

rightist in the early 70s defending Pres. Nixon's conduct in office. 6) Leaders with a "moral posture" are most pleasing to Americans and "can acquire tremendous support for a wide array of civic goals," finds The Connecticut Mutual Life Report on American Values in the 80s (pr 4/20/81).

Presentday social responsibility drive by churches caught attention when Episcopalianians asked GM to quit South Africa a decade ago (pr 7/7/80).

STRATEGY TIPS FROM THE HISTORIANS:
ON PUBLIC ISSUES DON'T MOVE TO THE MIDDLE,
BUILD COALITIONS, FIND CHARISMATIC LEADERS

"Democracy can move decisively to the left just as it has (recently) moved to the right," James MacGregor Burns told Amer Historical Ass'n last month.

"Avoid the temptation to move to the center" he advised Democrats trying to put together a strategy to counter Republican successes. Traditional wisdom has it that to win elections or public issue debates, campaigns must peak near the center -- after using extreme rhetoric initially to attract attention.

Others reaffirmed the essentiality of forming coalitions. As leaders like Reagan, Thatcher, Joe Clark know, reaction to swings away from the norm -- in their cases from progressive to neo-conservative -- brings out many separate dissenting groups. Only by pulling together these threads, says Afro-American scholar Nathan Huggins, can US Democrats put down Reagan. Charisma is also necessary in the media era. Reagan is a charismatic leader, Burns finds: "He is something new in American politics -- an ideologue with charm."

Of related interest: Burns' theory was quickly proven in Canada. Parti Quebecois strategist Claude Morin tried to follow the middle-of-the-road course but quit after the rank & file, angry with his "cautious insistence on keeping in step with public opinion," rewrote the party program. The Dec. convention called for immediate steps toward independence. Premier Levesque is holding a new referendum on the issue by mail, but radical members are boycotting it. Levesque himself threatens to resign unless the party's 300,000 members reverse the convention's decision.

ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR PRACTITIONERS

Results of public relations programs in building effective bridges with publics may now have an impact on legal opinions. US Appeals Court, in a suit filed by an area group, ruled that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission must contend with the "psychological health" of residents before resuming plant testing & operations at Three Mile Island. Earlier NRC had decided not to concern itself with this topic, voting twice against instructing the licensing board to consider the "psychological health" issue. Public consent & approbation in picking up the pieces is as important as technological considerations, court seems to be saying.

pr's attempts to get economics recognized as psychologically-based, and therefore part of public relations, received a boost from Germany, as reported in the WSJ (Jan 7). "A public-opinion organization notes that its year-end surveys (taken since 1958) of 2,000 respondents' outlook for the coming year have more accurately predicted economic performance than any of the country's economists or economic institutes." Charges that the "opinion" is simply a self-fulfilling prophecy are refuted by the pollsters. "The problems lie in the irrationality of the connection between public opinion and the development of gross national product." Whether the pollsters explanation is right or wrong, it is clear that economic behavior is guided by human nature, not external forces.

Vol.25 No.3
January 18, 1982

AS "NO. 1 COMMUNICATION MEDIUM" PRICES ITSELF OUT OF THE MARKET,
NONPROFITS PREDICT PROGRAM CUTBACKS, DAMAGE TO VOLUNTEERS & EDUCATION;
NEW MAIL COSTS WILL PUT MORE PRESSURE ON BUSINESS TO FILL \$\$ GAP

Higher postage rates for nonprofit 2nd & 3rd class mail may seriously affect fund raising, public education & communication with volunteers. Increases are in 50% - 70% range but one is 400%. 3rd class bulk rates went from 3.8¢/piece or 15.8¢/lb to 5.9¢/piece or 27¢/lb. 2nd class rose from .9¢/piece or 6.6¢/lb to 4.5¢/piece or 8.8¢/lb.

