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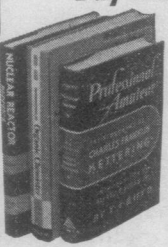
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PUBLIC SAFETY

Cars' Knobby Interiors Major Cause of Injuries

➤ A MAJOR CAUSE of injuries in automobile collisions is the interior of today's cars with their protruding steering wheels, door handles, radio dials and other knobby parts.

This has been discovered in tests over a ten-year period by a research team at the Institute of Transportation and Traffic Engineering of the University of California at Los Angeles.

Injuries occur during secondary collisions when the car occupant is thrown against some interior component, rather than during the primary collision between the car and another object.

A frequently lethal weapon is the rigid steering wheel column, which often functions like a spear against the driver hurtled forward and against the column during the collision impact.

Arnold W. Siegel, assistant project engineer, foresees in the next few years a number of automobile changes designed to protect the driver and passenger:

1. A retractable or a collapsible steering column will eliminate spearing the driver and will absorb most of the energy upon impact with the driver.

2. Safety belts will be worn by almost all drivers and passengers. In addition to the current lap belts, there may be shoulder harnesses. Another safety addition will be head supports to cut down on neck whiplash injuries during rear-end collisions.

3. Padding of the interior with foam plastic or similar material will reduce puncture-type wounds, while a general redesigning of the interior will eliminate dangerous protruding parts.

But even with all possible safety features, the decisive factor is still the driver's attitude and behavior, Mr. Siegel warned.

"It is important to realize that a motorist, without a safety belt, involved in a collision at a mere 25 miles per hour can hit the car's interior with the same impact severity as a pedestrian being hit by a car traveling at 25 miles per hour," Mr. Siegel said.

Science News Letter, August 23, 1958

PUBLIC HEALTH

Chemist Group Attacks Doctors' Chemical Plan

➤ THE AMERICAN MEDICAL Association's model legislation for control of hazardous substances has drawn heavy fire in Chicago from spokesmen for the Manufacturing Chemists' Association.

The feature of the A.M.A. plan that drew heaviest criticism from Dr. Thomas W. Nale and Sanford J. Hill, representatives of the Washington, D. C., organization of chemical producers, is the "unfeasible" broad scope of regulation over chemical products designed for use in industry as well as in the home. They expressed their views before the A.M.A. Committee on Toxicology.

They contended it is one thing to label and regulate hazardous chemicals sold in small containers for wide use in homes by inexperienced persons, and quite another thing to regulate those same chemicals sold in bulk to a few trained industrial users.

The A.M.A. plan would attempt to control chemicals designed with both uses in mind through the same set of regulations and through a single agency, Dr. Nale and Mr. Hill pointed out.

They added that the A.M.A. model legislation "arises out of the 'great number of poisonings' in the household."

"While we are not convinced of the validity of the A.M.A.'s contention as to the number of poisonings due to the use of household chemicals, the safety record of chemicals used in industry has been excellent," they said.

The chemical spokesmen suggested potentially dangerous household chemicals could be regulated through the Federal Food and Drug Administration, while another organization could be formed with entirely different objectives to oversee the industrial use of chemicals.

However, they stated they did not believe that "any case has been made for Federal legislation regulating the labeling of industrial chemicals at this time."

Science News Letter, August 23, 1958

Questions

ENGINEERING—How do the ionic pumps create ultrahigh vacuums? p. 121.

MEDICINE—What are the symptoms of cholera? p. 119.

PSYCHIATRY—What body chemical has been found in short supply in adult schizophrenics? p. 118.

ZOOLOGY—What glands seem to be involved in arteriosclerosis in caged animals? p. 116.

Photographs: Cover and p. 115, U. S. Navy; p. 117, U. S. Army; p. 118, General Electric Research Laboratory; p. 119, Convair; p. 128, Alco Products.