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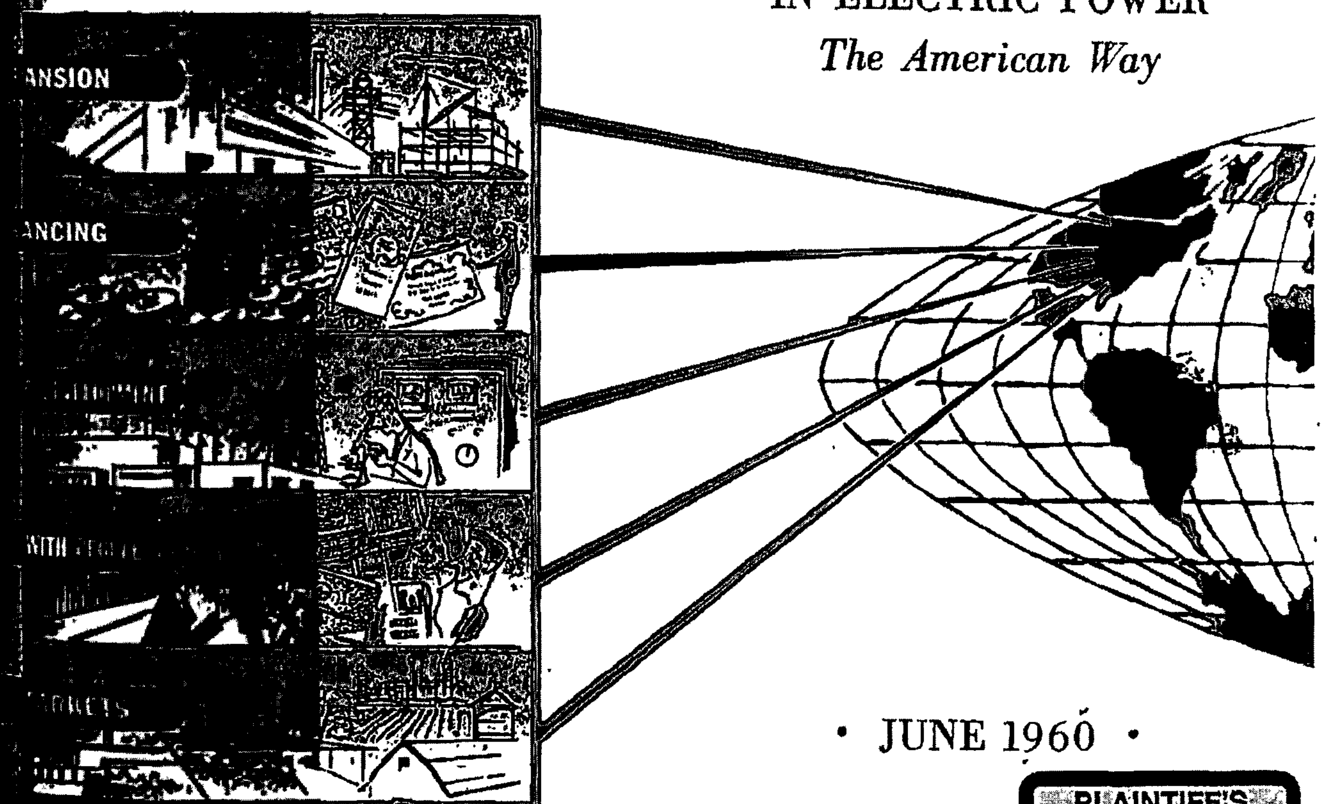

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in the achievement of management ob-

one of the first acts of management following acceptance of the responsibility for safety, was -an effective safety division. I would be I did not pay tribute to the outstanding by my associates in this division. No com- our size can achieve its safety objectives the persistent and intelligent aid of safety

o not want to overlook the significant con- made by the Accident Prevention Committee titute in conducting safety conferences; in ng information on methods and results; in g training programs and materials; in recog- eritorious achievement; and in numerous ys. The concern for safety expressed through k of this committee has been a major factor ing accident frequency in the electric indus- 14.02 in 1949 to 6.06 disabling injuries per an-hours in 1959.

Management Must Decide

I am trying to say at this point is that in- accidents will never be eliminated, nor further in frequency to any substantial degree, and until management first decides that they eliminated, and then makes its decision known ust to the safety supervisor or safety engineer, the entire line organization, including all of pany's employees.

esponsibility for safety cannot be delegated ff department. It is part of the job of every every department head, every foreman or head, every individual worker, to prevent or ccidents. Unless that fact is clearly impressed nd kept fresh in the mind of everyone, we shall vercome the devastating waste of human and ic resources which is the end product of acci- And it is useless to talk about improved tech- better tools, or any of the other paraphernalia odern safety program.

would have to search pretty hard to find an igent management which did not admit to its sibility for safety. In this enlightened era, *for* safety is like being *against* sin. Both stances mong the required marks of respectability.

