

Even in the heat

7 out of 10 bosses still require 'uniform'

By HENRY GILGOFF
(C) 1973, NEWDAY

You know the kind of day. A scorcher. A record-breaker. The kind of day a man might reasonably hesitate before noosing up with a tie.

A daydreaming day about calling in sick and riding off to the beach or just lounging in the backyard. A setting to consider shaking up the office in a burst of boldness simply by dressing casually and comfortably.

The moment passes. Tie goes on, followed by jacket, and one more colored-collar worker falls in line with the rest of the troops driving off to sectors of the business world where the tie-and-jacket is still a mainstay.

Of course, not everybody has to wear the outfit. And for those who do, styles change.

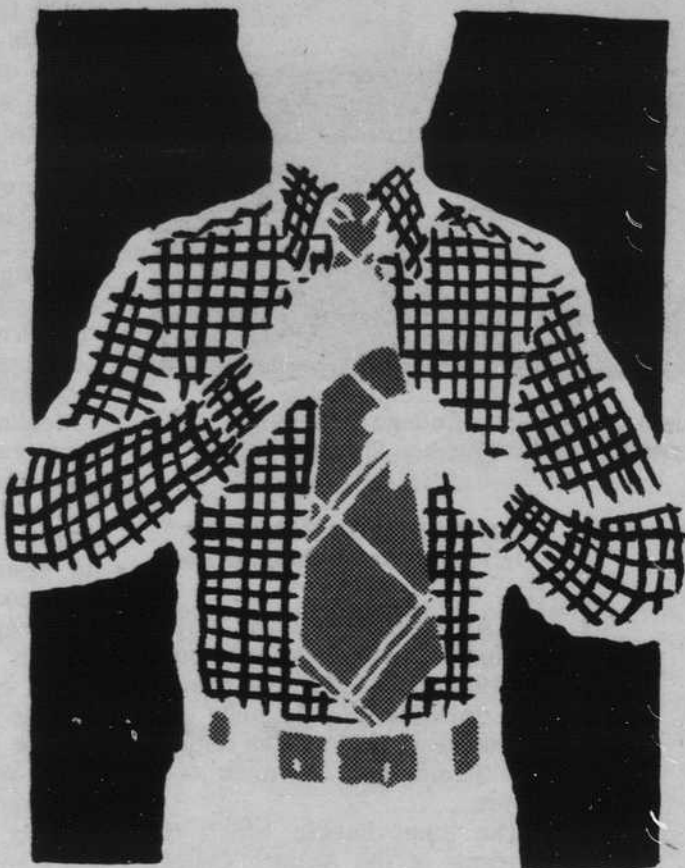
Still, a survey of 370 companies last year by the Administrative Management Society of Willow Grove, Pa., found that 71 per cent of the firms demanded ties and jackets. The survey did not distinguish between sport jackets and suits.

"Why don't the men rebel more?" asked Ernest Dichter, a psychologist and motivational expert, and answered: "They're too much like sheep."

Dichter is president of his own consulting firm, Ernest Dichter Creativity, and he dresses as he chooses.

On the day of the interview, he was wearing check pants with red, blue, yellow and white stripes, and a short-sleeve shirt open at the collar. The shirt happened to be white but, he said, that was understandable because "my pants are very colorful. Last week, my wife told me I look like a parrot."

Decision-makers following a hard-line clothing policy, implied or stated, might shrink from a consultation with a psychologist who dresses like a parrot. But if they were to listen, here is what Dichter would tell them: "We



should modernize our views as to what is necessary to maintain our dignity. If our dignity depends on a tie and jacket, it's phony dignity."

But, doctor, what about productivity? Let men appear relaxed at the job, and maybe they will not treat their work seriously enough. Not so, said Dichter. Abandoning

jacket and tie rules "would influence the workers' performance positively. It would break down the barriers between leisure and work."

"In countries like Israel," Dichter said, "everybody walks around in shirt sleeves. Once the ambassador from Israel went to a special reception in Ghana without a tie and he was bawled out by the Ghanians. He was told it showed a lack of respect. But the ambassador told them, 'no, I'm just being comfortable. You're just copying the habits of the white colonialists.'"

