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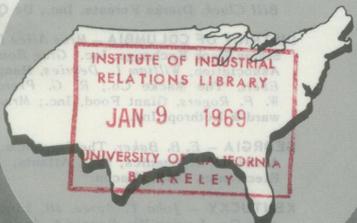
CHRISTMAS AND YEAR-END

1968 85

PERSONNEL PRACTICES

**Personnel Policies Forum**<sup>®</sup>

Survey no. 85



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December 1968

# What Is The Personnel Policies Forum?

The Editors of The Bureau of National Affairs have invited representative personnel and industrial relations executives to become members of the 1967-68 Panel of the PERSONNEL POLICIES FORUM. These Panel members are top personnel officials in all types of companies, large and small, in all branches of industry and all sections of the country.

At regular intervals throughout the year BNA editors ask the members of the Panel to outline their policies and procedures on some important aspect of employment, industrial relations, and personnel problems. From these replies, the editors complete a survey report on the problem, showing prevailing practices, new wrinkles and ideas, and cross-section opinion from these top-ranking executives.

In many cases, the comments, suggestions, and discussions are reproduced in the words of the Panel members themselves. In effect, survey users are sitting around a table with these executives and getting their advice and experience on the major problems in this field facing all companies this year.

Results of each PERSONNEL POLICIES FORUM survey made during 1967-68 are printed in a special survey report which is sent, as part of the service, to users of these BNA labor reports:

Labor Relations Reporter; Labor Policy and Practice; Daily Labor Report; White Collar Report; Retail Labor Report; and Government Employee Relations Report.

## The 1967-68 Panel

### NORTHEASTERN STATES

**CONNECTICUT** — T. W. Atkinson, Handy & Harman, Fairfield; Thomas A. Brady, Sperry Rand Corp., Bridgeport; B. C. Czech, Colt's Inc., Hartford; Thomas H. Decker, Chesebrough-Pond's, Inc., Clinton; George B. Gaedeke, Allied Thermal Corp., New Britain; Walter J. Hatcher, Pitney-Bowes, Inc., Stamford; Frank H. Livingston, The Hartford Gas Co., Hartford; John R. Marchiando, The Armstrong Rubber Co., West Haven; Daniel Reinhardsen, Flexible Tubing Corp., Guilford; Laurence R. Swart, Bundry Corp., Norwalk.

**DELAWARE** — D. A. Bunce, Hercules, Inc., Wilmington; James Jordan, Atlas Chemical Industries, Inc., Wilmington.

**MASSACHUSETTS** — Charles D. Bond, Dynamics Research Corp., Stoneham; Robert G. Hennemuth, Raytheon Co., Lexington; Keith A. Kreuzon, The Foxboro Co., Foxboro; Frank H. Miklavic, Polaroid Corp., Cambridge; T. J. Treacy, Filene's, Boston; J. F. Tuscher, The Carter's Ink Co., Cambridge; James White, Jordan Marsh Co., Boston; Jack Ziegelmayr, H. H. Scott, Inc., Maynard.

**NEW JERSEY** — Nicholas Balbo, The Pantasote Co., Passaic; Joseph Siegel, Radio Corporation of America, Camden; Vincent J. Veninata, The Grand Union Co., East Paterson; Albert E. Weller, Autographic Business Forms, Inc., South Hackensack.

**NEW YORK** — Stanley R. Case, Hartman Systems Co., Huntington Station; Richard Galberaith, The Carborundum Co., Niagara Falls; John W. Hanselman, St. Joseph Lead Co., New York; Robert M. Hirsch, McKaig-Hatch, Inc., Buffalo; Harry J. Morrison, Dun & Bradstreet, Inc., New York; Carl W. Reed, Nelsner Brothers, Inc., Rochester; R. J. Ripple, IBM, Armonk; A. Paul St. George, Arwood Corp., Brooklyn; Sol Salzman, Times Square Stores Corp., Brooklyn; Paul F. Shaw, The Chase Manhattan Bank, New York; Kenneth B. Wolfe, Martin Marietta Corp., New York.

