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Companies keep lids on firing policies

By MARY GNIEWEK

Getting the axe is something neither employees nor employers like to talk about, according to an informal survey of Farmington businesses.

Yet employee termination is a reality. And every day, some boss at some company must tell a worker that he or she is fired. The reasons range from chronic absenteeism to poor job performance.

FARMINGTON HOUSES national and regional headquarters for several major corporations. Among them are Panasonic, White Castle, Nabisco, Jervis-Webb and Hamilton Insurance.

While some companies have a formal procedure leading to dismissal—from a verbal warning to suspension—others are more casual.

"Ours is a humanistic approach to dismissal," says Keith Scrutton, vice president of personnel for Jervis-

Webb. "This is a family-owned operation so things tend to be informal. Most of our employees have been with us for 20, 30 or 40 years."

JERVIS-WEBB EMPLOYS 3,000 to 4,000 persons worldwide. It is a materials handling company that designs systems like conveyors for use by all types of industry. The company was established in 1919 in Detroit.

"We are an engineering oriented firm, with seven manufacturing facilities in Michigan and outlets throughout the world," explained spokesman John Anderson.

"We strive to get the right people for the right job, but we do terminate people who are not qualified."

There are no formal employee evaluations at Jervis-Webb. Scrutton says that if an employee is troublesome, he or she gets a warning from the supervisor. That warning goes on record.

Continued problems lead to a sit-down session between boss, supervisor and personnel manager. If the problem can be worked out, attempts are made to solve it. No one is terminated without authorization from personnel.

"We bend over backwards to help before it happens," says Scrutton. "We work with individuals to prevent new problems from arising. When there is a problem, we sit down with the employee and figure out why they are not suitable."

Scrutton says that dismissal seldom comes as a surprise to an employee. Though firing employees at the company's branch outlets is handled regionally, the Farmington personnel office is notified.

FRANK SLIVA is the area manager for White Castle, a national restaurant chain that originated in Wichita, Kan.

In 1921. He is the manager of over 400 company employees in Michigan.

White Castle features miniature hamburgers as its main bill of fare, with few other menu choices. New employees get three weeks on-the-job training. Workers are hired for one of two posts: as cleanup workers or for food service and cashing.

Sliva explained the formal procedure for dismissal.

"First, there is a verbal warning, then a written report of complaint. If there's still a problem, the employee gets another written warning, then a suspension for a few days. If the problem persists when the employee returns to work, he or she is terminated."

Sliva says employees don't get fired often.

"We're in the business to keep employees. We hire them because we

need them. We usually have a large turnover after summer because we hire a lot of students. They quit to go back to school or onto another job after graduation."

Chronic absenteeism and tardiness are at the root of most firings, according to Sliva.

"We only have isolated, minimal problems," he said.

ANOTHER FOOD COMPANY with regional headquarters in Farmington is Nabisco, maker of cookies, cereal, crackers and candy. Sales and delivery are handled here. The main headquarters is in New Jersey.

"We don't fire employees here. All discharges are processed through world headquarters. We give them (the personnel department) the facts. They decide what to do," says Nelson Sprague, divisional operations manager.

The Panasonic office in Farmington follows the same dismissal procedure with its national headquarters in Chicago, Ill.

"We are a small distribution center attached to a large warehouse for the midwest region," said a company spokeswoman. "All hiring and firing goes through Chicago."

JOYCE HARMAN, PERSONNEL spokeswoman for the Hamilton Insurance Company, says her firm follows written procedures for dismissal.

"They're too detailed to give, but we do have written procedures that are shown to employees if there is a need."

Hamilton Life Insurance employs nearly 300 workers in the Farmington home office. They range from clerical workers to executives. Sales agents are not considered employees but rather as independent contractors.

Rabbis debate Judiasm from opposite poles

By MARY GNIEWEK

"A spiritual holocaust is taking place on college campuses and in synagogues today. It involves the destruction of young Jews. Jewish youngsters don't give a damn about being Jewish. It affects them about as much as the color of their hair."

