

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO PRACTITIONERS

Wall Street Journal admits the rising importance of pr execs -- grudgingly. Lead item in front page column March 4 reported top pr official is apt to be sr vp who sits on executive committee, earns \$150,000 or more. "His influence has grown tremendously," a recruiter told WSJ. Another recruiter said there's a shortage of qualified people for top pr jobs. The writer attributes this to "growing corporate concern with public image and government & consumer relations." But WSJ's unmistakable bias on subject dominates, since headline reads: "TOP FLACKS, once nobodies, win power, prestige and big bucks at more firms." Opening sentence talks about "first to go, last to know." (See also prr 2/5/79, 5/28/79.)

Spokesperson training pulls strong media coverage post-TMI in general as well as trade press. "Hot" area of business for pr firms now so institutionalized that syndicated columnist Art Buchwald takes humorous poke. Imaginary students at B-school are put thru ropes roleplaying as oil co. spokespersons. One given B- & this counsel on credibility: "Remember: A spokesman for a large corporation must never sweat on television." (For copy write prr.)

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

DIED. Lewis F. Gordon, Sr., 88, in Atlanta Jan. 24. Former pres, Bank Marketing Assn.

HONORS. Second annual Chapter Service Award of National Capital Chap., PRSA, to Walter Belson, long with Amer. Trucking Assns & 1962 national pres of PRSA; & Glenn Lasbly, dpa, Potomac Div, AAA.

PEOPLE. Richard H. Hopperton appointed dir indus pr for Watt-Jayne PR (Cleveland)...Dr. Daniel M. Fallon joins Dudley-Anderson-Yutzy (NYC) as cons affrs coord...Jerry Swerling named dir, Patricia Theodoros assoc dir, Ingalls Assocs/PR (Boston)...James Bishop, Jr., former dpa, U.S. Dept of Energy, joins Wash. staff, Burson-Marsteller as sr consultant...Melissa R. Werder becomes media rels coord, Anthony M. Franco, Inc. (Detroit)...George A. Moak promoted to corp dir comms srvs, Lear Siegler, Inc. (Santa Monica).

Howard L. Levine becomes dpr, NYU... Sharon S. Weinstein joins Sanford C. Bernstein (NYC), mgr-corp comms ... Brian Levitt joins Panorama Magazine (NYC) as pr mgr, a new position... Doris M. Hall appointed corp dpr, Grolier Inc. (Danbury, Ct.)...Sally K. Wilson named mgr comms/pr, Vivitar Corp (Santa Monica)...J.D.(Jim) Rennie joins Bralorne Resources (Calgary, Alta.) as mgr, corp comms.

William L. Sullivan, Jr., former dir comms, Nat'l Micrographics Assn, joins The Chesapeake Corp (West Point, Va.) as dpr...William E. Perry, Jr., dir comms, Nat'l Mental Health Assn, named dir comms, U.S. Council, Internat'l Year of Disabled Persons...Stanley W. DeVaughn becomes dir fin rels, Cooper Labs (S.F.)...Kirk T. Stewart joins TRW Inc. (Orange, Calif.) as comms mgr, TRW Info Srvs...Paula Ross-Carlson joins Bay State Gas (Canton, Mass.) as mgr corp pr...James E. Lott appointed dpr, Central Soya (Fort Wayne)...Illinois Bell names John T. Trutter to new position of vp-comty affrs & emp info...Gary D. Demaree elected corp sec'y & dpa, Overmyer Corp (Muncie, Ind.).

Thomas F. Rooney becomes dir external comms, MONY (NYC)...Ruth Thompson joins Int'l Development Coop Agency (D.C.) as deputy asst dpa...City of Scottsdale (Ariz.) names David Matthews pub info offer...ITT appoints John D. Hough reg'l mpr/civic affrs-Northwest (Seattle)...Penthouse Int'l mags (NYC) appoints Rich Jachetti dpr.