**PENNSYLVANIA** — William C. Bergmann, George K. Garrett Co., Inc., Philadelphia; K. B. Chase, Quaker State Oil Rfg. Corp., Bradford; Ross C. Cibella, Calgon Corp., Pittsburgh; James R. Clark, McCreary Tire & Rubber Co., Indiana; C. E. Dean, E. Keeler Co., Williamsport; W. Thomas Finley, Rohm & Haas Co., Philadelphia; G. T. Gallagher, Stackpole Carbon Co., St. Marys; W. H. Gilman, Jr., Crown Products Corp., Philadelphia; J. H. Goodworth, Babcock & Wilcox Co.,

Beaver Falls; K. P. Howard, Grinnell Corp., Columbia; James A. Kaehler, Honeywell, Inc., Fort Washington; W. David McIntire, Catalytic Construction Co., Philadelphia; David McMullin, John Wamaker Philadelphia, Inc., Philadelphia; H. T. Milner, Copper Range Co., Leetsdale; R. J. Shingleton, Heckett Engineering Co., Butler; W. C. Stonehouse, Jr., Latrobe Steel Co., Latrobe; Robert J. Wagner, Harbison-Walker Refractories, Pittsburgh; James J. Walsh, AMETEK, Inc., Sellersville; William R. Wortham, The Trane Co., Dunmore.

**RHODE ISLAND** — J. Robert Fryer, Leeson Corp., Warwick.

### SOUTHERN STATES

**ALABAMA** — J. B. Brand, Jr., James B. Clow & Sons, Inc.; Birmingham; A. A. Childs, Page Aircraft Maintenance, Inc., Fort Rucker; James L. Coley, Russell Mills, Inc., Alexander City.

**ARKANSAS** — Richard K. Benn, Gerber Products Co., Ft. Smith; Bill Cluck, Dierks Forests, Inc., De Queen.

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA** — Miss Alice Dulany Ball, The United States Book Exchange, Inc.; Greg Bowen, Perpetual Building Association; William L. Devries, Manpower, Inc.; Charles W. Ebert, The Macke Co.; R. G. Pierce, Dynallectron Corp.; W. F. Rogers, Giant Food, Inc.; Mrs. Jean H. Sisco, Woodward & Lothrop, Inc.

**GEORGIA** — E. B. Baker, The Arrow Co., Atlanta; W. C. Byars, American Cryogenics, Inc., Atlanta; John F. Moran, Maxson Electronics Corp., Macon.

**KENTUCKY** — John T. Acree, III, Lincoln Income Life Insurance Co., Louisville; Donald A. Andrews, National Mine Service Co., Ashland; Lowell Z. Ashe, Brown-Forman Distillers Corp., Louisville; Dale R. Deitels, American Air Filter Co., Inc., Louisville; J. R. George, Standard Oil Co. (Ky.), Louisville; Raymond R. Hawkins, Kentucky & Indiana Terminal R.R. Co., Louisville.

**LOUISIANA** — W. G. Allee, Jr., American Sugar Co., Arabi; R. E. Bellows, Wyandotte Chemicals Corp., Geismar; Robert J. Stone, Delta Steamship Lines, Inc., New Orleans.

(Continued on inside back cover)

## CHRISTMAS AND YEAR-END PERSONNEL PRACTICES

The third Personnel Policies Forum survey in 1968 deals with four major areas of management concern as the year-end approaches. These are (1) bonuses and gifts; (2) employee parties; (3) time off in the holiday week; and (4) community-relations activities.

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### SUMMARY

About one fourth of the companies represented in the survey give employees a year-end bonus, and one fifth of the companies give Christmas gifts. The bonus, typically, amounts to one or two weeks' pay; the gifts, whose value seldom exceeds \$15, are in the nature of hams, turkeys, food packets, merchandise from the company or ordered through a catalogue, and candy.

Lower-level supervisors usually are treated the same as nonsupervisory employees in the matter of gifts and bonuses.

Nearly four fifths of the companies are making some arrangements for time off on the Tuesday preceding Christmas. Forty-three percent of all companies also will give some time off on the Tuesday preceding New Year's Day.

Some celebration of the Christmas season takes place in about three quarters of all companies. Almost two fifths of these parties are company-sponsored, but where no formal party is scheduled, employees get together informally in departments or plant units for pre-holiday festivities.

A majority of companies do not have established plans for charitable Christmas activities. About 20 percent of all companies, however, do have employee-sponsored projects.

On the question whether a company should sponsor a Christmas party, the Panel voted almost two-to-one against it. The same proportion of Panel members were against the serving of alcoholic beverages at parties. In commenting on their answers, many personnel executives cited the bad incidents their companies had experienced because of "too much Christmas cheer."

(In this report, companies employing less than 1,000 employees are classified as "smaller companies;" those employing more than 1,000 employees are classified as "larger companies.")

### CHRISTMAS AND YEAR-END BONUSES

A little less than half of the companies in BNA's Personnel Policies Forum survey report they give employees and supervisors a year-end bonus or gift in recognition of the holiday season. Often the gift, or the bonus, is of relatively small value, but it serves as an expression of the company's good wishes at the year's end.