These were the opening remarks made by orthodox Rabbi Mier Kahane Monday night as he addressed a packed Birmingham Temple, Farmington Hills, audience and debated humanistic Rabbi Sherwin Wine on the future of Judaism.

BOTH RABBIS ARE nationally known and often controversial figures who represent the polar opposites of modern Jewish thought.

Kahane, who once billed himself as the Jewish Eldridge Cleaver, is a former head of the activist Jewish Defense League. An author and lawyer, he now lives in Gila, Israel and leads a new group called the Center for Jewish Activists. The group represents the extreme right wing of the Israeli political spectrum.

Wine is the first to espouse humanistic Judaism and is the movement's acknowledged leader. He established the Birmingham Temple in Farmington Hills and has written a book defining Humanistic Judaism. In 1969, he helped found the Society for Humanistic Judaism, whose membership now comprises 10 temples across the country.

IN THE FORMATTED half hour allotted each Rabbi, both stated his case before a standing-room-only crowd. The arguments were followed by short rebuttals and then questions from the audience.

Though Kahane's speech was laced with humor ("There's no Judaism in Bar Mitzvahs. One of the objects is to see who can serve the most grotesque pile of chicken livers"), he criticized strongly the laxity he finds among American Jews today.

"American Judaism is a tragedy. It's something the people have created to suit themselves. If only you knew what your parents and grandparents had and threw away in this country."

"There is a God, not a spirit within man. The reason to be Jewish is the

Torah. Jews either heard what God said at Mt. Sinai or forgot it. We are not the masters of our own fate."

Opposed to a reliance on tradition, Wine advocates a scientific approach to the study of Judaism.

"**THE TRADITION** of the Torah was designed for people who never lived through an urban revolution," he said. "The Torah is not the reason for the survival of the Jews. They survived because they were economically useful."

Kahane called Humanistic Judaism passing phase. He said real humanism should invite an end to Jewish tradition, such as disapproval of intermarriage between Jew and Gentile.

Wine responded by saying today's Jews cannot plan ahead for the next century. He chided the orthodox belief in segregation.

"The basic issue is survival," Wine asserts. "He (Kahane) believes Jews must survive as a group, isolated from others. As humanists, we believe in survival in so far as it enhances us as human beings. We Jews thrive as human beings in modern society. If we have to keep apart from others—that's the price we have to pay—then it is too high a price."

Kahane gave advice to the crowd. "If you want to be Jewish, find a real Rabbi with real fire and faith in God. You cannot send your children to a synagogue school and not follow Jewish law at home. They can see the hypocrisy and fraud. If Judaism doesn't have something special in it for you, then drop it."

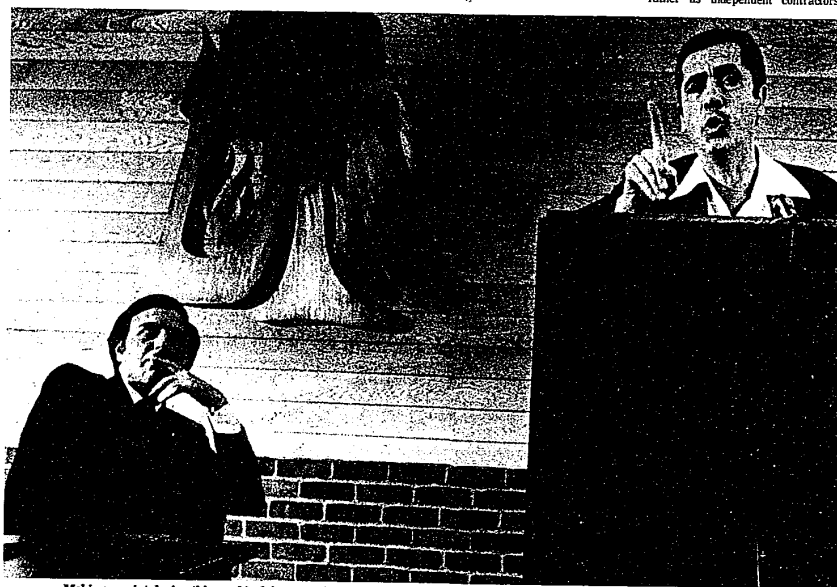
In answering a question from the audience, Kahane said he left the JDL because he moved to Israel.

