APRIL 1981

HOLMES SAFETY ASSOCIATION

E PLURIBUS UNUM

SAFETY EFFICIENCY

MINERAL INDUSTRIES

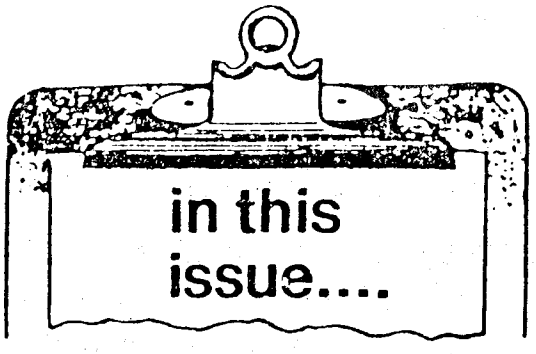
BULLETIN

United States Department of Labor

MSHA

Mine Safety and Health Administration

HOLMES SAFETY ASSOCIATION



April 1981

SAFETY HAT DIRECTIONS:
GO ON AHEAD!

April 1981

HOLMES SAFETY ASSOCIATION MONTHLY SAFETY TOPIC

Excerpts from Code of Federal Regulations

Part 77--Surface Coal Mines and

Surface Work Areas of Underground Coal Mines

Section 77.1304

Subpart N--Blasting Agents; Special Provisions

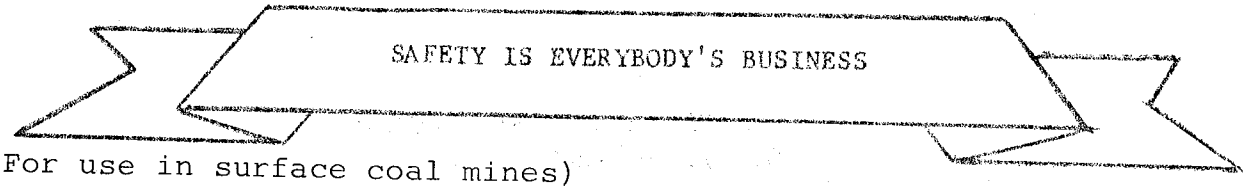
This section will continue our discussion of safety in blasting.

(a) Sensitized ammonium nitrate blasting agents, and the components thereof prior to mixing, shall be mixed and stored in accordance with the recommendations in Bureau of Mines Information Circular 8179, "Safety Recommendations for Sensitized Ammonium Nitrate Blasting Agents," or subsequent revisions.

(b) Where pneumatic loading is employed, before any type of blasting operation using blasting agents is put into effect, an evaluation of the potential hazard of static electricity shall be made. Adequate steps, including the grounding and bonding of the conductive parts of pneumatic loading equipment, shall be taken to eliminate the hazard of static electricity before blasting agent use is commenced.

(c) Pneumatic loading equipment shall not be grounded to waterlines, airlines, rails, or the permanent electrical grounding systems.

(d) Hoses used in connection with pneumatic loading machines shall be of the semiconductive type, having a total resistance low enough to permit the dissipation of static electricity and high enough to limit the flow of stray electric currents to a safe level. Wire-countered hose shall not be used because of the potential hazard from stray electric currents.



(For use in surface coal mines)

April 1981

HOLMES SAFETY ASSOCIATION MONTHLY SAFETY TOPIC

Watch Out For Falling Rock

A rock, whether it falls underground or in an open pit, has the same capacity to inflict injury on whatever it strikes. Therefore, it is important that you recognize the hazards presented by rocks situated where they can roll or slide down into working areas. You also must be aware of the dangers that exist where the ground is cracked or broken. But recognition of these hazards is not enough; something has to be done to eliminate them.

The purpose of this safety message is to acquaint you with ways of eliminating accidents and injuries resulting from falling rocks in an open pit. Observation is the best weapon we have in our war against accidents. As you develop your powers of observation, you become more aware that hazards exist and that something can be done to prevent accidents.

Since observation is of prime importance, let's get into the habit of looking around, keeping our head up, and reporting things that appear dangerous to someone who can do something about them--a shovel operator, if the area is active, or a supervisor, if the area is inactive. A concerted effort is necessary if we are to eliminate hazards arising from unsafe conditions.

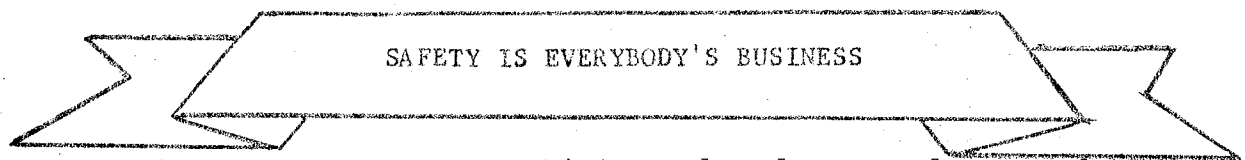
(Note to supervisor: You may use the following information as it applies to your work and add other things that apply to your mine).

If a dangerous area has been spotted, keep out of it until the hazard is eliminated. If falling rock threatens, leave the area until the hazard is eliminated.

If you walk, keep to the side of the road facing traffic and stay as far away as possible from the banks--especially those that are ragged. Keep an eye out for hazardous conditions.

Whenever possible avoid driving close to, or under, overhanging banks or areas of loose rock. But remember that there is traffic from the opposite direction, so don't risk a collision. Report these conditions at once.

Shovel operators must remember that they have a definite responsibility for keeping the area in which their shovel is located free from hazardous ground conditions. They must remember that banks within reach of the bucket can be barred down with the shovel, but higher spots must be made safe under the direction of a supervisor. The bank must be kept trimmed at all times. Shovel operators must not leave a loading area until the bank is



(For use in all surface operations and underground noncoal operations)

completely trimmed. Once the shovel leaves a location there usually is no way to bring down loose rock. If the area is one through which personnel and equipment must travel, then a shovel may have to be brought back to the area to trim the bank and clean up the rock. During the interval, personnel and equipment have been exposed to the possibility of injury from falling rocks.

Many of you who work in the pit have special jobs that require you to travel into isolated sections, either on foot or by truck. If you are a sampler, surveyor, or geologist, your work sometimes requires that you go into areas that are not working, but where the possibility of injury is much greater because the banks have had a chance to deteriorate since the area was last worked. Remember that if your job takes you into an isolated area, the responsibility for avoiding accidents and injuries rests entirely with you. Keep an eye out for dangerous conditions, and remember that, because these places are isolated, it may take some time to get you out if you are injured. Even if your job takes you into locations that are working, your responsibility to avoid injury from falling rocks is in no way reduced. Hazardous conditions may be pointed out to you, but it is up to you to watch out for others and to stay out from under dangerous looking places.