#### Bonus Plans for Rank-and-File Employees

A fourth of the companies represented in the Forum give nonsupervisory employees a Christmas or year-end bonus. A large proportion of these companies give the bonus to all employees; a very few restrict the bonus to nonunion or salaried employees only.

Typically, the Christmas bonus figures out to one or two weeks' wages for each employee. The exact formula by which the bonus is computed varies from company to company. Some compute it as "four percent of annual earnings," which amounts to about two weeks' pay. Others will give a bonus of "a week's pay" or "\$100 for one year or more; 1/12 of \$100 for each full month if less than one year."

A significant number of companies pay bonuses above and below one-to-two weeks' earnings. On the low side, a few companies give a lump sum ranging from \$10 to \$60. At the opposite end of the range are bonuses from five percent to 10 percent of annual earnings, and a few companies noted lump sums of \$400 or \$500.

Following is one company's explanation for giving a year-end bonus to nonsupervisory employees based on years of service:

This is computed by a seniority date, as well as a maximum amount per year. Should an employee start in May of the given year, he would receive a maximum of \$20 gratuity at Christmas time. The minimum amount is \$5, which would be given an employee starting in November of a calendar year. Therefore, would add \$5 for each year up to a maximum of \$125. . . --R. J. Shingleton, Assistant Vice President, Industrial Relations, Heckett Engineering Co., Butler, Penna.

### Bonus Plans for Supervisors

Slightly more than one fourth of the companies in the survey give bonuses to supervisors.

Members of the Forum panel were asked to list separately the bonus practices of their companies with regard to (a) non-supervisory employees and (b) "lower-level" supervisors. The purpose of the question was to determine whether supervisors fared better or worse than rank-and-file employees in the matter of Christmas and year-end bonuses. (The phrase "lower-level supervisors" was used to exclude from the survey any special bonuses paid top-level executives, which might distort the picture.)

A majority of companies which give bonuses are more liberal to supervisors than to rank-and-filers, simply because a large number of companies use the same formula for both supervisory and nonsupervisory employees. This results, in most cases, in a slightly larger bonus in dollars to supervisors. Over half of the companies granting bonuses to both groups use the same formula. On the other hand, a sizable number of companies have a different formula for supervisors which results in their receiving substantially higher bonuses. Only a few companies which give bonuses to supervisors pay no bonus to nonsupervisory employees.

A majority of firms compute their bonus according to a fixed formula in order that all supervisors receive the same treatment. Most formulas are based either on a percentage of the supervisor's earnings or a lump sum based on service.

One company describes its plan:

We have a Year-End Bonus for Exempt Salaried Personnel, and the amount for the lowest grade Exempt Group has a minimum of two percent of the annual salary and the highest non-officer echelon group receive a maximum of 25 percent of the annual salary. We also have a Christmas Bonus for Non-Exempt Employees, which ranges from \$20 for employees with one year of service to a maximum of \$50. --J. R. Marchiando, Corporate Director of Personnel, The Armstrong Rubber Company, West Haven, Conn.

A majority of companies give supervisors a bonus of about two weeks' pay. Several companies give a lump sum of \$500. About five percent of the Panel members reported that their bonuses ranged from one to two months pay.

Some companies that once had year-end bonuses have given them up. Some listed union problems as the reason, while others mentioned employees' lack of gratitude or the instability of corporate profits to finance bonuses. Three percent of the employers indicated they had replaced their year-end bonus with another program.

For a long number of years, our Company had an annual voluntary bonus given at Christmas. It was widely accepted and anticipated and proved to be an effective manager relations program. The plan has been replaced by a three percent general increase and a salary savings plan which

the company matches with 50¢ to each \$1 of employee contribution. --J. B. Brand, Jr., Director of Industrial Relations, Clow Corporation, Birmingham, Ala.

### CHRISTMAS GIFTS

#### Christmas Gifts to Rank-and-File Employees

About one fifth of the companies represented in the Forum survey distribute gifts to employees at Christmas time. Included in this figure is a small group, representing 10 percent of all the companies in the survey, which distribute both year-end bonuses and gifts to employees. The practice of giving Christmas gifts is about equal among smaller companies (20 percent) and larger companies (19 percent).

About 30 percent of these gifts are in the form of cash or check, ranging from \$5 to \$60. Another 20 percent of the gifts were in the form of gift certificates or merchandise from a catalogue. The biggest proportion of gifts, however, constitute items for the holiday dinner--hams, turkeys, food packets, candy, etc. The value of such gifts seldom exceeds \$15; in most cases the amount spent for each employee ranges between \$5 and \$10.