"It's been a great change. The Israelis are not prepared for violence. They need a different type of organization."

In another question, Wine gave his stand on intermarriage.

"For intermarriage, they come from many types of families. Orthodoxy is incapable of persuading people to follow the fold. The traditional attitude is that if they won't follow the rules, goodbye. But I believe intermarriage is neither good nor bad. It depends on the individual couple."

The debate was the first of the Humanist Forum series for 1978-79.



Making a point during this week's debate at Birmingham Temple is Rabbi Mier Kahane. Looking on is Rabbi Sherwin Wine. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

Eye doctor performs free service

Local doctor moonlights in Brazil

By MARY GNIEWEK

Seventy-year-old Dr. Maurice Croil is too busy to think about retirement. Instead, the Farmington Hills ophthalmologist is planning a trip to Surat, India, next year to perform free medical service for one month.

It will be his 25th goodwill mission abroad. For the past quarter of a century Dr. Croil has spent a month each year treating the ills of people from South America to the Far East. All services are rendered free, though both the U.S. and Brazilian governments have offered to foot the bill.

"Governments get between people, I like relating to people, not paperwork. I pay for everything because I believe in the brotherhood of man," says Dr. Croil.

He established a surgical eye clinic in Anapolis, Brazil, that is still thriving. He worked in clinics in Hong Kong, Korea and India, leaving cases of second-hand surgical supplies behind for native doctors. The cure packages were his own gift, padded with whatever supplies he collected from fellow physicians at Grace Hospital.

Dr. Croil also operates a clinic in Southfield and still teaches at his alma mater, Wayne State University. This week, he is conducting a five-day review workshop for ophthalmology professors at Dearborn's Hyatt Regency Hotel. Eye specialists from as far away as Thailand and Argentina are expected to attend what is being billed as the "premier course in the country."

DR. CROIL is a man who enjoys his career. "It's been my life for 40 years," he says. "I'll retire when God tells me to. I'm a religious man."

He explains his hectic schedule with



Dr. Maurice Croil takes his stethoscope into the Brazilian jungles to tend to various illnesses of the South American Indian.

this philosophy: "I'm a doctor, not a talker. I don't wait for other people. If I'm inclined to do something, I tackle it right away."

A forerunner in his field, Dr. Croil was the first Detroit eye doctor to perform cataract surgery for removal of cataracts. While Grace Hospital's Chief of Ophthalmology, he and his brother, Dr. Leo Croil, published several articles for medical journals on the cold surgery technique.

clinic, combined with hunting and fishing," he recalled. "We came the next year and saw hundreds of eye cases. There was no end to it."

For the next 15 years, Dr. Croil returned to the Brazilian interior, accompanied by various Grace Hospital physicians. They treated not only eye cases but all bodily diseases. The country has an infant mortality rate of 50 per cent. Lepers and tribes of head-hunters were among the patients.

"It was made an honorary member of the Carna Indian tribe," Dr. Croil proudly states. "I was painted during a formal ceremony. I had to stay there an extra week just to get the paint off."

Dr. Croil's daughter, Cathy, accompanied him on two Brazilian trips. His wife, Eva Mae, a former Army nurse, travelled with him on his last trip to India. Last year, Dr. Croil took a leave of absence from his annual monthly mission to spend more time with his family.

HE AND HIS WIFE have two married daughters. One is a nursing specialist living in San Diego. The other is a Michigan State University education graduate living in Venice. Education has always been stressed in the Croil family.

Dr. Croil is also a Doctor of Dental Science. He earned that degree at the University of Michigan before attending Wayne State.

"I have always enjoyed writing. I started writing poetry two years ago. I've written 25 poems to date. And I'm working on a novel, too."

The subject for the book will be his South American adventures.

Dr. Croil has been awarded two outstanding alumnus awards from Wayne State University. He is also an honorary citizen of Brazil by government proclamation.

inside

IT ALL ADDS UP

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