A basic requirement for safe performance of any job is common sense; and, common sense tells us that it is silly to work under overhanging banks or loose rocks. In spite of this, miners are injured every day in some open pit because they rejected the warnings arising from common sense. Don't get caught in the same trap: Keep your eyes open and stay away from hazardous ground conditions.

April 1981

HOLMES SAFETY ASSOCIATION MONTHLY SAFETY TOPIC

Maintenance of Mechanical Equipment

There are many jobs that require advance planning, particularly those that are not routine. This is true of maintenance work, or jobs other than routine repairs.

Maintenance or repair work is not routine. Almost every job is different in some respect. Most of these jobs have to be done as quickly as possible so as not to hold up production. Some have to be performed in relatively close quarters; others in hazardous or exposed locations.

Consequently, these jobs expose you to hazards not usually found in production work. They make it necessary for you to have specialized safety and work training and to watch closely to avoid getting involved in accidents. You also have to combat the temptation to take shortcuts.

Here's an example of a short cut that resulted in a serious injury: Two men were assigned to drill some holes and install new bolts in a railroad switch platform weighing about 600 pounds. They tipped the platform on edge and propped it up with a crow bar. They drilled the holes and started to install the bolts. A strong wind was blowing while the work was going on. One man was hammering the bolts from one side of the platform and the other man was tightening the nuts on the other side. It is not certain whether the wind blew the platform over, or whether the hammering dislodged the crowbar, but the platform dropped on the man who was tightening the nuts, catching his right leg between the platform and a rail.

Here, several unsafe practices were involved and there was no security. First of all, the platform was improperly supported--a crowbar in the position described certainly was a poor way to prevent the heavy object from falling. Second, the injured man, working on the side of the platform where the crowbar was, had put himself in an unsafe position. Finally, his partner didn't help the situation by hammering on the poorly supported platform from the other side. If you had been given this job, what would you have done?

(Note to supervisor: You may briefly discuss any suggestions and tell your employees the platform should have been securely supported by blocking.)

It doesn't take an unusual situation to cause an injury. There are many routine operations that require care in securing the work and ourselves before we start, just as a piece of machinery or equipment must be held in place while the operation is performed.

SAFETY IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

(For use in all mining operations)

An example would be a situation in which a machinist was drilling a long, thin piece of metal on a drill press. If the metal were not secured it could come loose during drilling, spin around rapidly with the drill, and possible injure the operator.

Let's review a few simple rules to remember and use to give yourself the knowledge that will protect you from accidents at any time or in any place you are required to work.

1. Plan each operation before starting the job. Check for possible hazards and protect yourself from them.

2. Unless absolutely necessary, or where steps or platforms are not provided, do not stand on any piece of machinery or equipment without a secure work platform.

3. It is a dangerous practice to lubricate, adjust, or repair moving machinery or equipment.

4. Securely block all objects on which you are required to work so they cannot move or fall under any conditions.

5. Never work in high, exposed locations unless you are in a lift platform or are wearing a safety belt fastened to a solid support.

6. Never work on makeshift ladders or platforms. Get a good ladder or platform and secure it.

7. Use the right tools for the job; be sure tools are in good condition and are used properly.

8. Replace all guards after a job is completed and clean thoroughly.

9. Cover work areas that are subject to falling objects before doing the job.

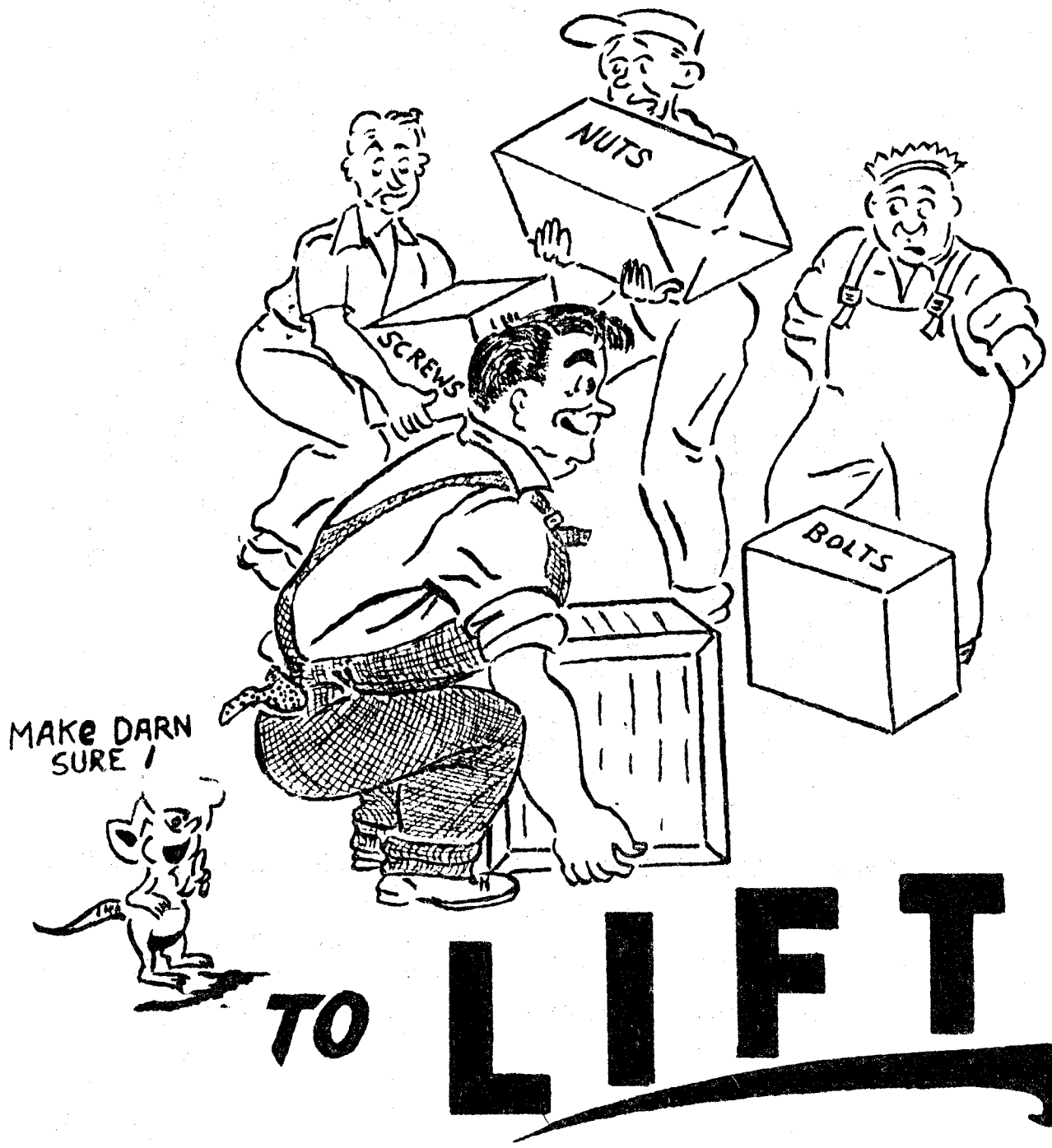
(Note to supervisor: You may add other rules or precautions required at your operation. If you have time, briefly review a recent, pertinent accident.)