, when I look at a chart which tells me that he year 1959 there were still 6.47 disabling in- for every million man-hours worked in Amer- industry, and when I see that the accident uency rate in my own industry was not much r than the average for all industry, being 6.06 electric utilities, I cannot help but wonder if there 't too many managements who are giving only ervice to this particular responsibility.

here is a familiar story about a preacher who ularly lectures the faithful on the evils of non- endance, never reaching the ones who are guilty skipping church. Lest it be concluded that I am aking a similar mistake, let me point out that, while here are many companies in the electric industry with truly outstanding records, there are even more with very poor records, indeed.

Among the 180 companies reporting their 1959 accident experience to EEI, 52 reported a frequency above the industry average. Thirty-three of these were more than 50 percent above the industry average, 17 were more than double the industry average, and five had the dubious distinction of reporting accident frequencies from five to nine times the industry average. These remarks, however, are not addressed solely to companies with accident frequencies above the industry average. Among the companies with better than average performance, there is need for plenty of improvement before the electric industry can take its place among the exemplars of industrial safety, as an industry so deeply imbued with a public conscience certainly should do.

Perhaps too many managements in our industry are trying to delegate to staff departments a responsibility which properly belongs with themselves and with the line organization.

Or perhaps the fault lies in the measure by which management establishes its safety objective. With the record of the past confronting us, it is not unnatural for management to assume that a certain number of accidents is inevitable. Let me confess, in preparing these remarks, I caught myself thinking of a phrase —"tolerable level of accident frequency."

There is no such thing as a tolerable level of accident frequency, unless it be zero. In preparing an earnings estimate or a balance sheet, the accountants may insist upon a contingency provision for the cost of injuries and damages, but management makes a mistake when it budgets a given number of accidents.

Those of you who are baseball fans know that Hank Aaron of the Milwaukee Braves led both major leagues with a batting average of .355 last year. Based upon that record, each time he goes to bat this year the odds are nearly two to one against his hitting safely. But does he budget a given number of strike-outs or pop-ups? I don't know the answer; but I dare say that the best hitter in baseball intends to hit safely every time he steps up to the plate.

Again referring to the 180 companies reporting to EEI last year, I find 17 which reported no disabling injuries and five others which reported less than one accident per million man-hours worked. Do the managements of these companies budget a given number of accidents each year? I *do* know the answer to that. And I suspect we all know it.

One Right Objective

The plain fact is that in discharging its responsibility for safety there is only one right objective for management to set, and that is the complete elimination of accidents.

True, this objective may never be attained—just as no baseball player will ever hit safely every time he goes to bat—but any lesser objective, set as a mark of achievement, will tend to breed accidents rather than prevent them.

That is not merely a rhetorical statement. It is made after much thought, even soul-searching, on my part. It is made in the face of a rather sobering experience I suffered last year. In the first 10 months of 1959, our company had incurred only three disabling injuries. About the first of November, I agreed to appear on this program. There followed immediately a series of accidents, totaling five in the next two months. I assure you, there was no letdown in our efforts to promote safety. One could almost say that those accidents just happened. If I were inclined toward superstition, I might conclude that it is a grave mistake to talk, or agree to talk, about safety. Certainly, I have had to ask myself, again and again, does it really make sense to strive for the complete elimination of accidents? But the answer is always "yes." It is the only objective which does make sense. Once we accept the proposition that accidents — some accidents — are inevitable, the war against them is already lost.

Safety Will Pay Dividends

I have been told by some of my friends in industry that to set as a goal the complete elimination of accidents would be to impose intolerable cost burdens on their operations. I don't believe it. True, if safety becomes an obsession, to the point where no worker is permitted to do his job without the constant surveillance of another person whose sole duty it is to watch the worker to make sure he doesn't put his hand or foot in the wrong place, and if another person is assigned to keep his eye on the watcher to be sure he stays awake, the cost burden would become intolerable. And, human nature being what it is, I suspect that the number of accidents would increase. But, if safety is taught and practiced as a matter of common sense, as a way of life, even though it may require watchers on certain hazardous jobs, it will not add to the over-all burden of costs but will pay dividends instead.

It may be that too many managements use a false standard in measuring the costs of a safety program. It is a mistake to think that the economic value of an effective safety program can be measured by weighing the cost of tools and equipment, and the man-hours spent on training and supervision, against a possible reduction in the amount of insurance premiums or accident awards. I need hardly explain that there are other values, harder to measure but far more important, than the cost of insurance. Some of them, such as the avoidance of lost time by entire crews or even whole departments when accidents occur, are economic values. And some of them, such as the pain and hardship which accidents bring to individual workers and their families, are human values. The day has passed when management can afford to ignore any of these values, for the economic and the human are inseparable.