Explaining their practices, Panel members comment:

We give all employees, hourly and salary, a Christmas box containing a canned ham, canned fruit, as well as candy and cookies. We have found excellent employee acceptance and it is the type of gift the employee's family can also enjoy. --E. R. Willemin, Director of Industrial Relations, Bendix-Westinghouse Automotive Air Brake Company, Elyria, Ohio.

\* \* \*

It has been the practice of our company to give what we call a "Christmas Gift" in the amount varying from \$40 to \$60 per year with all employees, including executives, supervisors, and non-exempt, receiving the same amount. --R. L. Roche, Personnel Director, Cambridge Wire Cloth Co., Cambridge, Md.

#### Christmas Gifts to Supervisors

With few exceptions, lower-level supervisors receive the same gifts as non-supervisors. One company gives gift certificates redeemable for \$25 to rank-and-file employees, while the supervisors are given a lump sum of between \$40 and \$50. In three companies, Christmas gifts were given only to supervisors.

#### Gifts from Employees to Supervisors

Although most companies discourage the practice, only about 24 percent have a flat rule prohibiting supervisors from accepting gifts from employees under them. In many companies, the absence of such a rule simply means that the problem has not arisen. It is interesting to note that 42 percent of the larger companies have found it necessary to set up a rule against gifts to supervisors, while only 18 percent of smaller companies have done so.

Some personnel executives point out that even if their companies do not have a formal rule, they expect their supervisors to use discretion:

We rely on good judgment and common sense of supervisor. If apparently substantial gifts were given, it would be discouraged or stopped. Gifts are usually "grab bag" type limited to price, with names being drawn in department in advance. --E. L. Ogden, Vice President-Personnel, Anderson, Clayton & Co., Houston, Texas.

#### Gifts to Employees from Other Firms

Rules forbidding employees to accept gifts from other firms doing business with the company are found in about 50 percent of smaller companies, and 62 percent of larger companies, according to the Forum survey. Many other panel members, as on the preceding question, commented that the company discouraged the practice, but had no formal rule against it. Comments:

No formal rule, must be within the "guidelines of propriety."--J. E. Blissick, General Personnel Advisor, Consumers Power Company, Jackson, Mich.

\* \* \*

Rule provides that it should be usable on company property (no alcohol).--Larger Company.

\* \* \*

Certain areas, e.g. Purchasing, have limitations.--R. E. Hollerbach, Director of Compensation & Benefits, Parke, Davis & Company, Detroit, Mich.

\* \* \*

One company, Latrobe Steel Company, sends a letter to all company suppliers with this request:

With the approach of another Holiday Season, we wish to remind you of Latrobe Steel Company's policy regarding gifts and favors.

In order to maintain the friendly and sound relationship existing between our companies, our employees are not permitted to accept gifts from our suppliers or their representatives.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our many friends for their services in helping us to attain our various objectives during the past year.

We extend to you our best wishes for a Happy Holiday Season and a Prosperous New Year.--W. C. Stonehouse, Vice President, Industrial Relations, Latrobe Steel Company, Latrobe, Pa.

#### YEAR-END WORK SCHEDULING

This year Christmas and New Year's Day fall on Wednesday, which raises problems for management in arranging work schedules on the preceding Tuesdays. Members of the Forum panel were asked to outline their holiday schedules for this year.

##### Tuesday Before Christmas

About one fifth of the companies say they will give no time off to employees on the Tuesday before Christmas. Forty percent of the smaller companies and 38 percent of the larger companies are giving employees all day Tuesday off. Forty-two percent of smaller companies and 28 percent of larger companies will operate only a half day on Tuesday before Christmas. The remaining companies will allow employees to go home from a half hour to two hours early, or will operate short shifts on Tuesday to insure early closing.

One company describes its plan:

Our labor agreement provides that: On December 24 and on December 31, except when these days are observed as holidays, all employees who can be excused will be excused after four and one half (4½) hours of work and will receive straight-time pay at their regular rate for all scheduled working hours not worked. All employees who cannot be excused will be paid at the rate of two and one half (2½) times their regular rate of pay, and in addition, any shift differentials to which they may be entitled, for all hours worked between 12:00 Noon and 12:00 Midnight.--Y. Nishida, Labor Relations Manager, Hawaiian Telephone Company, Honolulu, Hawaii.

##### Tuesday Before New Year's Day

Forty-three percent of the companies will give employees time off on the Tuesday before New Year's. Sixteen percent of smaller companies and 26 percent of larger companies will give employees all day off; 25 percent of smaller companies and nine percent of larger companies will give up to a half day off or have short shifts on that day.

