

BUSINESS AND SOCIETY

Business is responsible for society, consumers, employees and investors. Its activity companies must build up in respect for person's dignity and justice of distributing benefits. Profitable activity of any company is not possible without attentive attitude towards health and safety of its employees labors. Rights of minority, women and ethnic groups to equal fee, education and access to information are taken into account in ethic code of company.

In making decisions companies must balance the needs of the various groups that have a stake in a free-economic system: the community and its environment, consumers, workers and investors.

Pollutions problems became the subject of widespread public concern in the 1960s, when ecology and the balance of nature became a popular cause. Toxic chemical accidents are not the only form of pollution threatening our environment. Our air, our water, our land are all subjects to abuse as a consequence of industrial activity. Besides there are still such troubles as acid rains, airborne carcinogens, toxic waste disposal. By the way, industry has begun to take steps to reduce hazardous waste contamination. Some companies use high-temperature incineration, some recycle wastes, some neutralize wastes biologically, and some redesigned their manufacturing processes so as not to produce the wastes in the first place.

The activism of the 1960s also made companies more sensitive to consumers. Crusaders like Ralph Nader, author of UNSAFE at ANY SPEED, shocked the public with exposes about poorly designed, unsafe and unhealthful products. In response to the consumer movement, a number of businesses created their own consumer affairs departments to handle customer complaints. At the federal level, a new "bill of rights" for customers was announced which laid the foundation for a wave of consumer-oriented legislation. These rights include the right to safety, the right to be informed, the right to choose and the right to be heard. Principle of utilitarianism foresees benefit for most of the people.

Over the past decades dramatic changes have occurred in the attitudes and composition of the work force. These changes have forced businesses to modify their recruiting, training and promotion practices. The burden of discrimination has fallen on minorities, such outnumbered and easily distinguishable groups as blacks, Spaniards, other ethnic groups, the handicapped, the elderly and so on. Women too have traditionally suffered economic discrimination. Most companies have willingly complied with government requirements and set up affirmative action programmers to actively recruit members of minority groups and train them for jobs. They have fixed up quotas to provide genuine equality in career opportunities. Another sensitive issue is sexual harassment which represent illegal discrimination. According to the rule companies should train supervisors to avoid the problem. Special services inspect workplaces not only to investigate complaints, but also to check safety. Penalty for noncompliant include fines and imprisonment. The Du Pont Chemical company serves as an outstanding example of what can be accomplished when safety is given a high priority. Every day the chairman of the company receives a safety report where all accidents are reported immediately. And virtually every meeting, regardless of the purpose, begins with a report on a safety of employees. The national environmental policy must deal with the problems of ecology, job discrimination, move toward change, positive experience in promoting people, constitutional quotas, standards of safety and health.