



WESTIN HOTELS

# Homefront

FOR WESTIN HOTELS CORPORATE OFFICE EMPLOYEES

January 25, 1985

## THANKS FOR YOUR RESPONSE!

Your responses to the HOMEFRONT survey (60-second critic) as coordinated by Corporate Personnel was much greater than anticipated. Total responses--161. And judging from the number of write-in comments, a lot of you took more than just the minute to complete your survey forms.

Sincere thanks for your feedback. We'll do our best to be guided by your information preferences--both as you rated the listed items and your write-in suggestions--in future HOMEFRONT issues.

Now, for the survey recap:

Of the 161 responses, 152 said they wanted HOMEFRONT continued; 8 said no, and 1 was non-committal (the concept was O.K., but thought the language "a bit corny.")

As to the check-off listing of type of information preferences, all 13 listings received votes but to varying degrees in the cumulative total.

Heading the totals were "Corporate plans/strategies" and "Corporate office policy/procedure changes" sharing 120 votes each. (Interest in these two areas was further confirmed in the number of write-in comments.)

"Special rates, bargain buys" and "Employee offers, etc." shared second place with 118 votes each and "New hires, transfers, promotions" was third with 117 votes.

Also in the running were "Benefit news" (113 votes); "Coming Events" (111 votes) and "Employee activities" (108 votes).

At the bottom of the scale were "Community events" (56 votes); "Letters to the editor" (59 votes); "Hotel briefs"

(60 votes) and "Social items" (62 votes).

Somewhere in between: "Employee profiles" (71 votes) and "Department/Division news" (100 votes).

As to write-in suggestions for other news/feature topics, a couple of respondents suggested classified notices (items for sale, rentals, etc.). Other suggestions: recipe sharing, restaurant critiques, employee-contributed poems and cartoons, items from The Westin Hotel, Seattle and service anniversary listings.

A number of respondent comments were in reinforcement of their votes for HOMEFRONT's continuation as a communications link for corporate employees. A need for information about corporate plans, strategies, office procedures and policy direction and the "how are we doing" state of the company was emphasized.

As one respondent put it, "I feel very strongly that the average corporate employee needs to know more about Westin--its problems as well as its pluses..."

And this, "We know who we are and where we want to go. Let's hear some clear cut words on how to get there..."

Well, there you have it--your feedback. How will we respond? All we can say is the best we can with whatever resources are available to us. And you, by the way, are one of those resources.

If you have some news or other items you think might be of general HOMEFRONT reader interest, please let us know. Further, if there's a specific subject you would like to know more about or feel in need of a topic update, let us know about that too. Drop a note to HOMEFRONT editor, ADV-13, or call Gabe Fonseca, Ext. 3182.

## THE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

"Westin will grow!" That's the company's number one goal according to CEO Harry Mullikin who made that point plain during his opening address to the 1985 Management Conference attendees held at the Camino Real, Mexico City in early January.

Growth was just one of five "basic and essential thrusts" that will be pursued by the company during 1985 as Westin implements its new directions in strategic planning for its future.

The other four pursuits were listed as: Westin will be market driven. Westin will reduce the costs of developing new hotels. Westin will improve the operating profitability of its hotels and corporate office operations. Westin will manage its assets so as to develop a satisfying return on equity.

Amplification of these five points were emphasized in Mullikin's presentation as well as those made by other corporate officer presentations. (See the February issue of FRONT for more details).

Repeatedly stressed throughout the Conference, however, was that the specifics of Westin's strategic planning, particularly as related to marketing strategies, would not be divulged until they are implemented. This as a precautionary measure to assure that such plans would not become common knowledge among the competition before they were put in place.

The Conference mood, as exhibited by attendee reaction, was one of upbeat optimism for an exciting and rewarding future for Westin Hotels and its employees. As Mullikin noted to the Conference group, "You will see more changes in Westin Hotels in the next three years than you have seen in the last 15 years."

## WHY ACCOUNTING BULLETIN #16

Those of you who've read Accounting Bulletin #16 (issued January 1) may have wondered what prompted the revisions to Westin's hotel discount practices. Wonder no longer. Sandy Peiser, Westin's

director of taxation, provides the answers.

It all has to do with Federal law, Sandy explains. It is Westin's response to the Tax Reform Act (also known as the Deficit Reduction Act) of 1984. The revisions--which are very minor--were made to bring Westin's practice in compliance with the various restrictions imposed by the tax act so that these benefits could continue to be provided to employees on a non-taxable basis.

Point one is that the Bulletin reinforces the previous practice that complimentary rooms will be available to employees ONLY on a space-available basis.

Hotels can no longer block room nights strictly for employee complimentary use. The law is very specific in that if a hotel turns away a paying guest in order to give a free room, then it would be out of law compliance and the value of that room would become taxable.

Secondly, the reduction of F&B discounts from 25 percent to 20 percent is also a result of that law. To remain on a tax-free basis, the law has determined that a qualified employee discount is limited to 20 percent.

All other qualifications and restrictions as previously spelled out for Westin's Complimentary Room Policy remain.

For administrative simplification and that the policy be uniform throughout the company, this revised practice applies to all Westin hotels, even those outside the U.S., that offer this employee comp room benefit.

## PEOPLE

A Westin welcome to new hires: Susan Stewart, tax accountant, Tax Department (X3102); John Nesbitt, analyst/programmer, Hotel EDP (X5070); Sheri Hashimoto, installation project analyst, Hotel EDP (X5184); Edwin Hanson, senior analyst/programmer, Hotel EDP (X8996); Hank Lo, interior designer, Design International (8980); Sandy Peterson, assistant buyer, Discoveries (X3164); Michele Norton, part-time clerk, Discoveries (X3164).