But why insist on ties and jacket? "It's an American version of what the Germans used to believe in very strongly—the uniform. It may have something to do with a lack of security. It's hiding behind your uniform," Dichter said also that "It's a status symbol" that helps to delineate levels of income.

What would happen today if an employee refused to follow his boss' views on clothing is a subject some management did not want to discuss. A spokesman for International Business Machines Corp. would not even consider such a "hypothetical" query. (IBM, he emphasized, does not have a specific, uniform dress code. "Each manager is expected to establish dress standards at each location," he said. Which, considering the size of IBM, is something akin to saying that the federal government has decided that dress is a states' rights matter.)

One IBM employee agreed with the spokesman that the company is not as regimented as, he said, "myth" has portrayed it. "There was once a unofficial code," he said, "probably in the mid-1960's when white shirts were understood to be required."

Now the computer makers are looser. Now men in management simply understand that suits are generally expected. "It's suits," the IBM employee said. "definitely."

Politicians worry: Is her hemline modest enough?

By HARRY TRIMBRON
(C) 1973, The Los Angeles Times

JERUSALEM — The Arabs threaten war. Consumers are reeling under galloping inflation. There's an epidemic of strikes. And tourism, the nation's major source of hard currency, has fallen off.

Major problems all, but probably the most talked about issues these days are a secretary's mini-skirt and a campaign in June called Modesty Month, sponsored by the Committee for the Defense of Holiness in Israel.

These seemingly disparate elements are part of a national controversy over proper attire for Israelis. And the controversy has reached even the Knesset (parliament), which is debating

whether to formulate a dress code for Knesset members, employees, and visitors.

That the debate should arise is something of a novelty, for Israelis are among the most casually dressed in the world. Normal attire for businessmen is an open-necked sport shirt, slacks and sandals. Many even wear walking shorts to the office.

Israel is probably one of the few places in the world where wearing a tie is considered a political statement. For the old-time socialist-minded Zionist pioneers, the tie is a symbol of the urban capitalist exploiter, unworthy of encircling the sun-burned neck of the pioneer engaged in nation-building.

Except for the orthodox, who cling to their black frock coats and other traditional dress (and

even many of them forgo the tie), just about the only well known Israeli who consistently wears a tie is Foreign Minister Abba Eban.

The cause of the Knesset debate was Guela, an attractive secretary for the Maki (communist) party. As the days got hotter, Guela's skirts, like those of other young female Knesset employees, got shorter. Finally, the head of the Knesset guards told Guela she would have to wear longer skirts.

But Guela stuck to the mini. So the guard chief called her into his office, placed a coin on the floor and told her to pick it up without risking arrest for indecent exposure. Guela couldn't but still continued wearing her mini.

Last week, Guela, as provocative as ever in her mini,

was barred from the employees' cafeteria in the Knesset. She had to eat in the visitors' cafeteria.

The dress controversy follows the classic split in politics. On the right, and among certain religious groups, are those who feel that far too many Israelis are far too immodestly dressed. They frown on even a bare elbow.

Those on the left insist that Israelis should be allowed to wear—or not wear—what they want. Knesset member Reuven Arazi of the left-wing Mapam party, commented: "There is no place for imposing regulations on suitable dress in a society like ours."

Maverick Knesset member Uri Avneri complained in a debate that Knesset authorities were waging a campaign of religious

coercion aimed at turning the chamber into a cathedral or synagogue with Victorian taboos on dress. The ultraorthodox Committee for the Defense of Holiness in Israel sponsored "modesty month" in an attempt to instill the ideals of modest dress in the nation's women. The fight, the committee said, will continue. About 3,000 distaff members of the committee vowed "not to rest or remain silent until the plague of nudity is eliminated from the streets of Jerusalem."

A dress manufacturer, who asked to remain anonymous, offered nearly \$500 worth of cloth for women who wished to have more modest clothing. The committee said it would distribute the cloth to women who cannot afford to buy or make new dresses.

