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ACE builds on Warren's quality

by Michael Hissam

For ACE's (Alambrados y Circuitos Electricos) first plant site, a "handpicked" team from all Mexican Operations staff areas ventured 250 miles south on the Pan American Highway from Juarez/El Paso. Packard went to the Mexican interior and opened a new plant in Chihuahua.

Jack Roettinger, former plant manager and recently reassigned, a 16-year Packard veteran, quickly pointed to the "32 years of Packard experience that the Mexican managers on this startup team had. They were in personnel, accounting, quality control, materials management engineering and manufacturing."

Nearly a year old, the Chihuahua facility assembles engine control wiring for A-2.5, J-1.8 and turbo and S-truck 2.5 and 2.8.

150-point check

Roettinger pointed out that Chihuahua's harness products have the largest content among those quality-checked by the electronic At Line Ring Out (ALRO) system.

"ALRO checks 150 points after the harnesses are built for clip and clamp presence and electrical circuit integrity. There are four ALRO boards per line; we'll have 14 lines here by December."

Zero customer complaints and a year-to-date 143 Quality Index average support ACE-Chihuahua's quality record, he explained.

A very stringent training program certifies Chihuahua employees.

"Our 'certified' or universal employees are team leaders — quality leaders. They are assigned ALRO positions and are trained in Statistical Process Control. They give us SPC feedback in a weekly report," Roettinger.

"Our employees are enthusiastic and eager."

Warren support

Roettinger reiterated Chihuahua's dependency on Packard-Warren.

"Warren Methods Lab did our preplanning. Plants 14 and 45 supply leads — and we're talking about 450,000 lead codes per day," he said. "The quality of material from Warren is good; the few problems are handled well. I feel we have an excellent relationship with supply plants in Warren."

"We also have an excellent material control system — borrowing concepts from the Warren Branch Operations, adding Mexican innovations to them," he continued.

"For example, Materials, not service people, is responsible for allocation of material. Our store accuracy is 99.4 percent!"

Clinton promotes 'Common Sense'

by Beth Magee

Packard-Clinton's Plant 24 until this summer was a non-descript area used for storage. Rejuvenated by an immediate sense of purpose, primary colors shout from the machinery. Lights flash and buzzers sound. Pictures of operators adorn each work station.

These are only the trappings of the Common Sense Management System Pilot, a program initiated in December of 1984 to analyze Clinton's operations and develop excellent practices in terms of material, quality and all other elements of manufacturing.

"Clinton's Common Sense Management System Pilot will provide one of the greatest opportunities for the Mississippi Operations," said Pat McCart, director, Mississippi Operations. "We are questioning every premise we have operated on and are committed to developing sensible practices for the manufacture of our product."

Organized under the direction of Robert Butkowski, superintendent, Manufacturing Engineering, this program incorporates the Just-In-Time manufacturing approach.

Butkowski said, "This system helps eliminate waste, applies total quality control principles and utilizes the Cause and Effect Diagram with the Addition of Cards." To initiate the pilot, he formed a team of Clinton hourly and salaried employees and an integrated supplier representative. This team divided itself into "squads" representing quality, engineering and manufacturing.

"Team members established an overall purpose to build and deliver one day's requirement of perfect quality material daily to Port Gibson, a local supplier," he said.

Working toward this goal, members established a team philosophy and guidelines.

"These included developing a system to fully utilize human resources based on respect and consideration, accepting nothing less than perfect quality, realizing technical improvement is necessary, providing the best quality at the lowest cost and recognizing that as the demands of the business change, so must everyone," Butkowski added.

He noted that team members analyzed the Clinton system to determine what does not work, and to suggest improvements for methods that do. When possible improvements were identified; members moved to implement them.

"We operated with the philosophy that rather than just talk about something, we would go out and do it," explained Butkowski.

"We followed an improvement cycle which involved adhering to an idea and then analyzing, improving and standardizing."

Clinton developed a process and developmental lab in Plant 24 where ideas could be tested and improved; innovative methods and approaches evolved, he said.