Finally, don't take a chance with a makeshift set-up--your safety depends on the security of your surroundings.

If you don't know how to proceed safely, check with your supervisor before you start.

HOLMES SAFETY ASSOCIATION MONTHLY SAFETY TOPIC

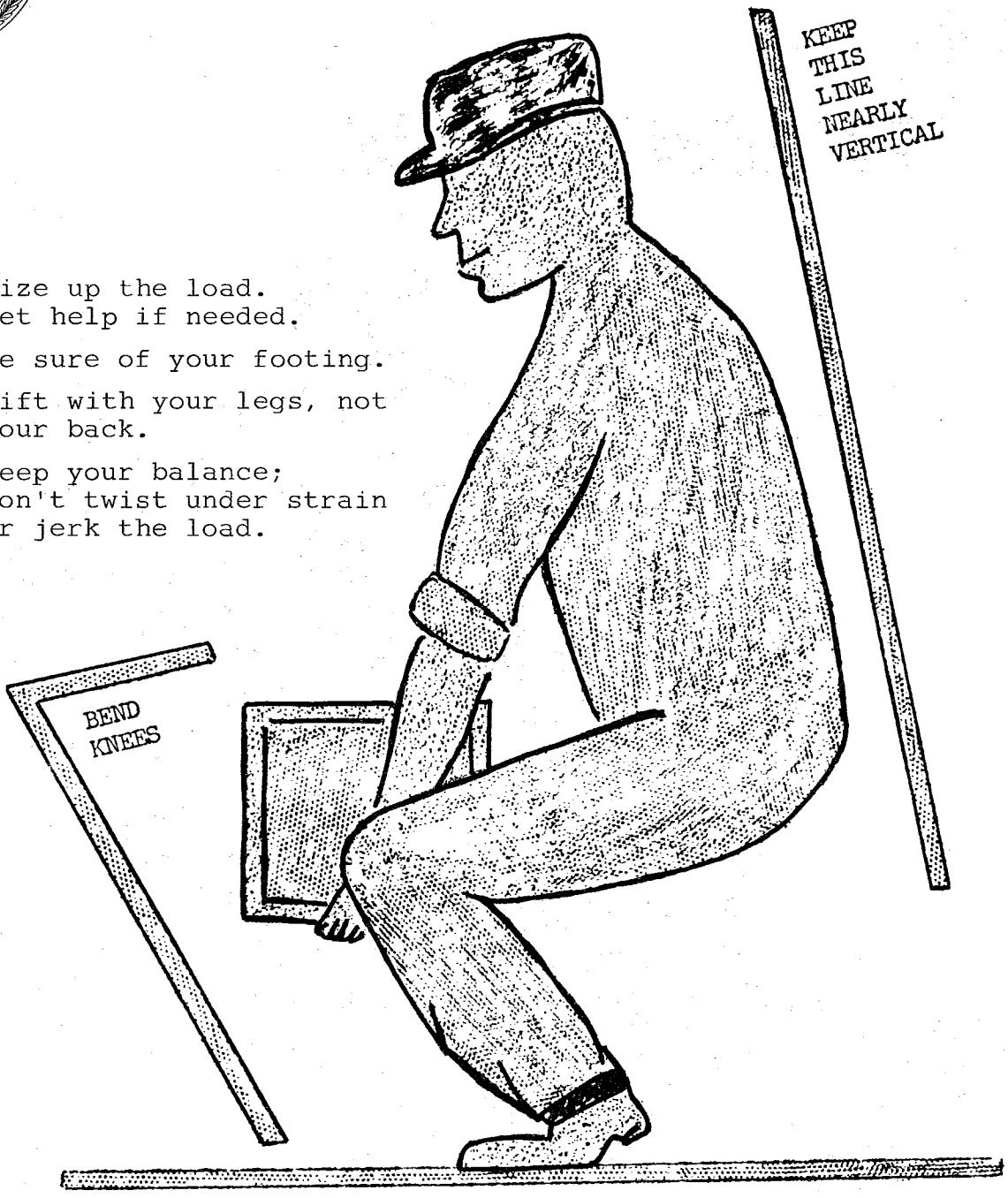
TEACH THEM...



TO LIFT

(For use in all mining operations)

HOLMES SAFETY ASSOCIATION MONTHLY SAFETY TOPIC



1. Size up the load.
   Get help if needed.
2. Be sure of your footing.
3. Lift with your legs, not
   your back.
4. Keep your balance;
   don't twist under strain
   or jerk the load.

BULL STRENGTH ISN'T ENOUGH -- YOU HAVE TO

APPLY POWER WHERE IT COUNTS. **LIFT SAFELY**

DO LIFTING JOBS MECHANICALLY, WHENEVER POSSIBLE.

SAFETY IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

(For use in all mining operations)

April 1981

HOLMES SAFETY ASSOCIATION MONTHLY SAFETY TOPIC

Back Pain and Disability
a Timely Topic for Consideration

Back pain and disability are medical, social and economic problems of national significance. Certainly, within our industry there have been great many back injuries with subsequent cost and disability, and a few comments on this subject might be of benefit.

The back, or spinal column allows us to walk, sit, stand, lift, bend, carry, twist, work, play and sleep in a manner that is reasonably comfortable and efficient. A back problem can mean pain, inconvenience, lost time, disability and expense. Pain is probably the most significant factor. There may be more to the typical back injury than something that happened at work. The pain and disability can be distressingly real and disabling.