"Safe Place Is a Good Place to Work"

"A safe place to work is a good place to work" is another way of saying that safety, encouraged by management and achieved through the common sense application of sound techniques, is a vital factor in developing the kind of human relations within a pany which are prerequisite to cooperativeness a high level of productivity.

Lest these remarks may be passed off as a couched in terms too abstract to be helpful, a set of specific suggestions as to how a manag which recognizes its responsibility for safety fectively discharge it. I endorse these suggestion cannot claim their authorship. They were deve by the members of EEI's Accident Prevention mittee at a meeting two years ago, at which th ject for discussion was "What I Would Like Top Management Do About Safety." Here is they would like top management to do:

- Attend and participate in employee safety ties, such as meetings, inspections, award prese tion ceremonies, investigations, evaluations analyses.
- Establish and maintain an active safety po
- Include safety performance in evaluating vidual performance.
- Support reasonable disciplinary action for ure to follow established safe practices.
- Hold every level of supervision accountable safety.
- Provide for effective training.
- Provide an adequate, competent safety sta
- Place the same emphasis on accident preven as on production.
- Demonstrate that safety is an integral pa operations.
- Direct engineering and operating personne consult safety representatives on safety of desig
- Appoint a joint safety and operating comm to establish uniform accident prevention rules am companies.

If top management throughout the electric indu will sincerely accept its responsibility for safety diligently follow the suggestions of our A Prevention Committee, I daresay the day will long in coming when we can point with pride truly commendable performance, one worthy of great industry of ours.

product of a society which is dependent upon individual initiative and judgment. The manufacturer cannot determine either himself or from governmental direction what he should produce. He must anticipate —and anticipate at his peril—what the individual consumer in our society will want.

Self-reliance, initiative, and innovation thus become an integral part of our economic society. All of this contributes to a progressive stream of growth and expansion and of an improving standard of living. It meets that test of good government as stated by Goethe, who, after asking "what government is the best?" answered "that which teaches us to govern ourselves." They all continue to produce a climate that can never exist under statism, when the government chooses what the manufacturer can produce and limits what the consumer can buy. There the choice is the government's and not the individual's. This assumption of supreme responsibility by government over the individual and his wants atrophies individual initiative. It creates blind and supine submissiveness that is hostile to progress. It leads to that resul templated by Thomas Jefferson when he wrote: we directed from Washington when to sow and to reap, we should soon want bread." I may add sometimes it appears we are approaching danger near this condition.

Some modern economists criticize all this fre and right of individual choice because they con that "Madison Avenue," a term used derisivel describe our advertising art, misleads and divert consumer demands. Perhaps there is some mer this. But it overlooks that this is a small price t for the liberty that is ours. If we are to have dom, it must include the right occasionally to fool. And especially is this true when our foolish doesn't hurt anyone else.

Walter Bagehot, the famous English editor political thinker, put this point bluntly:

"I fear you will laugh when I tell you what I c ceive to be about the most essential quality for a

(*Continued on page 243*)

Safety— a Management Responsibility

By J. T. Wolfe
President, Baltimore Gas and Electric Co.

SAFETY is a subject close to my heart, but not closer, I am glad to observe, than it is to the hearts of those who direct the affairs of the Edison Electric Institute. The very fact that it has been included as a topic on the Convention schedule is an indication of the high degree of importance attached to it by the leaders of our industry. Usually the subject of safety is relegated to the committee room or, at best, to the sectional conference. I am impressed by the fact that this is the second time in four years it has been discussed at EEI's Annual Convention.

Thirty years ago—in 1930—312 employees of the Baltimore Gas and Electric Co. suffered disabling injuries resulting from accidents on the job. We defined a disabling injury then as we do now: any accident which results in death, or permanent disability, of whatever magnitude, or which involves the loss of eight or more consecutive hours from work. In 1959, with many more employees on the payroll, had th accident frequency rate been the same as in 193 460 of our employees would have suffered such in juries. Instead, the number of disabling injuries eight.

What caused this rather phenomenal reduction accident frequency over a period of just thre decades?

The short answer is simply this: managemen recognized that it had a responsibility for the safet of our company's employees and decided to discharg that responsibility.

I do not wish to minimize the importance of th work done by our Safety Division in developing safe ty manuals; in organizing cooperative and competitiv safety programs; in suggesting improved methods and better tools; in helping to determine the cause and cure for each accident immediately after its occur rence; in publicizing the importance and the requi sites of safety; and in otherwise assisting, in count

An address before the Twenty-Eighth Annual Convention of the Edison Electric Institute, Atlantic City, N. J., June 8, 1960.