Decision sent tremors through nonprofit organizations. "It won't stop us from putting out our mail. We'll go ahead and do it, but we'll have to cut back someplace else," Carolyn Tucker of Crossroads Rehabilitation Ctr (Indianapolis) told pr. Other fund raising methods are being used but "we wouldn't go to them completely because you'd miss so many people."

Nat'l Society to Prevent Blindness (NYC) mails about 1½ million pieces per yr. "It'll hurt," says Frank Voskovitch, coord direct mail. He fears also that they will have to decrease mail volume. He doubts they'd have to change their fund raising methods, "though we're open minded."

"What it'll do," Irving Rimer, vp-pub info, American Cancer Society (NYC) explains, "is critically damage the vital educational programs. I think we're losing a great deal by this. Certainly in the kinds of communications that help save people's lives. For example, Ann Landers referred to one of our leaflets in her column & said to write for a free copy. We had 500,000 requests! Do you realize what that would cost to send today?"

Communications with volunteers will also be affected. "I think the business of keeping the volunteer constituency informed is going to be weakened by this increase and that's the heartbeat of any volunteer organization. We have 2,300,000 volunteers. You can't keep that kind of movement alive & stimulated & optimistic & inspired without constant communication. The number one communication medium is the US mail. So we're deeply concerned," Rimer told pr.

Increase might have been easier to accept had org's been forewarned and able to plan. Originally increase was not due until '87, but Dec 15th vote by Congress

IT'S WORSE IN CANADA

Direct mailers are trying to beat Canada's 30¢ domestic 1st class rate -- 35¢ for letters going to the US -- by mailing in the US. Many have begun trucking mail bound for the states across the border and paying the US 20¢ 1st class rate. Canadian officials say it is illegal to take letters bound for Canada across the border & post them in the US.

changed that. Org'ns whose fiscal year runs other than Jan-Dec will find their budgets seriously short. Many nonprofits say they have little choice but to ask the business community to help them survive this sudden shock to their systems.

STRIDENCY DOESN'T PAY: MOBIL'S COMBATIVE POSTURE
CITED AS REASON COMPANY LOST MARATHON BATTLE

Herb Schmertz, limelight-seeking vp-pa, has been targeted by many as a negative

role model for practitioners. He is a labor lawyer, and programs under his care have relied on the information method (give 'em our version of the facts) and an almost pugnacious tone (ostensibly as cheerleading for employees & the embattled industry). Both pr experts & research found these tactics counterproductive for Mobil -- but Schmertz continued to apply the guidelines of the law courts to the court of public opinion. Last week the Wall Street Journal issued the sharpest repudiation yet:

"The decisive legal battles were accompanied by extensive public-relations skirmishing. Most observers believe that Mobil was severely damaged by a surprisingly wide-spread hatred of the company." The front-page article quotes a Marathon official: "If it wasn't Mobil, the battle would have been tremendously difficult to fight." He added that Mobil was "ripe for a public-relations drubbing." Said the headline, "Another Dry Hole; Mobil's Marathon Loss, Its Second in 6 Months, is Tied to Its Blunders." Cited in subheads was "Public Hostility."

Mobil's strategy that failed -- as it did last summer in attempted price rises in New York state -- is well known. Long copy ads try to make the company's positions look best for the public but don't prove it; while the self-interest is obvious. The tone has been described as aggressive, "street fighting," arrogant. Op ed articles & ads plus public statements & Schmertz tv & platform appearances come in a never-ending barrage, coupled with continual credits on "Petroleum Broadcasting Network" programs. Mobil seems oblivious to the law of public relations overkill.

A Little Reticence
Now & Again

Last month NYTimes humor columnist Russell Baker spoofed the company. Schmertz felt he had to rebut with a parody in his op ed ad space -- which gained instead negative reviews. In

July NY Public Interest Research Group held a news conference to criticize Mobil. Schmertz attended, asked questions, got into a shouting match with the speakers -- again, to poor reviews.