##### Other Plans for Holiday Time-Off

Aside from the day before Christmas and New Year's, what other plans do companies have for holiday time-off? Several Panel members described a variety of arrangements. These are their comments:

In addition, we plan to give salaried employees Monday before Christmas this year only. Will use the 8th holiday for this purpose. It is a floater, Last year used it on Friday after Thanksgiving.--J. E. Bryan, Jr., Director of Industrial Relations, Albemarle Paper Company, Richmond, Va.

\* \* \*

Employees are allowed to take vacation in amounts of one day or more with supervisory approval.--R. G. Pierce, Assistant Vice-President--Industrial Relations, Dynallectron Corporation, Washington, D. C.

\* \* \*

Our benefit program includes a plant shutdown during this period.--J. J. Link, Personnel Director, Electronic Memories, Inc., Hawthorne, Calif.

\* \* \*

Tuesday prior to Christmas is a floating holiday; Monday prior to Christmas traded for the following Saturday.--F.P. Melograno, Vice-President, Administration, The Bunker-Ramo Corporation, Canoga Park, Calif.

#### Holiday Week Absenteeism

Despite all the season's conviviality, less than thirty percent of the companies say they have any special problem with unexcused absences during the week. None of them has developed special methods of combatting absenteeism during the holidays, aside from the almost-standard practice of requiring attendance on certain work days in order to qualify for holiday pay. Most frequently this calls for workers to be on the job the last working day before and the first working day after the holiday.

#### CHRISTMAS PARTIES

Company-sponsored Christmas parties are held in 40 percent of the smaller companies and 37 percent of the larger companies represented on the Panel. A few other companies have formal parties which are employee-sponsored. Informal parties are allowed or sponsored in 35 percent of the companies--and many of these are found in companies which also have the formal-type party. About 25 percent of the companies report that they have neither formal nor informal parties at Christmas time.

These Christmas parties may be roughly divided into three types: (1) Parties for employees only; (2) family parties, where wives or husbands of employees are invited; and (3) children's parties, where the primary emphasis is on entertainment.

#### Parties for Employees Only

Many parties of the "employee-only" type are small, informal gatherings in each department. They are usually planned by the employees in the department, and often are solely financed by them. Typically, they occur on the last working day before the holiday, and employees stop working early on that day to participate in the festivities. This kind of party is much more popular among office groups than among plant production workers. Only three companies said they allow alcoholic beverages at these informal parties, but a few others admitted that they did not strictly enforce a ban against alcohol.

I know a bottle or two appears on occasion. Nothing serious in my view.--Larger Company.

Following are some general comments from Panel members on this type of party:

We have permitted our employees to utilize the last hour of the shift on the final work day before Christmas to exchange gifts and greetings. This practice has eliminated all of the problems usually encountered on the last day before Christmas.--E. R. Willemin, Director of Industrial Relations, Bendix-Westinghouse Automotive Air Brake Company, Elyria, Ohio.

\* \* \*

There may be some cake and candy in the office, but no organized shindig. Definitely no parties out in the operation departments.--F. A. Welch, Jr., Director of Employee Relations, The Anaconda Company, Sahuarita, Ariz.

\* \* \*

The Company does not sponsor a Christmas Party as such, but most departments have departmental parties. The Company does not financially support these parties in any way; the full cost being borne by the employees attending. . .--M. T. Steadland, Honeywell, Industrial Div., Columbus, Ohio.

#### Family Parties

Family parties for employees and their wives, husbands, boy friends, or girl friends are usually held outside the plant and outside of working hours. Twenty-six percent of the companies in the survey have this type of party. It is customarily a dance or dinner-dance, although other types of get-togethers are found at some companies.

The annual Christmas party is an evening affair at a rented private club. The party is financed by the income from the sales of soft drinks, cigarettes, and candy during the year in the refinery and by the company making up the difference.--K. J. Jøregensen, Personnel and IR Supervisor, American Gilsonite Company, Gilsonite, Colo.

\* \* \*

Several years ago we decided to distribute the money we received from Canteen machines to two committees--one for the shop and one for the office. The money was used for any purpose which the employees saw fit. The office employees decided they would like to have a Christmas party in the evening, sometime prior to Christmas, and have a dinner and exchange gifts. This has been the practice for the past five years and has proven to be very satisfactory.--C. E. Dean, Administrative Assistant to the President, E. Keeler Company, Williamsport, Pa.

