

follow rules, it is impractical to expect that workers will comply.

Generally speaking—any rule that can withstand an honest appraisal of its worth is enforceable and is worthy of respect. The comments made concerning some of the shortcomings of safety rules are intended to point up some of the general areas of fault that contribute to workers having a lack of respect for them. Consequently, if you are finding a general disregard for your plant's rules—may I suggest that you take a hard look at them to see if you find similar symptoms of weakness.

Another important thing is to acquaint employees with the nature of the rules they are required to observe, in short, these guides to action must be sufficiently publicized to make them part of the "working knowledge" of every employee.

While the educational approach will lead to the observance by a large segment of the work force, unfortunately, there is always a small minority that will insist upon violating rules. Thus, where education fails, supervision must be prepared to take proper disciplinary action.

I believe that the following statement—made by Emile F. du Pont of the Du Pont Company—sums up the whole story concerning enforcement of safety rules.

"We believe strongly in the philosophy of preventive safety rather than after-the-fact correction. We place great stress upon safety violations rather than upon injuries as such. We are tough toward wilful violators, as we are more interested in eliminating the chance for injury by working safely without violations of good practice than in setting records. Where we are reasonable but firm on violations, a safety consciousness is gradually developed among the entire work force."

This brings us to the all important problem of enforcement and discipline. If rules are to be enforced they must—as has been said before—be clear and known by the employees. They must be fair and undiscriminatory—and they must be uniformly applied—otherwise you may find them contested by union representatives.

The need for acceptance of safety rules by union representatives is mentioned because under the terms of some labor-management contracts a company may find that improper rules can become a basis for the

filing of a grievance—or even arbitration. Two examples will illustrate this point.

A union local in Trenton, New Jersey, filed a grievance against management's newly inaugurated rule which required 100 per cent compliance with an eye protection program. The following statement is taken directly from a report that the union local made to its membership concerning the outcome of action taken on the grievance:

"The 100% eye protection program—the union argued that many areas in the plant did not require safety glasses. Management has agreed and have modified their program accordingly. The areas and jobs not required to wear glasses are—purchased parts cribs, receiving docks, salvage building, main stock cribs, overhead crane operators, steel bay area, yard area, parts checker, tool room aisles, waste material disposal operations, car washing activity and drivers not working in production areas."

"Management's unilateral promulgation of a safety rule presents an arbitrable grievance."

On a question brought against a company by the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers' Union an arbitrator said, "The company had issued a regulation, which the union challenged, requiring all employees to wear hard hats and toe guards. The company argued that it had the unquestioned unilateral right to establish reasonable safety regulations—such as those being challenged. The union contended that safety regulations involving special protective devices, which employees were required to wear, constituted conditions of employment for which the union had been recognized as the sole and exclusive bargaining agent. The union held that these were matters for joint consultation between the parties in the first instance and subject to review in the grievance procedure in the event that a job was described and classified in a manner with which the union did not agree. The arbitrator held that although the employer ordinarily has the right to determine for itself rules for protection of employees, there are circumstances in which the union may challenge the imposition of certain types of rules as well as the reasonableness of particular rules and that the union's protest in these cases presented an arbitrable grievance under a contract which defined a grievance as any disagreement between the company and union involving interpretation or alleged violation of contract."

While I do not wish to invade the subject of discipline, there are a few precepts concerning discipline that also may have a bearing on the respect tendered to safety rules. Briefly they are:

First: Disciplinary action under some labor-management contracts may be subject to arbitration. When such is the case—remember that an arbitrator may determine whether there was just cause for the discipline, and also whether it was overly severe.

Second: The burden is usually yours to prove that your rulings are proper—and that the penalty given wasn't too severe.

Third: Discipline and discharge are serious matters. Consequently, be sure to have the answers to such questions as: "Did the employee know he was violating a rule?"—"Was his violation intentional?" and "Were previous violations condoned?"

Fourth: Discipline must be the same for bargaining and non-bargaining employees.

From the foregoing discussion, three basic principles emerge as being the basis for creating and maintaining respect for safety rules. They are:

1. The rules themselves must not be at fault.
2. Employees must be educated concerning the needs for the rules—and the benefits to

be derived from compliance with them.

3. When all else fails, enforcement and discipline must be resorted to, but on an equitable basis.

In summarizing this discussion, I would like to stress that:

First—Safety rules are essential to the attainment of both production and safety objectives.

Second—Ways must be found to make employees want to abide by safety rules.

Third—The rules must not be unreasonable or improper—for if they are they won't be respected or accepted by the workers—and without acceptance they are doomed to failure.

THE CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF DISCIPLINE IN SAFETY VIOLATIONS

By STANDISH C. RIDDLE
Senior Safety Eng., Cleveland Foundry & Engine Plants
Ford Motor Co., Cleveland, Ohio

On of the too many things aggravating the world situation today is the different interpretations applied to identical words by various persons or cultures. I want to consider the term, "constructive discipline," with a common and single interpretation of its meaning and implication.

First, let's look to Webster, who says,

"Construct (verb) 1. To put together the parts of something. To build. 2. To set in order mentally, to arrange.

"Discipline—1. Training (to train). 2. Punishment—(to punish). 3. Orderly Conduct. Synonyms are—educate, teach, chastise and correct."

Second, let's toss out these words and concepts: *punishment, to punish and chastise*. They have no place in our philosophy. We are not running penal institutions! We are operating business organizations where we are attempting to *instruct* our employees to perform their assigned duties to the best of their ability and with the least possible hazard to themselves and their co-workers.

Third, now, let's look at what we have left from Webster's definitions:

1. To put together the parts of something. To build.
2. To set in order mentally.
3. To arrange.
4. To train.
5. Orderly conduct.
6. Educate, teach and correct.

Fourth, from these concepts, let's construct our definition of "Constructive discipline"—to arrange by educating and correcting to motivate our employees to conduct themselves in an orderly fashion, both mentally and physically.

What this means is that we must strive to reach the minds of our employees and move them to conform to the standards of conduct as represented in the Ford Motor Co. safe practices rule books. This is not always an easy matter, for a man is not a simple organism, like some of the lower animals. A man can be very complex.

He is what he has lived. He is what his ancestors have been.

Keeping this in mind, we must consider that, just as no two individuals have identi-