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The Diez is a movable container made of 10 padded half cells which protect wire components while they are transported to the supplier. The Diez is one part of Mississippi's drive toward excellence.

Photo: Hissam



Photo: Courtesy of Mexican Operations

Packard Electric employees from the Mexican Operations' ACE Delicias plant work to maintain high quality. Mexican ACE plants averaged greater than 140 on the quality index for the 1985 model year.

ACE: Pride in quality

Packard production starts have their usual share of headaches. A new workforce, relatively untried suppliers and a new dimension in distance (300 miles south of El Paso) added to the stresses associated with the startup of ACE's Delicias, Chihuahua, plant.

Delicias employees are building the product right; their Quality Index for the 1985 model year was 141 for Chevrolet Van, Chevrolet A- and Corvette wiring harnesses.

According to Gustavo Ronquillo, manager of Engineering, that results from "a commitment to excellence."

Ronquillo pointed out that Delicias's workforce is the keystone of excellence and quality.

"We sought the better-educated worker. A high percentage of our 800 people have a high school education," he said. "Among ourselves, we speak of the goals associated with excellence. We try to improve ourselves through excellence."

New suppliers

Delicias, according to Ronquillo, is in an agricultural area. "That meant new challenges for us with suppliers, especially those supplying 'indirect' items such as tooling," he said. "Our startup team worked with them — went to their locations to express our needs for quality items and the importance of on-time delivery. "That situation continues to show improvement."

Local impact

ACE-Delicias appears to have made a "strong positive impact" in its location, Ronquillo noted.

"We were well received. ACE's presence has boosted the city's economy."

"Taking care of details" at ACE

Taking care of details during training, and an ongoing "professional" attitude by its more than 300 employees, accounts for the outstanding quality records at ACE-Cuauhtemoc.

Ruben Parga, plant manager, is proud of his plant's quality.

"We had very few quality problems in June and July out of 12,000 harnesses. I must also credit Brookhaven for the quality of cut leads they send to us," he said.

The Plant's Quality Index to date is 144.

Communication concerning quality is encouraged among workers, he noted.

"Operators telling other operators about ways to support quality is another reason for our success.

"There is also the professional behavior of our people on the job," Parga continued. "They work toward excellence — striving for the best every time."

"We at Cuauhtemoc have a special goal for 1986 production: that is to pursue excellence in our entire plant!"

'Common Sense' approach gains; Clinton uses Diez, Kanban methods

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A diez — a container for transporting wire and components to the supplier — is a result of the work in the lab. This container holds 10 half cells equipped with dividers and protective padding. On wheels, the diez may be rolled directly to the line station and unloaded, thus reducing handling and potential for error.

An Andon Board to address maintenance problems was another accomplishment of the group, Butkowski said.

Visible throughout the pilot module, this board contains squares representing different areas on the one side and maintenance needs across the top.

When a certain area needs maintenance, such as when the LFT cutter area needs a mechanic, the corresponding block will light up in color. A buzzer will also sound, and the appropriate maintenance person heads to the area.

Equally impressive is the Kanban system. When problems occur, they are described on cards displayed on a board in the area. Cards are not removed until the problem has been addressed.

Each module incorporates a management by sight philosophy. Each area is designated a



Packard Clinton employees use "management by sight" inspection methods.

specific color. Equipment is painted accordingly. Colorful lines separate the floorspace. Pictures of the operators hang at each station.

A walk through the area serves as an introduction to some of the latest technology available such as the cutter bank and Komaz cutter. This technology will significantly reduce production set up time.

While there is still equipment to be debugged and there are procedures to be refined, the initial goal is almost in sight. Supplying material on a daily basis to the first package is expected to occur by the end of the year.

Information Briefs

New divisional security chief

James E. Starr, formerly chief of Plant Security at B-O-C Fleetwood, has been promoted to Divisional chief, Plant Security and Fire Protection. Starr has been with General Motors for 23 years and holds a bachelor's degree in Police Administration from Mercy College. In his new assignment he will be responsible for plant security and fire protection for all Packard Electric Operations and will report to Larry Haid, Assistant Personnel director, Industrial Relations.