Aside from the dinner-dance, numerous other types of family parties are reported. One company, which has several plants throughout the country, says that at some locations the company-sponsored Christmas party frequently takes the form of an open house outside working hours. Another company gives a holiday luncheon for retirees:

The only Christmas party in recent years is a party given about the middle of December co-sponsored by the Company and the Union for retired employees and their spouses. Party is a luncheon (noon), music by employee talent--soft drinks and bar are provided. Company and Union share equally the cost of food and drinks; Union provides the hall. Transportation is provided on request. Party has been well attended. Cost to Company is about \$1.50 per retiree. Time is 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on a Saturday. Brief greeting by Union and Company management. Very short planned program to give maximum time for renewal of old acquaintances.--K. F. Krieg, Employee Relations Manager, Lockland, Ohio Plant, Philip Carey Corp., Cincinnati, Ohio.

Another company honors long-service employees:

Company Christmas party is actually to honor service employees and to mark the anniversary of the company. Awards for five, 10, 15, and 20 years of service are made at this party.--D. Richardsen, Administrative Manager, Flexible Tubing Co., Guilford, Conn.

#### Children's Parties

Since many people feel that Christmas is essentially a children's holiday, it is only natural that many companies have turned to children's parties as the best good-will gesture of the season. Moreover, children's parties are usually devoid of embarrassing "incidents" and, at the same time, contribute greatly to employee morale.

About 20 percent of the companies in the Forum survey conduct children's parties at Christmas time. (A few of these also have other parties, for employees only, or employees' husbands and wives.) Here are a few of the comments describing these parties:

A children's Christmas party is arranged one evening a few days before Christmas. We rent a school gymnasium to discourage drinking, and members of our security force are in attendance to assure order. The party is given for the children and grandchildren of employees. Local entertainment is provided and near the end, Santa Claus appears to help with the distribution of gifts. Gifts are provided for all children up to the age of 12. A few dozen door prizes are awarded to older children that may be present. --R. R. Hawkins, Assistant Vice President, Labor Relations, K&T Railroad Co., Louisville, Ky.

\* \* \*

Annually, the Company sponsors a Christmas Party for children of Company's employees and their friends in the Company's auditorium on the Saturday before Christmas. Professional acts, movies, and music comprise the program, which is repeated three times. Tickets for each show are previously distributed to employees. Candy is given each child as he leaves the show. --Larger Company.

A combination children's and grown-up's party is given in some companies, with apparently good results. One such party is described as follows:

We have established a practice of having a Family Day about two weeks prior to Christmas. (1) We have all facilities open, with displays, contests, prizes, etc. for all members of the family. (2) We have orchids for the ladies, door prizes, balloons, favors, and food for all. In addition, we rent children's rides and provide hostesses who in effect are baby sitters while older members of the family visit, eat, or look at displays. (3) All young children (12 and under) are given a large Christmas Stocking containing toys and candy. This is the only reference to a Christmas Party, since we prefer to play down this emphasis. --J. J. Link, Personnel Director, Electronic Memories, Inc., Hawthorne, Calif.

A few companies mentioned they were dropping their parties for employees and spouses and changing to children's parties. One company suggested that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act may have played a part in the decision to drop the Christmas Party:

We have had a Christmas Party for employees and spouses which included dinner, door prizes, and then later a dance. Since a change in certain laws has occurred, we will drop this party, due to several minor incidents (which could have turned into major incidents) and hold a party for children of employees, along with the probable use of a shift (three) party at the plant for the employees only. --Larger Company.

Some companies, when giving a Christmas party for employees' children, include children from orphanages or hospitals:

We bring children from the local orphanages to the same party given for employees' children. --C. W. Chambliss, Assistant Personnel Director, Drewrys Limited U.S.A., Inc., South Bend, Indiana.

#### COMMUNITY - RELATIONS ACTIVITIES

The majority of companies do not have definite company-sponsored charitable programs. Some of the companies have noted that they donate funds formerly spent on Christmas parties to charities:

For many years our Company sponsored an office Christmas party and also one for the plant foremen. However, in 1965 we surveyed the area practice and discovered that more and more larger companies were dropping the affair. Therefore in 1965 the Company donated approximately \$500 to the employees' Community Services Association (Red Feather Chest) in lieu of the party and have instituted in its place a key personnel "Management Night" dinner meeting in the early quarter of each year to outline Company goals and objectives . . . --G. B. Gaedeke, Personnel Director, Tuttle & Bailey, Div. of A. T. Corp., New Britain, Conn.

About 20 percent of the companies surveyed indicated that within their companies, employees sponsored various community projects.

Men's Club and Girls' Club sponsors project to collect gifts and money for underprivileged and hospitalized children, then has party(ies) for youngsters and distributes gifts. --L. B. Larkin, Jr., Manager, Benefits & Services, Hercules Incorporated, Wilmington, Del.

