

ments, with a high concentration of values, may seriously influence the fire-loss total because of the severity of the loss involved. But disregarding the factors in play, we know that we cannot relax our efforts in the area of fire-prevention activities.

During the past few years, the prevention of fires has received a great deal of attention in our overall effort to protect the people against the menace of fires. The State Firemen's Association has made a very remarkable record in this area.

To strengthen our program of prevention in the State, I, once again this year, am calling another conference on fire prevention, of which I have the honor to be sponsor. The conference will be held November 6 and 7 in the State House in Annapolis. Here, men and women highly qualified by experience, training and aptitude will gather for a free exchange of ideas and experiences on how we can best achieve our purpose—the prevention of fires.

To give you just one more example of our effort in fire prevention, on Monday, October 9, there will be a statewide fire-exit drill in every public elementary school in Maryland. This, to me, is a real credit to the State.

With regard to the Fire Service Extension, let me say that I am indeed happy to note that preliminary plans have been approved and placed in the hands of the architect for the construction of a new fire-fighting building, a new drill tower and a new multi-purpose room for use in the training program here. These new facilities, when completed, will serve to improve and strengthen the splendid training program that is being conducted here.

And may I, before I finish, express my personal appreciation to the director and staff members of the Extension for the fine manner in which they have cooperated with the federal government and our own State agency in our program of civil defense. As you know, President Kennedy has moved ahead boldly to alert the nation as to the dangers of nuclear warfare and to devise methods by which the citizens may be able to protect themselves against the ravages of nuclear destruction. In my mind, it is most important that we heed his warning and broaden and accelerate our own State program of civil defense. In this connection, I have invited local authorities and civil defense officials at both the State and the local levels to meet with me in Annapolis on September 28 to discuss the charting of a new course of action in the civil defense field.

I know of no group with a more vital interest in the subject of civil