Mid-September sales gains continue

Customer response to GM's unprecedented 7.7 percent financing continued in mid-September as dealers posted their third consecutive period of record sales. The 158,929 GM passenger car deliveries were 13 percent above September 11-20 last year, and broke the previous record for the period set in 1969.

Deficit sets August mark

The U.S. budget deficit hit a record \$2.03 trillion in August. Treasury Department officials said the year-end total should be slightly less because a small surplus is expected for September, the last month in the federal government's fiscal year.

GM one of top advertisers

Proctor & Gamble again led the list of top advertisers according to trade publication Advertising Age. P & G spent \$872 million in 1984 to keep its 21-year reign as the nation's biggest advertiser. General Motors moved up from fourth place in the Ad Age estimates to second with a \$763.8 million total.

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Quality

Packard bulk ignition cable gains in aftermarket sales

by Patricia Reilly

Your brother-in-law convinced you he could save you a bundle by giving you a cheapie tune-up. He deftly yanked your ignition leads to pop the boots off the spark plugs — for good. Good-bye connection! Your spark plug wires will never spark again.

You found yourself trudging to the nearest auto parts store to purchase new spark plug wires.

Guess who built the new wires? Chalk one up for Packard Electric.

Spark plug wires are continually threatened by dangers such as do-it-yourself mechanics. This results in quite a few sales of ignition sets by gas stations and retail outlets. And many of these sales involve Packard wire.

Packard began selling bulk ignition wire to non-allied customers more than 15 years ago. Business has become brisker recently as Packard adds new customers, and current customers gain market share.

"Our customers know that we're the best in the industry," said John Snyder, manager, aftermarket sales. "We offer a top-quality product and unparalleled service."

Some non-allied customers of Packard bulk ignition wire include Standard Motor Products, Wells Manufacturing and Lucas Industries. These assemblers cut, terminate, boot and package ignition sets for sale under their own brand name.

"We sell Packard bulk ignition cable only to top-notch quality assemblers," Snyder said.

Their purchases include 7mm black and orange hypalon and rust and gray silicone, and 8mm gray and blue silicone — all in a variety of specification numbers.

"In many instances customers like to use the brand name 'Packard Electric' because it helps sell their product," Snyder explained. "Otherwise we imprint their brand name as we make the cable."

Non-GM sales support Packard's growth objective and bring new money into General Motors. Packard carefully selects new customers in geographic areas and markets that won't cut into the sales of other Packard customers.

"The people in Plants 3 and 8 who produce our bulk ignition products do a fine job in assuring high-quality," Snyder added.

Graphite oven operators make the core; extruder operators add a coat of rubber produced in the rubber mixing area. A fiberglass braid interweaves with the cable before a final silicone compound jacket is added.

"It doesn't take black magic to make this product right," said Chuck Reifinger, general supervisor, Rubber Mill. "If we can control the variables in our process, we can control the quality."

In the past year operators have extruded cable directly onto the shipping reel, thus bypassing a rewinding step and reducing costs.

"Our people know our customers and are involved with them," Reifinger said. "When customers come in we introduce them to the people, and they sometimes bring product samples to show our operators what problems they're having."

Goals of the ignition cable area include:

- improve quality
- improve material costs
- reduce scrap costs

"When you are supposed to be winning a race it's easy to become complacent," Reifinger pointed out. "We are the highest-quality supplier of bulk ignition cable, but we're also one of the costliest."

'Brotherhood means helping others'

Brotherhood means helping yourself by helping others.

—**Elbert Hubbard**, author and freelance newspaper reporter

Many Packard Electric employees demonstrate the philosophy of brotherhood through "Fair Share" contributions to the annual United Way fund-raising campaign. This year the United Way of Trumbull County will support an agency which wouldn't exist without brotherhood.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Mahoning Valley, Inc. recently joined the ranks of United Way-supported agencies in Trumbull County, according to Kevin Clifton, campaign coordinator, Trumbull County United Way. Twenty-nine agencies receive assistance through the United Way.