\* \* \*

. . . employee organizations sponsor Christmas parties and/or donate gifts to the underprivileged and orphans.--E. F. Lannigan, Vice President-Industrial Relations, Reliance Electric Co., Cleveland, Ohio.

\* \* \*

Our Employees' Recreation Association collects and distributes food to the needy.--C. E. Naugle, Industrial Relations Manager, EG&G, Las Vegas, Nev.

#### SHOULD COMPANIES SPONSOR CHRISTMAS PARTIES?

The question facing management every year as the holiday season approaches is: What to do about a Christmas party or parties? Related to this is the perennial problem: Should alcoholic beverages be served?

To aid management in making these decisions, members of the Panel were asked to give their candid opinion on each of these questions. Briefly summarized, the Panel voted almost two-to-one against such parties, and the same proportion voted against the serving of alcohol.

#### Why Companies Have Parties

In general, the personnel executives who vote "yes" on Christmas parties stress the good-will aspects of the get-together:

A company social function that includes the families of their employees provides an opportunity for everyone to get to know each other. Christmas parties, picnics, or prayer breakfasts are possible functions of this type.--G. L. Bowen, Vice President, Perpetual Building Association, Washington, D. C.

\* \* \*

We feel that it is a good personnel-relations function.--R. L. Roche, Personnel Director, Cambridge Wire Cloth Co., Cambridge, Md.

\* \* \*

It would help generate a spirit of camaraderie which in turn can promote Company loyalty.--G. J. Grimmer, Personnel Manager, Keyes Fibre Co., Hammond, Ind.

#### Bringing in the Family

Many executives favor company-sponsored Christmas parties, if they have a family orientation:

If it is on a family invitation basis or keyed primarily to the employees' children.--F. R. Schulz, Personnel Manager, Kelley Company, Inc., Milwaukee, Wis.

\* \* \*

No, unless it is a family affair away from work area. However, it would be more beneficial to have a children's party.--F. Lambert, Manager, Labor Relations, Handy & Harman, Fairfield, Conn.

\* \* \*

If done in good taste with emphasis on family and children, we think it is a valuable morale booster.--Larger Company.

#### Size of the Company as a Factor

Many management people believe that Christmas parties are all right for smaller companies, but not for larger ones:

It would depend on size of Company. It is not appropriate for large group of employees. -- H. B. Delaney, Staff Research, Atlas Chemical Industries, Wilmington, Del.

Another company indicated that formal parties off company property should be held only if there are a small number of employees.

Size has to be a governing factor. Parties held "off premises" to which spouses are invited can have a favorable effect on morale and lend to the spirit of the season, provided the group is small enough to be controllable. Where size makes this prohibitive, departmental or divisional parties serve as an ideal substitute. --D. P. Lacker, Vice President, First National Bank of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Arguments Against Parties

Those personnel executives who voted "no" on the subject of company-sponsored Christmas parties give a variety of reasons for their answers. The most prevalent opinion among this group is that Christmas parties lead to over-indulgence and embarrassing incidents. Others argue that employees are too busy at Christmas time, there are too many other parties, and that employees prefer and should spend Christmas in the family circle. Many of this group indicate that they have no objection to parties which are planned and sponsored by employee groups, rather than by the company. Some are quite definite in feeling that the "office party" is a dying institution:

Christmas parties for employees are passé. Without alcoholic beverages they are deadly boring; with alcoholic beverages they're dynamite. They can lead to all kinds of trouble and are inconsistent with usual practice as well as the promotion of safety, which is a keystone to good industrial practice.

The strongest argument against employee Christmas parties (at least for one who has gone through it) is the traumatic experience of attempting to "stand in" for a husband and father of several young children on Christmas after informing the new widow on Christmas Eve that her husband was killed in an automobile accident while on his way home from the employee Christmas party. --L. R. Swart, Director, Industrial Relations, Burndy Corp., Norwalk, Conn.

\* \* \*

Christmas is the time when one should be with one's family. It is not the time to become spirited and create a situation that could cause grief during this happy season. We permit informal gatherings during the last day of work during which employees may exchange the greetings and good will of the season. Experience has shown us that informal gatherings are far superior to parties that oft-times become uncontrollable due to individuals partaking in excessive non-holiday spirits. --A. P. St. George, Manager, Industrial Relations, Arwood Corp., Rockleigh, N. J.

\* \* \*

We have had employee Christmas parties in years past but are considering dropping it this year due to troublesome situations. We do not feel that very much good will is gained from this. -- J. F. Greene, Director, Industrial Relations, Farrington Manufacturing Co., Springfield, Va.

