMs and the National Fire Information Council which helps USFA generate national fire statistics. We need to get this situation back on an even keel or national fire statistics -- which show an improving picture -- may be affected.

International Association of Fire Fighters, AFL-CIO. Vinnie Bollon, secretary-treasurer; Dave McCormack, special assistant to the president and Rich Duffy, OSHA specialist, were everywhere. McCormack was helpful. The IAFF plans to play a major role in NFPA. IAFF locals are driving state bills in at least two places.

Others: Bill Jenaway of CIGNA insurance and formerly a loaned executive to the Congressional Fire Caucus. Jenaway would be an excellent candidate for second vice president of the IAFC. He seems interested in running. If he succeeds, Jenaway will be president about the time the federal study is complete.

A large contingent from NY state included Andy Messina, president of the NY Chiefs; Dick Siebert of the NY Districts and as many as a dozen of their members. All remain very positive.

Lou Amibili and Steve Austin of Delaware. Austin asked us to visit to discuss federal arson legislation, possibly introduced by Delaware Senator Biden who chairs the Judiciary Committee.

Herman Brice and Reg Penney of West Palm Beach. Both are active nationally and were friendly. FL still is a bit hostile as a result of McGibeny. Tom Quillen's recent move from Illinois to Tallahassee means we need to watch FL.

Dick Custer, now an adjunct professor at Worcester Polytech, and his wife Pam Powell. Both have been helpful in the past. Custer may be helpful again in communicating our technical message.

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Finally, a fair number of prominent public educators were at the meeting. Included were Californians Jan Gratton, Pat Mieszala and Tom Nyhan; Oregon's Roy Knight; Carol Gross of Phoenix; Mary Nachbar of Minnesota; Floridians Vicky Wade, Christy LeMay and Gerri Penney; Jerry DeMillo of Maine as well as several NFPA public education staff members.

Also, while in Miami, David Remes asked that we help identify PA fire fighters willing to oppose introduction of a fire safe cigarette amendment in that state. We complied with his request.