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The Council is not responsible for the views expressed in the Papers submitted at the Congress nor in the discussions thereon. These manifestly are the product of individual opinion.

NOTE

Volume III of these Transactions, containing the Street and Highway Traffic sessions, Traffic School, Child Education Section, Home Safety, and Statistics Section, is being mailed automatically to members who are believed to be interested. Any other member of the Council may receive a copy of Volume III by requesting it.

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Tuesday Morning Session

October 13, 1931

E. S. BEAUMONT, Chairman

The Peoples Gas Light and Coke Company, Chicago, Ill.

The first session of the Public Utilities Section convened with General Chairman E. S. Beaumont presiding.

CHAIRMAN BEAUMONT: The first talk on our program is one that is decidedly interesting to safety men. We have discussed it before but there is much for all of us to learn in selling the safety program. Whether we sell it to the management, to the men, or to the public, those are but different phases of the safety program, all of them being important. The gentleman who is to discuss this subject is highly qualified to do so. It gives me great pleasure to introduce Mr. Joseph W. Hicks, of the Byllesby Engineering and Management Corporation, Chicago.

Selling The Safety Program

By JOS. W. HICKS

Publicity Director, Byllesby Engineering and Management Corporation

A well known industrial executive said recently that there are four main ways and means of reducing accidents in this country: first, the enactment of laws; second, the enforcement of those laws; third, improved engineering practices; and fourth, education, which he said is the most important because it has to do with the human element.

Certain efforts have been made by power companies in recent years to educate the public concerning hazards which result from ignorance and carelessness. Public utilities have done considerable newspaper advertising with the appeal that care should be manifested by those who may carelessly or recklessly come in contact with power hazards. Among the most common types of advertised warnings with which you are familiar, probably, are those directed against kite flying with wire used as string or tail. In discussing this type of advertising with a utility executive of long experience the other day, I was surprised when he remarked, "Why is money wasted in printing advertisements about kite flying? Nobody ever sold any power to a kite and this kind of advertising has never brought us any business."

It occurred to me then that if this man was sincere in his statement there must be other executives whose attitude regarding safety education is similarly warped; and while we are working out ways to make our present and future citizenry safety conscious, we might profitably spend considerable time and money in an effort to educate some of our own associates as to their duties and responsibilities, from a safety standpoint, to their employees and their public. In other words, perhaps our chief safety educational program should start under our own roof.

The public utilities safety program could be sold more quickly and more effectively, in my opinion, if we utilized more completely and more intelligently some of the facilities which we now have at our disposal. Having entered the utility business by the employee magazine route, after a number of years as a newspaper man, I believe an employee publication can be equally as valuable a factor in safety education as it is supposed to be in promoting *esprit de corps* and building employee interest in the growth or development of an organization.

The National Safety Council and other safety agencies have done such a thorough job of broadcasting safety information, however, that nine out of ten employee magazine editors have been spoiled. They have become too lazy to originate and develop a safety news department based on the news and experiences which are obtainable from within their own organization; the safety end of their job has been made too easy.

Employee magazines in industrial institutions have grown with tremendous impetus during the past five years. They have been a valuable factor not only in the promotion of loyalty and service but in educating executives and employees in the scope of commercial development and institutional training. They have utilized every available accessory in becoming editorially and mechanically perfect. Some of them rival in appearance and make-up some of our leading fiction magazines. Yet, generally speaking, their safety departments contain less originality and more boiler plate, syndicated or clipped sermons, and more alleged essence of philosophy than will interest the average employee, attract his attention, or make any impression on him as far as his safety consciousness is concerned.

Proper utilization of the employee magazine is one of the foremost means of selling your safety program. But first of all, be sure that you have an editor who is safety conscious and one who is permitted sufficient time to study hazardous conditions that may exist in your system and work out means of bringing these problems to the attention of your employees in a forceful, interesting and effective manner.

He may give broad publicity to safety campaigns. He may print and reprint safety rules of your company. He may outline how accidents happen, and he may, through the help of his safety supervisor, tell how those accidents might have been avoided. He may publish the names and cite the instances of careless acts without regard for the personal feelings of those who are responsible for carelessness; for it undoubtedly is better to offend the sensitiveness of an individual through constructive criticism than to permit a repetition of his carelessness, which may result in further injuries and casualties to himself and his fellow workers.

If any section of a magazine permits frank speaking and constructive criticism, the employee magazine's safety department is the one place where such statements may be broadcast in the loudest tones.

I do not mean to be critical of the material I have styled sermons and boiler plate, emanating from the publicity departments of organizations interested in safety promotion. However, the wide awake employee magazine editor, instead of using these general statements of fact and philosophy in their verbatim form, may obtain from them ideas about which he can develop local items of local interest resulting in local benefit.

Contact between the utility company and the homes of employees offers considerable value in safety education work. Most of our companies maintain such contacts in various ways. A safety section appears in practically all of the companies' employee magazines each month and in some companies special issues are produced devoted almost entirely to safety work. These publications in several of our companies are sent directly to the employees' homes.

The safety teams and safety classes conducted by utilities have been valuable assets in training employees and the public. However, care must be taken to see that the use for which these first aid teams are intended is not overshadowed by the utilization of their services as publicity attractions rather than in the actual furtherance of public first aid instruction.

Newspapers will cooperate with any industrial organization in the dissemination of safety information, so long as the information or cooperation given them is based on news and does not smack of publicity tomfoolery. One of the most reliable news sources that I ever had as a newspaper man was a public utility company which maintained an inhalator squad available for public benefit as well as for use in life saving attempts among its employees. An emergency line crew carried it with other equipment in answer to every fire alarm, and it was used also in covering a radius of 25 miles whenever drownings were reported to the police department.

This company's publicity department reported to the city desk of each newspaper in that town immediately upon receipt of information concerning a fire or accident, thus enabling the city editor to dispatch reporters to the scene many times when the regular