VICE PRESIDENTS. Michael R. Geraci, vp, Ketchum MacLeod & Grove (Pittsburgh)... John O. Montgomery, sr vp, P/R Associates (Detroit)...Nick Farina & Sid Cato, vp's, Financial Relations Board (Chi.)...Coy Hobbs, vp-pr, Ackerman & McQueen (Tulsa)... Linda S. Rosenberg, vp, Straus Assocs (NYC) ...Stephen W. Rutledge, sr vp, Bozell & Jacobs/Southwest (Phoenix)...Ron Nessen, sr vp, Marston and Rothenberg (D.C.).

NUCLEAR INDUSTRY CHANGES PUBLIC RELATIONS TACK: WILL EMPHASIZE "MORAL" NEED FOR NUKE POWER; MORE POLARIZATION LIKELY AS ANTI'S GEAR UP

Traditional strategy of anti-nuke groups -- which positions them as "moral advocates" for society's well-being -- may soon meet its match. Nuclear industry is abandoning its defensive stance on safety & waste debates to emphasize "exigent moral need" for energy self-sufficiency, according to Bill Perkins, dpr of Campaign for Energy Awareness industry sponsored group. Pitted against "moral" self-sufficiency is scenario far more threatening than altered lifestyle -- continued international tensions & possibility of war.

Perkins told pr reporter that polls show American public opinion on energy situation is "more sensitive to events than issues" (see prr 2/25/80). Iranian crisis & invasion of Afghanistan have been agents for change in public energy concerns. Whereas nuke safety dominated in wake of Three Mile Island, possibility of war has now replaced it as "overriding public concern." Thomas Jordan, pres. Underwood Jordan Assocs., NYC firm which represents many utilities, also advocates new stance. "We've allowed the high ground to be taken away from us," he recently told members of an affiliated international network, Inside Europe Public Relations, at 4-day workshop. "The moral connection between national security and nuclear power is not what the Ralph Nader groups would say. Technology is not the moral aspect."

ISSUE-STATEMENT	% AGREE	% DISAGREE
"The American way of life is being seriously threatened by the energy and economic situations"	85	10
"Americans would be better off if they lived more simply"	83	13
"The U.S. will have to militarily protect its interest in the Middle East oil fields from a takeover by other powers."	60	20

-- from ABC-Harris Poll, Feb. 1980

According to Jordan, real issue is whether there will be sufficient energy for U.S. & Western allies, particularly those with less developed economic systems. Danger is "in our being so short of energy that we perceive our very existence to be threatened. It is under such circumstances that nations will risk war to protect those interests." Public relations professionals involved in debate must "depolarize" issue to balance social, economic & environmental interests.

Pro-nuke campaign aims at a "wide public with moderate opinions," says Perkins. Media ads, key community groups such as labor unions will be used to carry message. Meanwhile, anti's are getting ready to combat pro's "massive media blitz" -- making depolarization highly unlikely. Safe Energy Comms Council, nascent Nader group, is heading effort.



Modestly funded council works through network of local anti-nuke and community groups like League of Women Voters. "With help of fairness doctrine" group also hopes to place public service ads, according to director Diane McCachlan. Council's major goal is to broaden active support base, and increase public confidence by downplaying "activist image" of anti-nuclear politics," McCachlan told prr.

Inevitably, McCachlan disagrees with new "moralistic" stance of pro-nuke lobby: "People feel they have no real alternative -- but the fallacy is that nuclear power does not even replace oil." Mark Pinsky of Critical Mass, another anti-nuke group charges that the nuke industry has "used ambiguous information to mask the dangers of nuclear power," and is actually ducking "complex issues."

So far public opinion pro & con has remained fairly stable despite persuasive efforts on both sides & events like TMI. New tack raises question of whether more affective approach will sway moderates where reasoned facts & statistics have failed.

CASE STUDY: KIMBERLY-CLARK'S FITNESS PROGRAM FOSTERS HEALTHY EMPLOYEE RELATIONS, PROVES PUBLIC RELATIONS BOON

Preventive medicine, "self-health" movement have pushed employee fitness programs to the fore (see prr 4/17/78, 11/14/77). Since inception in late

'70s, company wellness efforts have grown to magnitude of becoming an important fringe benefit -- according to employees & employers. But unlike other fringes, companies also benefit. Bill Wicks, vp-pr at Kimberly-Clark lists decreased health costs, lowered absenteeism & increased productivity as goals behind his company's program, which is one of largest in the nation.