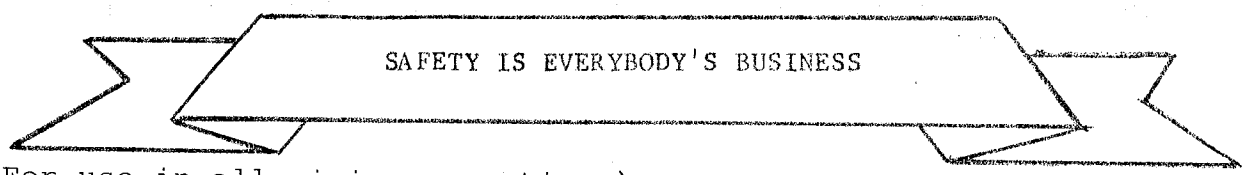
According to the National Safety Council, the average worker's compensation claim for back disability cost $5000. Over 600,000 work-related back injuries are reported each year, with a total cost in excess of three billion dollars. There are 93 million lost workdays each year due to back disability. The majority of cases are reported as being due to a mechanical action such as lifting or twisting, rather than because of a slip, trip, fall or being struck by or against an object. A majority of people at one time or another are going to have back trouble.

Several types of injuries are being reduced, but back injuries are on the increase. It is difficult to tell whether injuries are real or psychosomatic and what type of treatment is best. Compensation courts are usually willing to accept the condition as compensable, and insurance carriers often offer little resistance to this.

Anatomy of the Back

The spine is well-designed, but if it is abused too often it is in trouble. There are 33 bones, or vertebrae, in the spinal column. The curve in the spine helps to absorb shock, but an excessive curve can be bad. Muscles, tendons and ligaments keep the column from collapsing.

Muscles are attached to the bones by tendons and allow motion in all directions. There are 50 to 60 ligaments in the spine, five of them major. Ligaments are tight bands of fibrous tissue that keep the spine together. The function of the ligaments is to restrain and limit motion. Whiplash injuries can tear ligaments in the neck. Even an enthusiastic slap on the back can cause whiplash, although the most common cause is automobile



(For use in all mining operations)

accidents. Keeping headrests in the upright position can help prevent whiplash injuries. The treatment for whiplash consists of getting the neck in a brace, or corset, immediately.

A sprain of joints in the back can cause swelling and pain. Joints can get inflamed and put pressure on a nerve. Because muscles are attached to the spine by ligaments, a sudden force such as lifting can cause a problem because of delayed muscular response. An unexpected weight or shock can come about when an individual mistakenly thinks that a 55-pound box only weighs five pounds. We should know what we are lifting and how to lift. Warm up before lifting, and before doing any exercise.

Slips and sudden jerks are as likely a cause of back pain as a fall or being struck by an object.

Fractures of the spine are not all that common in the work situation. In most cases, bones will bend under stress and strain.

When two persons are carrying a load, trauma (sudden jarring) can come about if one person drops one end of the load prematurely. Such efforts should be coordinated.

Don't be confused by terminology. Lumbago simply means backache and sciatica means pain in the leg. Lumbago or sciatica is not a diagnosis.

Problems With the Back

The lower spine is where most back problems occur. Most of these problems involve the disc. Discs are pads or cushions between vertebrae that make up about one-third the length of the spine. Each disc is like a jelly doughnut in that it contains an outer layer called the annulus, which surrounds a nucleus that is very fluid, permitting flexibility. The annulus is strong when stretched, the nucleus strong when squeezed. Together they allow a smooth, easy motion of the spine, but abusing them can lead to problems.

The most likely time for an individual to develop back trouble is between the ages of 28 and 45. In the aging process, the annulus weakens. After age 28, it can develop fatigue tears. Even a trivial action after this deterioration can make the nucleus suddenly burst, causing a ruptured or herniated disc. After age 45, the nucleus dries out and is not so likely to rupture.

The lymphatic fluid the nucleus soaks up at night is squeezed out during the pressures of the day. One-half to three-quarters of an inch of height is gained at night because of disc swelling. People do get shorter with aging becuase of disc drying. Complete inactivity can result in a stiff back due to disc drying.

There is no blood supply in the disc; once it is injured it doesn't heal.

A "slipped disc" is probably incorrect terminology since the disc actually bursts, breaks, bulges or gets weak, rather than slips. The disc can move or push into the spinal canal and catch a nerve causing classic sciatic pain or numbness down the leg.

Causes of Back Trouble

It would be unusual for one specific work incident to cause a serious back problem. However, working or lifting, particularly improper lifting, or repetition of a certain type of physical effort over the years, can cause gradual wear and tear. This can allow a trivial action to be the straw that breaks the camel's back and cause the nucleus to pop out, resulting in a herniated disc.

If you see somebody who appears to be lifting incorrectly or engaging in an effort that would put undue strain on the back, suggest a better way of doing the work. Know your limitations. If you lead a normally sedentary type of life, don't suddenly start to push the furniture around or put in a rock garden.

Being overweight probably accounts for a significant amount of back trouble. Diet and maintain a reasonable degree of physical fitness. High-heeled shoes can also be bad for the back.

Complicated instructions concerning how to lift are usually not remembered and may only be confusing. However, remember not to twist while lifting. This is probably the most important advice that can be given concerning lifting, probably as important as instructing to lift with the legs and not the back. Don't twist, don't jerk, get close to the load and know how much weight you're lifting. Avoid continued stress. Lifting wrong can result in tremendous compression of the nucleus.

If the nucleus starts to work its way through a previously weakened inner lining of the annulus, the individual will probably have a lot of warning, in the form of occasional pain, before the bursting or slipping takes place. This pain warns one that a certain type of activity, such as bending the back while lifting, should be avoided.

If your back is hurting you several times a year, you are probably headed for trouble, particularly if each attack is worse than the previous one. If incidents are as frequent as four times a year, the back does not have time to heal, whereas if the pain only came about once every three years it would have the time necessary. Think about what you are doing wrong and lift in a better fashion if you have occasional pain--don't jerk.

Jumping out of equipment such as front-end loaders, trucks or dozers can lead to back trouble, as can jerking when climbing on. Safety engineers should consider what kind of activity can lead to back trouble in their operations, and might even take pictures of the action that reportedly led to the back pain. Knowing that this will be done could discourage people from giving incorrect stories.

Accidents leading to back injuries should be as thoroughly investigated as any other, because documentation might later prove to be important. Reports should not be as incomplete as; "I hurt my back while working." Ask if the pain was sudden and severe. Was it serious enough to be immediately called to the attention of others? Was it such that it immediately caused the person to cease work?