\* \* \*

First the wives objected for reasons too numerous to mention. Then the employees objected because there were almost as many guests as employees. Finally we cut it out. We used to have a whing ding--entertainment, music, ice carvings at the hors d'oeuvres table, champagne fountain, etc.. --J. B. O'Brian, Director of Industrial Relations, Leonard Refineries, Inc., Alma, Mich.

\* \* \*

It's an antiquated mode of paternalism. --Larger Company.

\* \* \*

Believe employees would prefer that money be spent on other benefits.--R. E. Hollerbach, Director, Compensation & Benefits, Parke, Davis & Co., Detroit, Mich.

\* \* \*

Do not recommend. Invariably they get out of hand and cause embarrassment to employees and the company.--E. L. Ogden, Vice President--Personnel, Anderson, Clayton & Co., Houston, Tex.

\* \* \*

There is sufficient affluence among workers today that social functions of this nature have lost their value.--R. R. Hawkins, Assistant Vice President, Labor Relations, K&IT Railroad Co., Louisville, Ky.

\* \* \*

To most people the holiday season is a personal time for immediate friends and families. Employees prefer their personal parties to that of a company.--D. M. King, Director of Personnel, Lytton's, Chicago, Ill.

\* \* \*

Have had such parties in the past--usually get out of hand and are never appreciated.--Larger Company.

#### SHOULD ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES BE SERVED?

A majority of the Panel members who expressed an opinion on the question of serving alcoholic beverages at company Christmas parties were opposed to the practice. Nevertheless, a sizable group of executives feel that liquor has a place at holiday affairs, and the privilege, if not abused, helps the festivities. As two companies said, "A party without drinking is a failure!" "It's risky but we do it. It's natural, has its advantages, and anything you do these days is a risk."

#### Limited Consumption is OK Away from Company Premises

Most of those who voted for drinks added that "moderation" was necessary, and it was wise to have parties away from the company:

This company has rigid controls on the uses and serving of alcoholic beverages. Our Christmas party is limited to 2½ hours, and minors are prohibited from drinking.--M. A. Flippen, Personnel Manager, Tri-Valley Growers, San Francisco, Calif.

\* \* \*

Served with discretion and in limited quantities.--J. R. Fryer, Director, Industrial Relations, Leesona Corp., Warwick, R. I.

\* \* \*

Only at off-premises parties.--C. D. Bond, Director of Personnel, Dynamics Research Corp., Stoneham, Mass.

\* \* \*

Only to limited amounts such as cocktail servings before party, and party should be off company premises.--Smaller Company.

\* \* \*

If used with moderation, nothing wrong.--P. B. Musgrove, Industrial Relations Counsel, Hiram Walker & Sons, Inc., Peoria, Ill.

Arguments Against Alcohol

Those executives who oppose drinking at Christmas parties usually give as their reason the unpleasant incidents which are likely to occur. Another reason is safety hazards both in the plant and in traffic going home after the party.

Alcohol and business don't seem to mix well when a total Company group is present. It seems to serve as an excuse for everything except mutual respect shown to one another in business.'--D. M. King, Director of Personnel, Lytton's, Chicago, Ill.

\* \* \*

Too much chance of company liability.--R. D. Patton, Industrial Relations Manager, O'Keefe & Merritt Co., Los Angeles, Calif.

\* \* \*

Invariably someone drinks too much and endangers his life and others on the highway going home.--F. A. Welch, Jr., Director of Employee Relations, The Anaconda Co., Sahuarita, Ariz.

\* \* \*

We have always felt that alcoholic beverages have no place at a Christmas party. In the state of Pennsylvania, it is illegal to furnish alcoholic beverages to any person under the age of 21. Several of our girls are under age 21, and we do not feel it is wise for them to have access to alcohol nor to see other people who have imbibed too much. The Christmas season is a sacred time of the year, and we feel that any party by an employer should reflect the sacredness of the season. There is too great a possibility of driving accidents when leaving the party and then there is also the question of moral laxity engendered by too much alcohol.--C. E. Dean, Administrative Assistant to the President, E. Keeler Co., Williamsport, Pa.

Rules against Drinking on Company Property

Members of the Panel were asked: "If you have a rule against drinking, is it strictly enforced on days preceding Christmas and New Year's Day?"

A few admitted that if they had the rule it was not strictly enforced:

We say we strictly enforce it, but don't really check the rest rooms, closets, etc. too closely.'--Larger Company.

Ninety-five percent of the Panel said that they did enforce no-alcohol rules. One comment on the subject:

For our 26 years we have taken a very firm stand against drinking on the job and extra-marital activities. We will continue without relenting.--H. C. Meir, Vice President, Universal Electric Co., Owosso, Mich.

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