Kimberly-Clark invested \$2.5 million in comprehensive "one roof" fitness facility. Healthcare approach is three-pronged: 1) Complete physical of each participating employee 2) "wellness prescription" which tailors diet and exercise program to individual needs and 3) medical education classes, including instruction in CPR, counseling for drug and alcohol dependency. Company offers all facets of program free of charge, including use of extensive facilities for jogging, swimming, bicycling and exercising.

Corporate Comms dep't, whose job was to motivate employees to participate and attract media coverage, won 1979 PRSA Silver Anvil. Over 90% of salaried employees have joined in voluntary program. Pilot proved so successful that company recently extended program to include all employees. Full staff eligibility had always been goal, according to CEO Darwin Smith, but "we had to learn to walk before we could run." Wicks attributes much of success

- FITNESS P.R. PROGRAM —
1. Letter from CEO sent to employees' homes to introduce program.
 2. Week later, employees invited to Q & A session with chief medical officer during work hours. Each receives brochure explaining program.
 3. Hotline established so can anonymously ask personal questions.
 4. Family involvement achieved through open house at the health services center. Special brochure prepared.
 5. Local physicians, other health care professionals involved through another open house.
 6. News media invited to press conference at opening of center.
 7. Program receives continued support through newsletters, booklets, bulletin board announcements, stories in company publications & external media, letters to employee homes.

to thorough communications program (see p.2 box).

Results have been encouraging: "Although a cost-benefit analysis could take as much as 10 years, the payoff in terms of corporate relations and individual employee benefits has been immense," Wicks told pr reporter. For example, employees in the program for 12-18 months have achieved significant reductions in blood pressure. Medical officers also report discovering several cases of cancer in curable stages and increasing enrollments of employees and families in health courses.

Positive reinforcement is a "vital part of sustaining employee participation," Wicks says. One reward is series of patches given to employees as they pass set milestones in their exercise programs.

Kimberly-Clark has found preventive medicine beneficial to its public relations as well. Company has received widespread media acclaim for commitment to employees' well-being. Although now three years old, topic is "hot" copy and "outside media coverage continues to gain momentum," Wicks told prr. NYTimes, Wall Street Journal, Chicago Tribune, CBS, UPI, other news syndicates are among those who have covered program. Wicks also reports that over 200 representatives of companies, universities and gov't agencies have inquired "to see how the program could be adapted to their own employee health needs."

POLLSTERS REPORT WIDESPREAD PESSIMISM DESPITE GAINS IN NATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Query of pollsters by Christian Science Monitor reveals that despite new feelings of national solidarity, "startling changes in American attitudes" toward such issues as defense spending, the public's "crisis of confidence" Pres. Carter bemoaned last summer continues apace.

Pessimism continues to extend beyond gov't to "big business, news media, and public institutions," says David Gergen, mng. ed. Public Opinion magazine. Behind mood: feelings of "anger, frustration and a sense of powerlessness." Of growing concern to some is increasing public perception that perhaps no one can solve the nation's problems. People seem to be lowering expectations of what any president can accomplish.

Unabated inflation is significant factor in public's mood. According to pollsters, there's growing conviction that problem is unsolvable: 61% of respondents to an NBC-Associated Press survey felt "no president can control inflation." Those who are positive tend to be particularly "susceptible to simplistic solutions" on complex topics, says pollster Claibourne Darden.

New mood is also hawkish. Recent polls show 58% favor increased defense spending even if it means more inflation. 78% support resuming registration for draft; 62% would like to see draft brought back. The fear of war has tripled in past two years, confidence in military hasn't. Only one-third of public indicates confidence in U.S. armed forces -- almost 30% less than in '66 when U.S. was involved in Vietnam.

Some pollsters, like Gergen, see heavy voter turnouts in early presidential primaries as indicators that "people are wanting to believe in their country; they want it to do better." And, despite uncertainty about economy & way gov't functions, most are optimistic about what future holds in store for them as individuals. Most expect their children to be better off financially than they are. Public also rates what's close to home higher. For example, local schools get higher ranking than nation's education system. So do local congressmen.