If you wake up in the morning and your back is stiff, your mattress may not be right. People with different body weights may need different beds. Hard, firm mattresses are often advocated, but it is possible to use a mattress that is too hard, and this could keep pressure on the lower back. A firm base (springs) may be needed, with perhaps an inch-and-a-half to two-inches of foam support.

Constant sleeping on one side can cause problems. Change sides. Keep good neck posture while sleeping. Maintain good position when reading and sitting.

There are dangers in stating that back pain is due to lifting or trauma when this isn't true. The claimant could be doing him/herself a serious disservice by delaying a treatment for a spine tumor or other disease.

In England it was found that 50 percent of the people who complain of backache cannot remember a specific instance that brought it about. Twenty-five percent say the problem is due to lifting, and the other 25 percent claim slips, trips and falls.

Some exercises such as touching toes could hurt ligaments. If your back is bad, don't bend forward too much. Don't jerk, but be smooth when exercising.

Short, stocky persons usually have stronger backs and may be less susceptible to back trouble than taller persons.

Treatment

Inactivity can result in back trouble. Don't sit in one position too long. Sitting is not really a very good position for the back. Consider what positions might aggravate a back problem and avoid them. Raise your arms while at your desk. Get up and walk around occasionally. Movement should be smooth and controlled. You have to keep things moving to keep them functioning. Overly long bed rest may not be in the best interest of all back problems. The bed, while soft, may not help all that much.

With some back problems it might be best to get back to work and engaged in some activity, lest the condition become chronic and the patient suffer from inactivity.

Of course, follow the doctor's instructions and avoid excessive stress and strain. Maintaining motion and function might be helpful and even necessary, but the only way the back will get better is by straining it less.

As therapy, it can be helpful to lie down with the legs elevated. Heat therapy and whirlpool baths may not always do a great deal of good, although they keep the patient busy. Some authorities believe that traction is of very little benefit, but insurance plans may pay for traction while they might not pay for simple bed rest at home. X-rays, of course, can be a good diagnostic tool but are greatly overrated as a means of predicting trouble when used in pre-employment physicals. One study indicates that 38 percent of the prople receiving a myelogram have a positive reading even though there may actually be no problem.

Diagnosis

Medical examination reports should follow a well-defined format such as the following:

Examination

1. Initial observation.
2. History
3. Structural examination.
4. Active movements.
5. Palpable--position, mobility, condition.
6. Neurological--reflex, sensation.
7. Radiologist.
8. Summary of findings.
9. Outline treatment plan.
10. Prognosis.

How long will this person be disabled? When can he/she do some work? Does the condition appear to be due to the reported action? Has the person had prior problems?

If the person persists in the complaint even though all findings are subjective, a psychological referral may be in order.

An article in Time magazine mentions, "From all indications, a major aspect of lower back pain appears to be psychological. Some back specialists say that in as many as 80 percent of all cases the pain is due not to any overt organic problem, but to such elusive factors as stress, worry and other mental attitudes. Some people seem to have a heavy emotional investment in continuing their pain, which is quite real to the patient, even if it is of psychosomatic origin."

In addition to the above, Time cites numerous causes of back trouble, and states that 80 percent of problems are caused by overworked muscles, herniated discs, and the facet joint syndrome. In the latter, facets (knobby outer structures of the vertebrae arch that can be felt by touching the back) dislocate because of a sudden twist or bend that causes the bone to press on tiny nerves.

Back pain and disability deserve considerable attention as an industrial and a social problem. Attempting to reduce the number of incidents, making sure that proper treatment is given and seeing that claims are properly handled are important.

Prevention of back injuries is a challenge. Means of prevention might not seem as well-defined as is the case with other types of injuries. Nevertheless, back injuries are one of the most persistent and expensive type of injuries.

The above article is reprinted from a National Safety Council newsletter and is appropriate for all employees. Back injuries account for a large percentage of our injuries, particularly those resulting in lost time. They are also the most difficult to document for the purposes of compensation. The reference to thorough investigation of accidents leading to back injuries is very important. The more detailed information acquired relating to events leading up to the accident situation will reduce questions raised by compensation claims examiners and will also provide information that can be useful in preventing similar occurrences.

April 1981

HOLMES SAFETY ASSOCIATION MONTHLY SAFETY TOPIC

Use of Rotary Drills

(Note to supervisor: You may use the following as they apply and add other items involved in rotary drill operation at your mine.)

Let's review some of the common hazards arising from the operation of rotary drills:

1. Hazards incurred in moving the drill from one hole to another, or from one area to another.

2. Hazards presented in the operation of the drill.

3. Hazards arising from poor housekeeping.

4. Hazards encountered when drill rods are changed.

5. Hazards faced when climbing the mast for repairs or lubrication.

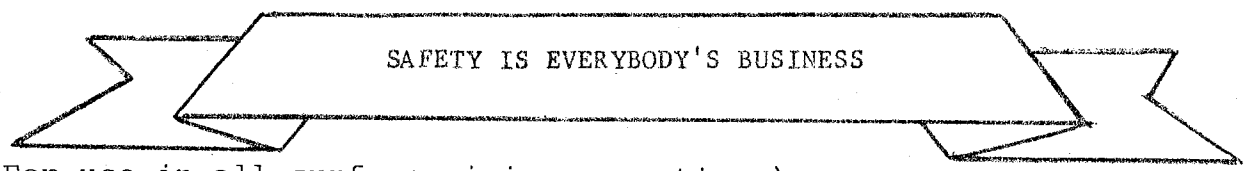
6. Hazards presented by the lack of safety equipment or safety grounds.

Let's take these hazards in order and see how we can either eliminate them or safeguard ourselves from them.

Hazards incurred in moving the drill--when moving the drill, whether it is from one hole to another in the same drilling area, or from one area to another (that may be on a different bench), some operations have to be done in a certain sequence.

First consider what has to be done to move the drill from hole to hole in any particular drilling area. All short moves should be made using power from the drill--either diesel or electric. If the drill is electrically powered, the power cable has to be kept in the clear so that it will not be run over. It must be handled with gloves or special cable tongs. Long moves are best made by towing the drill with a tractor, and using at least three-quarter inch steel tow cable for security.

The sequence for safely moving a short distance is as follows: Remove and rack as many sections of drill rod as are necessary to clear the hole and permit the drill to move; raise the jacks as far as possible and move the drill under its own power to the location of the next hole; drop the jacks to a position of firm contact with the ground and get the drill rods into position to start the new hole.