"Packard employees have a strong, proud history of caring," said Clifton. "Packard people's generous response will mean the difference between hope and despair for thousands of their Trumbull County neighbors."

Some Trumbull County United Way-sponsored agencies include: the American Red Cross, Boy Scouts of America, Chemical Awareness, CONTACT Trumbull, Girl Scouts and Trumbull Mobile Meals, Inc.

"I urge Packard employees to give generously," Clifton emphasized. "I hope they will consider joining the ranks of Fair Share contributors. They will have the satisfaction of knowing that their contribution is helping make a difference."

Packard-Warren will try to reach \$955,000 in employee pledges this year — up from last year's goal of \$905,000.

"Packard is a community-minded organization,



Watt Brown, CV operator, Dept. 322, prepares a reel of bulk ignition cable for shipment to the customer.

We should ask ourselves, 'how much and for how long are our customers willing to pay for our product?'"

Packard must continue to improve to maintain its market position against competitors such as Prestolite, Essex, Carol Cable, Madison Wire and Ristance Corp.

"We're constantly looking at how we can better compete and improve our quality," Reifinger said.

and so are its people," said Carl Rausch, Packard's salaried United Way chairman. "We want to see excellence not only at Packard Electric, but in the community as well. The only way our United Way organizations will achieve excellence is through our support."

"We take pride in ourselves, and should take pride in those organizations that are supported by the United Way in our community."

Children in grades K-12 participated this month in Packard's United Way poster contest. Packard-Warren also held a \$1,000 U.S. Savings Bond drawing for fair share givers.

"Our United Way campaign committee is enthusiastic and dedicated," said Don Mumford, Public Relations staff. "Packard Electric was well-represented at Trumbull County's campaign kickoff held at the Packard Music Hall."

Lee Crawford, director, Warren Operations, chairs Packard's campaign this year. Hourly committee co-chairmen include: Kathy Nichols, Bill Rodgers, Pat Baldwin, Marie Gray and Daisy Thomas. Cecelia Johnson serves as committee advisor.

"The May 31 tornado affected Trumbull, Mahoning and Portage Counties. These counties receive dollars generated by the United

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VP Johnson reviews GM ethics

Elmer Johnson, General Motors vice president and group executive in charge of the Operating Staffs Group spoke with Packard managers recently. In an interview with the **Cablegram**, Johnson discussed topics including GM's business ethics and social responsibility to employees:

Cablegram: Let's open the interview by looking ahead: Why will business ethics be so critical as we move into the 21st century?

Johnson: With the development of new technologies we have greater impact on other aspects of society. With these far-reaching consequences, we have to be more sensitive to our constituents than we were 20 years ago. We have to regard not only stockholders as our constituents, but the public, the environment, the government, our employees and our customers.

How do we balance these? How do we treat employees and help them enhance their work environments? In the end, it's a partnership.

Cablegram: Why do you believe in the credibility of GM?

Johnson: I have been working in the field for forty years, and have seen many companies get in deep trouble. Of all the companies I worked with in the 70s, GM stood out from the rest of the crowd. It had written rules of conduct — some going back as far as the 1920s, written by Alfred Sloan. (former chairman of the board of GM)

I was very impressed by the long tradition of ethics in the company. Most companies found ethics important only late in their development. Ethics has been a part of GM for a very long time.

Cablegram: What can General Motors employees do to improve the public's perception of the corporation?

Johnson: Our acquisition of high-tech companies has been a major factor in changing the public's perception of GM. It no longer thinks of us as a smokestack industry. The emphasis on world-class quality has changed our image even more. Quality — there is no substitute for it. If as employees we can produce quality products, then the public's perception of us will fall into place.



Photo: Hissam

"Of all the companies I worked with in the 70s, GM stood out from the rest of the crowd."

—Elmer Johnson

Packard's giving ways continue

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Way campaign," a committee spokesman said. "We hope that Packard people will continue to support their friends and neighbors through the United Way. We feel our concern for others is expressed through our Fair Share contributions."