The public is willing to hear Mobil's case, but only if it reveals some sense of accomodation & compromise, doesn't try to drown out everyone else. Until it does, Mobil is an easy target. Diversified Communications Inc. in Marathon's hometown of Findlay, Ohio, was asked by a citizen's group to do a Washington Post ad opposing Mobil's takeover. Jim Little's headline read, "Corporate Responsibility Is More Than Sponsoring Programs on PBS."

HOW TO INFORM & PERSUADE WITHOUT MOBILIZING (PUN) THE OPPOSITION

Guidelines for effective advocacy messages are offered by James Foster, sr vp & gen mgr, Brouillard Communications: 1) Don't just oppose. 2) Never ridicule. 3) Rise above the opposition. 4) Explain without being contentious or daring a skeptical public to prove you wrong or knock a chip off your shoulder. From his firm's experience in campaigns for Eaton & Textron he deduced additional suggestions: 5) Appeal to the self-interest of the audience. 6) Build in elements of drama or surprise without detracting from the primary message. 7) Show how your products/services, capital investment or philosophy contribute to the public good.

TO COMBAT EFFECTS OF TROUBLED TIMES,
COMPANY ISSUES INTERNAL HANDOUT
ON WHAT'S RIGHT

Accentuating the positive in times of deepening recession & layoffs in many industries is the objective of Munsingwear's Special Report on the year 1981. Titled, "What's

Right With Munsingwear 1981," the low-cost, low-key, 4-page itemization outlines corporate level accomplishments & improvements in four sections: 1) merchandising/marketing/sales, 2) consolidations/cost reductions/efficiencies, 3) operations, 4) organization/administration.

Applying techniques learned while in the public education sector, Ann Barkelew, vp corp afrs, focuses on participation. "Everybody could see something they worked on in the report," she told prr. Tho it is a corporate piece, plant managers are urged to do their own versions. Barkelew said she had "maybe \$50" in cash outlay, relying on word-processor type setting & internal printing. (For copy, write her at P.O. Box 1369, Minneapolis 55440.)

CHURCHES NOW LEADING ACTIVISTS:
CAN YOU GET 'EM ON YOUR SIDE?
TREND BEGAN WITH SOUTH AFRICA ISSUE

Do you include religious groups as a public? If you didn't before, better add them now: they have become the most daring & vocal activists (see also this week's purview).

They alone among Establishment institutions are speaking out against nuclear armament, reactionary social policies & other seemingly popular initiatives. No longer is it just the Quakers, liberal Catholics & Episcopalians -- tho the Berrigan brothers are again in the news.

1) Widely reported anti-war sermons of Roman Catholic priests result from positions voted by the conference of bishops. When NY's Cardinal Cooke seemed to contradict this stand in his annual letter to military chaplains, other Catholic leaders publicly rebuked him. 2) United Presbyterian & American Baptist denominations took stands in Dec. against production of nuclear weapons. 3) In Mass. Protestant, Orthodox, even Salvation Army top brass joined their Catholic brethren in attacking a workfare proposal. Gov. Ed King wants to make 23,000 mothers receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children work for their benefits. The coalition is called Church Leaders in Covenant for Urban Justice.

Other evidence: 4) NCR (new Christian right) is still potent, despite public discontent. 3 of 4 polled last month were "strongly opposed" to Moral Majority, according to "Washington Whispers" column. But 5) the latest Gallup Youth Survey reveals 500,000 teenagers may be Moonies. This is 2% of US teenage population. Rev. Sun Myung Moon first attracted attention as a religious

Among Roman Catholics "there is close to a groundswell of people who are terribly concerned with the possibility of nuclear warfare. They see it as an impossible solution to tensions, are very frightened and are prepared to rally around an antinuclear cause." (Arbp. John Roach, pres, Nat'l Conf of Catholic Bishops to NYTimes)

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"We feel compelled to note that our country stands at a critical point in its history when those with power are in the process of dismantling the social, educational & housing programs that should be assumed to be a national responsibility. Justice for the poor is the only true context for peace." (Statement signed by 60 NYC Catholic leaders refuting Cardinal Cooke's adherence to the "just war" theory.)