(For use in all surface mining operations)

For a long move all the drill rods should be removed and racked; the reamer and bit removed and the crosshead lowered to a point where it can pick up the reamer and bit. Then, with the crosshead holding the reamer and bit down as far as possible, the drill should be moved to its new location. When an electrically-powered drill is moved with its own power, the power cable must be watched so that it doesn't hang up on rocks or get run over by the drill. Again, the cable must be handled with approved safety gloves or cable tongs.

If the drill is to be towed to its new location, it is necessary for the towing cable to be strong enough for safety. The rotary drill's brakes must be blocked out to permit free movement of the tracks on the drill. Because the height of the mast tends to make the drill top-heavy, drills must not be moved over uneven or rough ground; a grader or road patrol should precede the drill and keep the roadway as level and smooth as possible. Where possible, the mast should be folded for longer moves.

Hazards presented in the operation of the drill--safety operation while drilling requires that the pressure on the bit be watched so that it is not excessive, but still is strong enough so that the bit will cut. Excessive pressure is unsafe because it causes the bit to hang up on harder rock and makes the drill bounce around.

Remember to keep in the clear of all moving parts. Never lubricate, adjust, or repair unless the motor is shut off.

Hazards arising from poor housekeeping--housekeeping is part of safety in a drilling operation. Debris and tools scattered around the drill or in nearby areas are tripping hazards. Open tool boxes or lockers allow tools to fall out and expose the operator to the danger of being struck by a falling tool. Oily and greasy rags are fire hazards and should never be allowed to be left lying around the drill. They should be stored in a covered metal container.

Hazards encountered when drill rods are changed--safety is critical while changing, removing or adjusting drill rods. The rods are heavy and, if dropped, can cause serious injury to an operator, damage to the drill and loss of drilling time. Here, the important thing is to be sure that all connections between sections of drill rod, the crosshead and the reamer and bit are screwed in tight. Be sure that the "dog," or clamp, has a tight hold on the drill rod being handled and that all sections of drill rod in the rack are properly supported and locked in place. Keep all parts of your body in the clear. Don't allow rods to dent the deck plates.

Hazards faced when climbing the mast--when it is necessary to climb the mast, caution and care are required. Items to be checked are as follows: bent or broken ladder rungs; runner supports that have broken away from the drill structure; broken or missing parts of the guardrail around the platform at the top of the mast and

a broken platform or supports. When climbing be certain that every step and handhold is firm in order to prevent a slip or fall. Use a safety belt where guardrails are broken or unavailable.

Hazards presented by the lack of safety equipment or safety guards--safety guards are a must around all belt or gear drives and pulleys; and around all parts of engines and compressors hot enough to burn anyone who comes in contact with them. All electrically-powered drills must be equipped with high voltage rubber gloves or cable tongs to be used whenever the power cable has to be handled. Be sure all the guards provided are replaced after adjustment or repairs.

ABSTRACT FROM FATAL ACCIDENT

April 1981

HOLMES SAFETY ASSOCIATION
MONTHLY SAFETY TOPIC

Haulage Accident

General Information: A battery-powered scoop accident occurred in the No. 5 entry of the first right section resulting in the death of the scoop operator. The victim had approximately one year of mining experience, the last two months at this mine as a scoop operator.

Description of Accident: The first right section crew and their supervisor entered the mine and traveled to the first right section. After examining the working section, the supervisor conducted a brief safety meeting with the employees and then assigned duties and work locations to the crew members. Part of the crew was instructed to replace a damaged bearing in the conveyor belt tail roller and the scoop operator was instructed to tram a S & S battery powered scoop to the surface, change batteries and return to the section. He returned to the section and unloaded supplies he had brought in from the surface. He then delivered roof bolts to the roof bolting crew, after which he apparently began to clean up loose coal and coal dust along the right rib area in the No. 5 entry between the last open crosscut and the face. The ventilation man stated that the saw the scoop operator operating the scoop in the No. 5 entry as he passed through enroute to No. 6 entry to hang line brattices and check curtains. The ventilation man finished his work in the No. 6 entry and returned to No. 5 entry and saw the scoop operator slumped over in the operator's compartment of the scoop. He walked to the scoop to investigate and found that the scoop operator had been injured. He ran to the section supervisor for help. The supervisor, the ventilation man, and the coal-cutting machine operator rushed to the accident scene and discovered that the scoop operator's head had been caught and crushed between the coal rib and a canopy post on the scoop. He was immediately rushed to the hospital but was pronounced dead on arrival.

Cause: The accident and resultant fatality occurred because the canopy installed on the S & S battery-powered scoop was not installed properly, a violation of Section 75.1717, 30 CFR. Also, the line brattice used for ventilating purposes in the No. 5 entry was not removed prior to performing clean-up operations.

SAFETY IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

(For use in underground coal mines)

April 1981

HOLMES SAFETY ASSOCIATION MONTHLY SAFETY TOPIC

The Value of Life

As we compare the overall accident experience in all mining areas of 1980 with that of 1979, we find a significant improvement in 1980. However, is that enough?

As you can readily see, there is much missionary work still to be done in the mineral industries.

Each year as the accident experience of our industry is reviewed, I'm quite sure that people in the safety departments and others in the industry who are safety-minded have a strong feeling of frustration. The dictionary defines the word "frustration" as "to prevent from attaining a purpose, to bring to nothing, to defeat, to baffle, to foil, to make null or ineffectual."

This describes exactly how many safety directors feel after putting twelve months of intensive effort into accident prevention work. This effort requires many hours of overtime in planning and developing their safety program; and, seeing that it was put into effect.

Human nature being what it is, we know people are prone to take chances. Sometimes, many even seem to have an uncontrollable urge to do so. As we study injury reports, we find that most list as their cause some simple, thoughtless act which never should have occurred had a little common-sense been used.

In one foolish moment, each of the victims took a chance that made it impossible for them to enjoy the fruits of their labor with their loved ones.

Safety--it's a dull word. We hear it from insurance companies, safety council literature, on films, and in company publications; but, when a serious accident affects a member of our family, an acquaintance, or possibly a person who works for us, we have a different feeling concerning the word. It is then no longer dull stuff.

Without a doubt, the 227 victims who lost their lives during 1980 would be more than glad to cultivate safe habits in the line of safety if they but had another chance, but their chances were snuffed out in the blinking of an eye. Those who have to break the news of such occurrences to the families of the victims certainly cannot remain aloof from such incidents and too many of us have had that unpleasant experience.

