

# RISK

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*"Life without risks would be mighty dull."*

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**The sign outside the church listed the sermon topic:** "The sin of gambling—(farmers excepted)." Regular attendants at the races take fewer risks than do farmers. Since the beginning of time, farmers learned to expect and to accept risk.

**Today there is an increasing tendency to avoid risk,** to insure against risk, and even to legislate concerning risk. The government is becoming an integral part of the risk factor. Senator Daniel P. Moynihan of New York has proposed a risk assessment bill. It would create special committees that would rank environmental risks and estimate benefits versus costs of environmental regulation.

**How far can we go in making risks illegal?** Most businesses recognize risk and try to balance risk with return. The question is: In so doing do they take risks that could be harmful?

**Capitalism is based on risk.** Communism tries to eliminate it. Farmers will never feed and clothe the world without taking some risks. Contrary to popular belief, proper use of agrichemicals adds little or nothing to environmental risk. In fact, inadequate use increases risk while proper use decreases risk.

**There is a great danger that environmental policy could be based more on misleading statistics or emotional perception of risk than on solid scientific evidence. ■**

*J. Fielding Reed*