History

SECTION 2: Coming of Age

SCENE SETTER

Dana is famous for the Dana Style, and for good reason. But sometimes when our company gel talked about, too much attention gets paid to how we do things and not enough to what we achieve. The bottom line of the Dana Style is that it works, and it works because it's not a doctri but an attitude -- a flexible, progressive way of empowering people to get things done.

Although the Dana Style wasn't fully articulated until the 1970s, it owes a considerable debt to tl leadership of Charles Dana. Hating paperwork, Dana was committed to education, employee benefits and idea-sharing. He liked keeping plants to a workable size, and locating them near customers. He also prized growth and success -- of which the company enjoyed so much under his leadership, it was renamed Dana Corporation in his honor in 1946.

But although aspects of the modern Dana style were already present, much of the substance of today's company still had to be integrated. Dana was relatively small, with annual sales of $108 million, and relied too heavily on a single segment of the automotive industry -- original equipme for passenger cars.

1st vignette

A new era

For fifteen long years of depression and war, the civilian car market had been lifeless. Yet millio of cars had fallen apart during this time, and millions more were held together only by ingenuity prayer. Demand was ready to explode.

It did not happen immediately. For two years, while veterans demobbed into civilian life, people hung on to their money. Automobile companies used the lull well. They retooled their factories a designed a generation of stylish, aerodynamic and powerful vehicles.

As these came onto the market, confidence soared. There was talk of jet cars, even atomic cars Customers began to demand automatic transmission, power steering, power brakes and other accessories. Tail fins and bubble tops grew popular, as imagination seemed the only boundary progress. The 1949 Nash even had a folding bed in the back seat.

Cars were fun again, and fun was big business.

At the same time, the pioneers and long-time leaders of the automotive world were retiring, and new generation was coming to the fore. At Dana, this shift began in 1949 when Charles Dana w appointed Chairman of the Board, and R.E. Carpenter succeeded him as President. Then, in 1952, Jack Martin was recruited from Firestone, and in 1954 he was appointed President.

From the start, Martin recognized that Dana needed to prepare leaders for the future. He recruit a series of young, talented people, then encouraged them to form "discussion groups" to study