SAFETY IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

(For use in all mining operations)

The above reasons prompted me, when I sat down to write this paper, to not talk about principles of safety, but rather to deal right off the top of the deck and to use words and thoughts that would serve as a reminder of the seriousness of the continuing situation we have confronting us.

The plain truth is that too many miners are still losing their lives in our mining industry. This fact reminds us that the time is overdue when every employee of the industry must share a responsibility for accident prevention.

The winning of awards and a decrease in accident statistics are not enough. We need to increase our efforts--to eliminate needless accidents which cause human suffering and financial loss.

This is going to take the combined efforts of every employee in the industry. It is going to take teamwork. It is going to require more engineering, education, and enforcement for safety.

It is in this last area that everyone can make the best contribution. There is no enforcement that compares with self-enforcement. There is no discipline like self-discipline.

The voluntary determination of every worker to perform their tasks in a safe and sane manner is by far the finest contribution that can be made. Safety education is the means which can be used to convince employees to make this contribution.

Neither management nor labor can do this alone. This job requires the cooperation of everyone. Human compassion challenges each individual to put forth their best efforts.

You probably do not need thoughts like these to remind you that safety is something which can challenge us, something to get excited about; but, maybe it helps once in a while to be reminded. First of all, management should set the safety example by teaching all employees to think positively about safety. It is not just preventing accidents. It is efficiency. It is profit. It is ability. It is happiness and it is life.

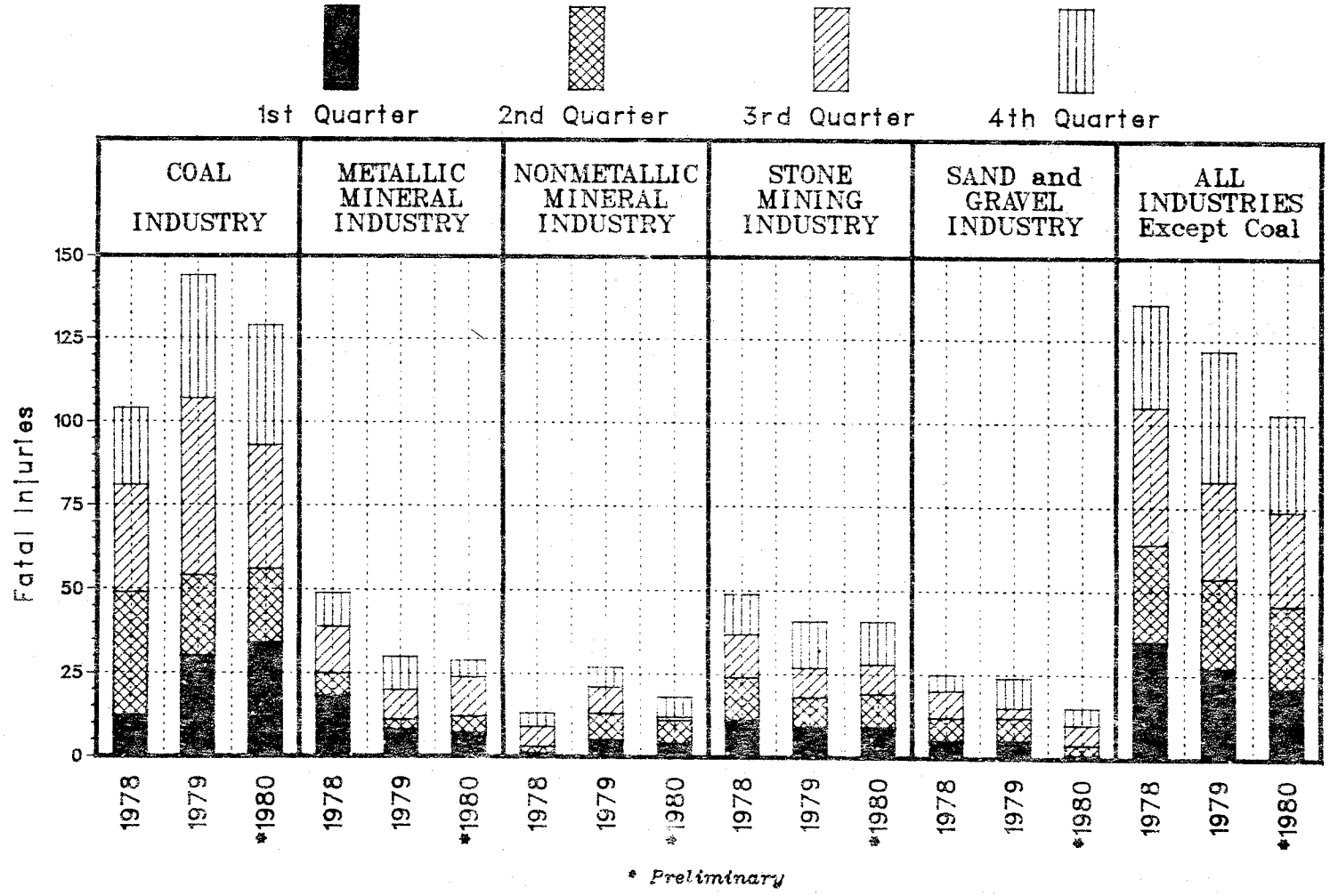
And how should we go about achieving this objective? Through training, instruction, supervision, psychology, sales, patience, determination, and logic.

Let me remind you of my favorite slogan, "It has been aptly said, time and time again, no substitute has yet been found to replace holding a good, informative on-the-job safety meeting between supervisors and employees."

"It's not the right way -- if it isn't safe.

