

THE INDUSTRIAL SAFETY MOVEMENT

Three of the Many Perth Amboy Employees Who Owe Their Sight to Safety Goggles

It Is Better to Be Safe than Blind



Fig 1-8 These three employees of American Smelting and Refining Company were proud of their new safety glasses, although they are rather primitive by today's standards.

factors must always be kept in mind

First of all, it must be remembered that the objectives in designing a safety movement on a national scale are quite different from the objectives in designing a safety program on a company or plant scale.

The first objective of a company or plant safety program is immediate and urgent—to prevent the accident which might happen in the next minute or the next hour or the next day, week, or month.

Safety men, unlike designers of a new piece of machinery, cannot look philosophically upon errors and breakdowns in the experimental stage. Since they deal with human lives, human health, and immediate efficiency and productivity, safety men must deal with today's problems today.

On the other hand, they cannot be content to run from emergency to emergency. They must consider the long-term effects of their work—the increase of knowledge, the

improvement of techniques, the development of organizational forms which will serve them well next year and for many years to come.

Since the factors are complex, no simple rating scale can indicate an answer to the question, "What has the safety movement accomplished?" In the absence of such a rating scale, an attempt to answer the question must be made by assembling several kinds of data.

Statistical evaluation

First, the question must be asked, "Has the safety movement, in fact, done anything to prevent accidents in the past?" To that question can be answered a clear "Yes!"

If the annual accidental death rate per thousand of population which held from 1900 to 1912 had continued through 1963, there would have been over 1,000,000 more accidental deaths than actually occurred. Medical progress accounts for some of this