

of union men and women. It is very difficult to measure just how many lives have been saved. A study made a few years ago showed that if the frequency of five years previous had been applied to the employment of 1958, the claim costs would have been about \$5 million more than they were. That savings of \$5 million of claim costs means that fewer persons were injured, fewer wives became widows, and more fathers came home to their children after the day's work.

No monetary value can be placed on the blood that was not spilled, the bones that were not broken, and the suffering that didn't occur. This is the real achievement of a safety program. This is the end for which dedicated people serve. Conservation of manpower and the alleviation of human suffering are being accomplished.

Oregon has witnessed a phenomenal improvement in the conditions that existed when Oregon citizens, aroused by the appeal made to them in the *Voters' Pamphlet* by those union leaders of more than a half-century ago, established the Employers' Liability Law by their campaign for votes for safety.

Although much progress has been made and we are encouraged by that progress, the job is not yet done. The number of widows, while smaller, is still too large. Fewer workmen are disabled, but there are still too many. The standards of the future must be higher than the standards of today. We of today must carry on the work begun many years ago by our predecessors and pass on to our successors an inspiration to accept as their motto, "One injury is too many."

OTHER PRACTICAL APPROACHES FOR WORKING TOGETHER IN SAFETY

By MRS. PAULEEN J. FIELD

Chairman, Safety Committee
United Auto Workers Local Union No. 652, Lansing, Mich.

I wonder just how many of you have joint industrial health and safety committees, partial cooperation—or none at all. We all recognize the fact that some large and small industries, with wise managements, do have joint labor-management safety committees. But very few companies with multi-plant operation enjoy 100 per cent cooperation between labor and management . . . "in each and every section of the country."

Ford Local 600, for example, has a full-time safety director, at the union level, as well as a workable strike clause to take care of unadjusted industrial health and safety problems.

The West Coast Papermakers and Paperworkers enjoy cooperation with management in regard to safety.

These examples are but two, however, of a wide area which is as yet untouched by complete harmony or even agreement between management and labor in respect to the industrial health and safety movement.

Well-coined phrases such as "Safety is everybody's business," come to mind, let us say, instead, that "The safety movement cannot survive without active participation of all citizens, including labor and management, in whom dedication and selflessness are the prime requisites."

Our safety committee has approached management for a top level meeting to discuss areas of safety we could agree on, such as traffic and home safety, as well as protective equipment. We were promptly informed that management, and General Motors, maintain that planning and administering the safety program and providing adequate safety facilities is a management responsibility which they always have and always will continue to fulfill. This being the case, they could see no need for a labor-management safety committee.

There is none so blind as they that will not see.

In my opinion, opposition to joint effort

is a narrow-minded and shortsighted attitude. Insofar as our safety committee was concerned, this viewpoint added incentive and the necessary stimulus to continue to work in safety, with or without management's cooperation—not only to prove to management our sincerity in improving existing conditions, but also to do what we could to educate the membership and their families against fatalities occurring on or off-the-job.

How then do we operate without management's cooperation in safety?

1. Form your committee, as large or as small as your needs, depending primarily on plant size.

2. Conduct training classes for the committee so they may more readily recognize hazards. This should also include a Red Cross class. Resource people may be obtained through your international union health and safety division, the Bureau of Labor Standards, Washington, D. C., state labor and health departments, and the National Safety Council, all free of charge.

3. District committeemen, stewards, top committeemen, and the membership should also have education. If you are working without management's cooperation, safety committeemen just will not have access to every area of the plant, therefore liaison should be established between the shop committee and safety committee at all times.

4. Safety grievances in most instances are useless. No human being has the right to bargain another's life away. It usually takes fifteen days before the grievance is on the table to be discussed by labor and management. Untold injury or even death can be caused in the meantime. There is either a hazard or there isn't. The employee should have the right to refuse to work in unsafe conditions without fear of being penalized. Should this be in dispute, the international should be called in at once.

5. Provided you have all the facts, a very successful and effective method of keeping your membership informed is to publicize the case in the union paper.

For example, we were having trouble with an over-zealous foreman grabbing bumpers off the line that he thought had not been buffed enough. Result was, not only did a couple of bumpers get away from him,

thereby endangering the lives of the employees in the department, but he ended up being injured himself. This was contrary to all the training he had supposedly received. Employees in the department were greatly relieved and their morale boosted when the condition through publication was corrected.

Weekly or monthly articles on all phases of safety, bulletins from your state health department, National Safety Council, as well as safety cartoons, will attract attention and bring about an increased awareness to the membership and their families.

6. Where the local union consists of several units, each dealing with a small plant, every unit should have an industrial health and safety committee. The local union hall should be the focal point for all meetings. Safety material, training manuals, etc., would be on hand for all the committees to utilize. Safety posters from the National Safety Council can be placed on the local union bulletin board.

The chairman for each of these unit safety committees could meet every two months to discuss the different plant problems and have an exchange of ideas.

7. Wherever possible, make the entire membership part of your program. Set up a booth during local union elections or at membership picnics. Literature can be handed out concerning industrial safety, home safety, traffic safety. In fact, cover the whole field. You will be surprised at the interest shown. During the 1958 strike, for instance, our committee, with the help of the picket captains, gave out 5,000 copies of the Michigan traffic violation point system. Ten or twelve-minute films on different phases of safety, are usually available which can be made part of the safety committee's report during membership meetings. The steward and committeemen's monthly meetings serve as an effective method for not only education but also as a source of information in regard to existing conditions in the various districts in the plant.

Above all—keep records. I'll go into this important area a little further on.

If, however, you do not receive satisfaction in correcting an existing hazard, after going through the foreman, general foreman, etc., we in the U.A.W. have found the most effective method to be the following.