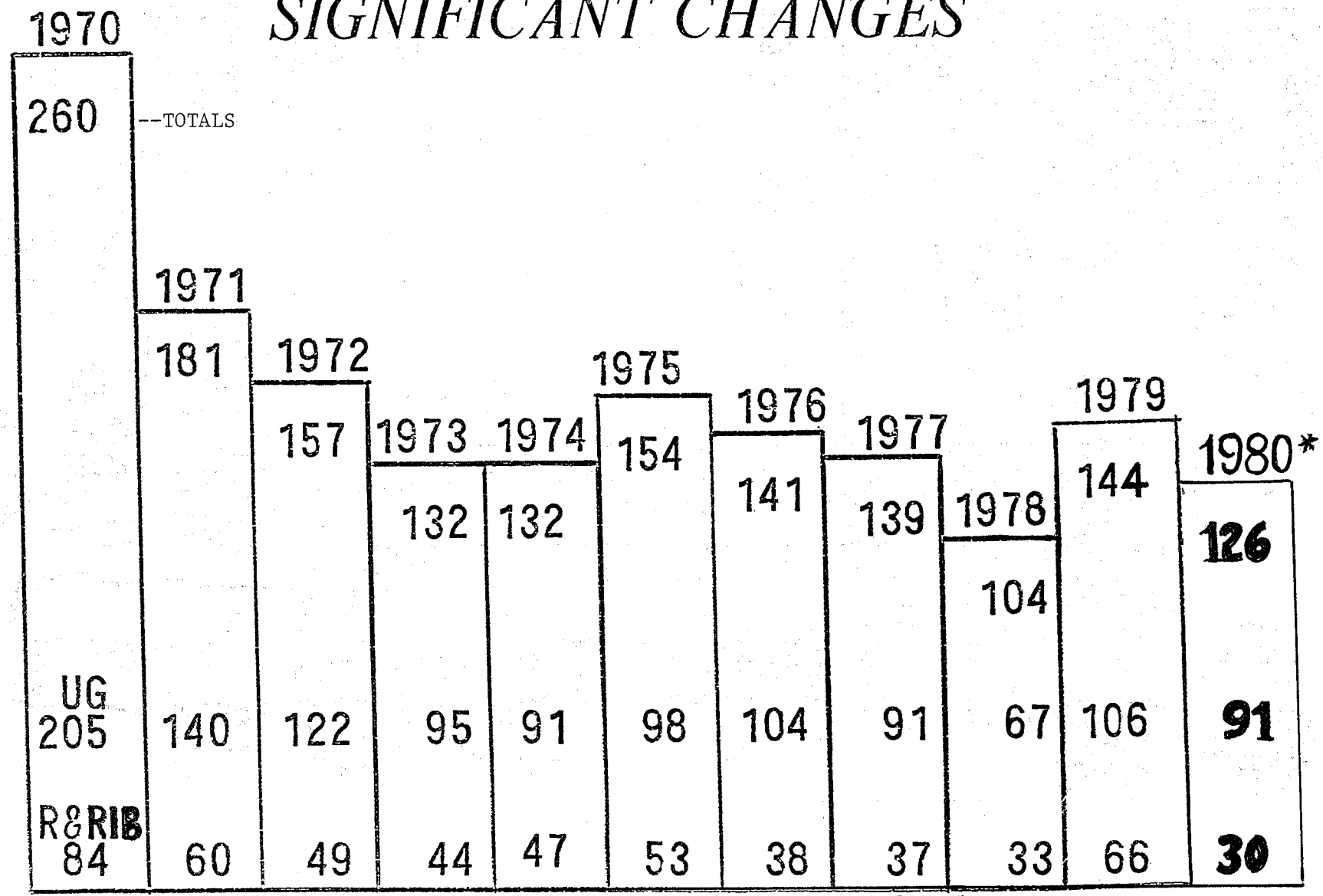
Chart 1.

Number of *FATAL INJURIES* in the U.S. Mining Industries in each quarter of 1978, 1979 and 1980



COAL MINE FATALITIES

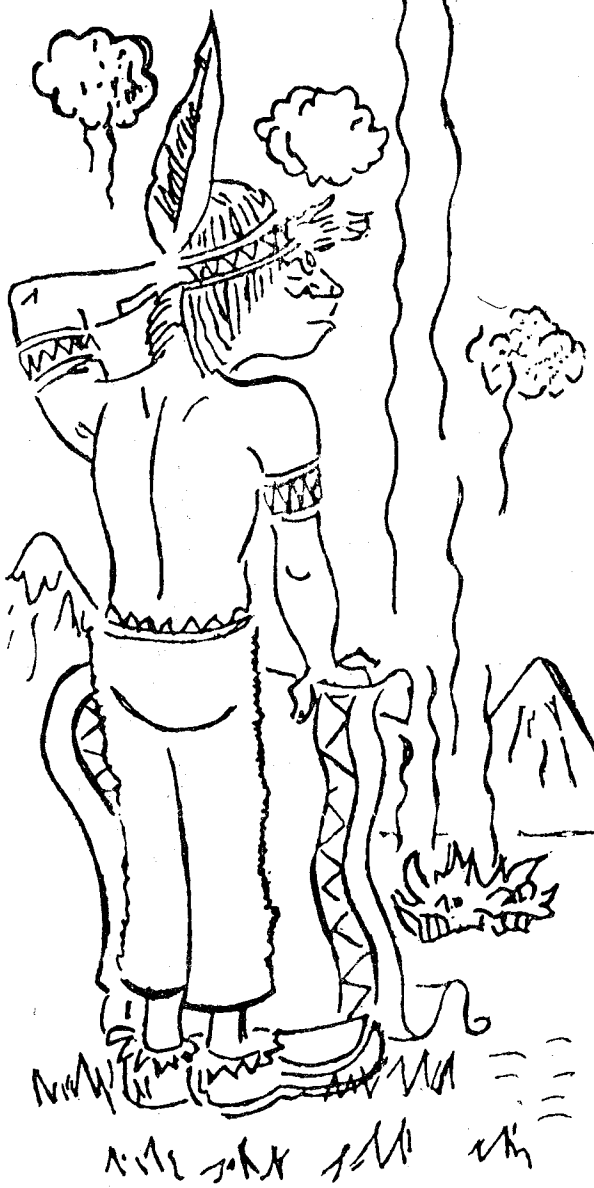
SIGNIFICANT CHANGES



* Preliminary

April 1981

A MESSAGE FOR YOU



NATIONAL MEETING

HOLMES SAFETY ASSOCIATION

LOCATION: QUALITY INN CENTRAL MOTEL
1190 NORTH COURTHOUSE ROAD
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22203
703-524-4000

AGENDA: MAY 26, 1981

SPONSORED HOSPITALITY BAR
7 to 10 p.m.

MAY 27, 1981

MEETING OF NATIONAL COUNCIL,
HOLMES SAFETY ASSOCIATION

MAY 28, 1981

MEETING OF JOSEPH A. HOLMES
SAFETY ASSOCIATION

PLANNING TO ATTEND? PLEASE NOTIFY
WILLIAM H. HOOVER, NAT'L. SECRETARY AT:

FOUR PARKWAY CENTER, SUITE 102
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA 15220
412-922-0220

☆U.S.Government Printing Office: 1981-777-093/7

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HOLMES SAFETY ASSOCIATION
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For the month of _____

TOTAL meetings held this month _____

TOTAL attendance this month _____

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