Mississippi efforts

Packard-Clinton's United Way campaign kicked off on September 30, 1985 with a drawing for a \$500 U.S. Savings Bond, according to Beth Magee, Public Relations staff, Clinton.

Cablegram: What social responsibilities do you feel corporations have toward their employees?

Johnson: First, employees deserve a good, nurturing appraisal system. Each employee deserves an honest appraisal of his work at least once a year. That honest exchange between employee and supervisor is very important for a person's sense of accountability and worth. It makes work meaningful. Also, it helps determine equitable compensation. People need to know how they are doing in relation to others in the organization.

Second, job security is important to employees. When people are relieved of the fear that they may not have a job, it is a lot easier for them to concentrate on what they can contribute to the company.

Cablegram: What changes do you think must take place for American industry to move away from the boom and bust cycles toward long-range stability?

Johnson: Our biggest problems are the big national issues, such as the trade deficit and the budget deficit. That's why (GM chairman) Roger Smith is spending so much of his time on these national issues. If our nation can't solve some of these problems, it won't matter what we do, we will not have any stability.

Cablegram: Why are you so optimistic in a time when so many are pessimistic about American business?

Johnson: I believe external challenges are opportunities for improvement. Any organization that receives as many external challenges as we have in the last 10 years — such as the Japanese auto manufacturers and government regulations — must bring out its best to survive.

Challenge makes us band together to fight the common enemy. We are running for our lives — both labor and management. We must be frank with each other. We must work together.

Cablegram: In what ways do you find your GM experience different from other paths in your career?

Johnson: The most basic change is that most of my work is now non-legal. I still have the general counsel role, but I spend only half my time on that. While I'm still dealing with the big legal issues such as CAFE regulations, I find even more challenging the expanded duties I now have in Public Affairs and Operations. I have tried to become well-informed in materials management, marketing, industrial relations and personnel.

It's personnel for which Packard is best known. Recruiting and nurturing young people is an extremely important part of the business.

Working toward a goal of \$111,000, this year's campaign will be conducted by a joint union-management committee composed of: Edith Lambert, local IUE pension representative; Terry Lee, Personnel director, Mississippi Operations; Terry Wells, local IUE Health and Safety representative and Ed Wogoman, resident comptroller, Mississippi Operations.

According to Brian Adkins, general supervisor, Accounting, Plant 23 in Brookhaven hopes to raise \$8,000 in employee pledges to the United Way this year.

Big brothers: making a difference

Older brothers: They're bossy, argumentative, overbearing and think they know it all. So why do little brothers like to hang around them?

Big brothers are also knowledgeable, caring, protective and fun to be with.

Some children don't have big brothers to serve as role models. Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Mahoning Valley, Inc., tries to fill this need by matching youngsters with volunteers who act as big brothers or sisters. This organization recently joined the list of United Way-supported agencies in Trumbull County.

Tilden Tatebe, electrical engineer, spends four to eight hours each week with his little brother Shane Robinson, 12. Whether they're washing a car, working on a bike, taking in a movie, grabbing a bite to eat or just talking, they make sure they keep in contact each week.

Maintaining contact is the most important thing, Tatebe pointed out. If they can't get together during a given week, they chat on the telephone.

"The most satisfying thing is seeing your little brother make progress," Tatebe said. "Although you can't always affect their lives as much as you'd like, it's nice to feel you've contributed to helping them mature."

Big Brothers/Big Sisters helps get the relationship started by arranging for a "suitable match" through interviews of potential big and little brothers and sisters.

"I've had good experiences with the two little brothers I've had. The effort is really worth it. I joined this program because the most important thing in my life is my relationship with Christ, and this is one way to express that," Tatebe said.

"You have to remind yourself that these kids aren't fully-formed people yet. They're at an age where they experience a lot of peer pressure and go through many changes.

"It's enjoyable to me to be a part of that change."



Photo: Reilly

Shane Robinson (left) spends an afternoon helping "big brother" Tilden Tatebe give his Pontiac Fiero a bath. Robinson and Tatebe met through Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Mahoning Valley, Inc.