

"This law strikes the delicate balance between an employee's fundamental right to privacy and the legitimate business needs of the employer."

NEW PUBLIC RELATIONS ARM FOR TEXAS  
IS EMBASSY IN LONDON,  
REOPENED AFTER 140 YEARS

It's part of the state's sesquicentennial celebration -- 150 years of independence from Mexico. "Texas is the only state that was once an independent nation. From 1836 till 1846 we were the Republic of Texas," Dallas County Commissioner Chris Semos told prr. (Vermonters, who were an independent nation before Texas was a gleam in Sam Houston's eye, will want the good commissioner to check his history.) Great Britain was one of 5 countries that "had the good judgment to recognize us diplomatically."

Ritz Hotel on Piccadilly is providing free office space thru the end of '86 -- "the duration of our celebration." Volunteers, Texans living in London, will staff the embassy 5 day/week. "As part of the celebration, we're sending over designated ambassadors for goodwill purposes. And there will be many British ambassadors coming to Texas." One highlight will be the Dallas Cowboys/Chicago Bears football game in London on Aug 3. "Our ambassador during that time will be Roger Starbuck -- former quarterback for the Dallas Cowboys."

Embassy's purpose is to 1) promote goodwill between Great Britain & Texas, 2) increase tourism between both places, 3) assist in trade. "We Texans want to show that we really appreciate the British, their friendship, their loyalty. And we want strong ties in the future as they have been in the past," explains Semos.

USEFUL INFORMATION FOR PRACTITIONERS

¶Calling the media to check on the status of your news release is irritating & a time waster to many journalists. When Jonathan Schenker (dir media rels, Ketchum) sent us his firm's 9-point crisis communication plan (pr 6/30), he closed his letter with: "But until that editorial need arises, I thought this tip sheet might remain in your files for referral. Rather than call and ask 'did you receive,' I'll assume you received, filed and we'll speak when appropriate." A potent relationship builder!

¶Examples of corporate sponsored educational & informational programs using tv, radio, newspapers, magazines are sought by ProEducation...the magazine about partnerships with education. "What we're looking for is input from corporate America about the specialized programs business sponsors for the public's information or education," explains editor Don Adams. Send a 250-word description of your total media program. Include slides, photos (color or b&w), supporting materials such as teaching kits, collateral materials, giveaways, news releases, promo pieces, ads, PSAs, etc. Deadline is Aug 1. (5000 Park St. North, St. Petersburg, Fla. 33709)

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

ELECTED. Canadian Public Relations Society 1986-87 officers: pres, Don Hoskins (Canada News-Wire Ltd, Ottawa); pres-elect, Allan Sinclair (Council of Forest Industries, Vancouver); treas,

Johanne Ricard (Mutual Life, Montreal); vice pres, Jean Freeman, (Sask Tel, Regina); sec'y, T.A.G. Watson (Tricil Ltd, Mississauga).

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GUTSY CPRS WILL TAKE STAND ON PUBLIC ISSUES,  
PLANS TO INSTITUTE MANDATORY ACCREDITATION IN 1990;  
SURVEYS SHOW PRACTITIONERS' MANAGERIAL SKILLS NEED IMPROVEMENT

CPRS 5-yr plan, accepted at 1985 conference, will be instituted by 1990. First step is putting together a nat'l professional development program -- because research shows the underlying need to be continual training of practitioners. Societe des relationnistes du Quebec (SRQ) is establishing an experimental program in its province over the next 2 years. The nat'l program will grow out of this, explains Michel Dumas of Bazin, Dumas, Dupre, Sormany (Quebec).

MANAGEMENT SKILLS WEAKEST. To define the task and subject matter to be covered, an informal survey was taken at SRQ's annual meeting. It found areas where practitioners most need to improve their knowledge are 1) strategic planning, followed by 2) relations with management. Subjects spontaneously identified most often were 3) computer-assisted info management, 4) media relations, 5) crisis management, 6) communications during a strike.

Another survey done in '82 for CPRS by Advanced Management Centre in co-operation with Mount St. Vincent U identified skills where practitioners most need improvement: 1) public speaking (22.6%); 2) consulting (21.4%); 3) project management (19.4%); 4) general management (18.7%); 5) interpersonal (12.8%). Knowledge areas rated important or very important in which practitioners see themselves as not sufficiently knowledgeable include: 6) accounting & finance (28.5%); 7) social sciences (23.4%); 8) public relations theory (22.3%).

"We're not saying someone without APR isn't qualified. But we are saying that by having your APR, you have proven recognizable competence within the full spectrum of the profession," Arbo Mattila, CPRS exec dir, told prr. It is one more cog in the wheel of public relations as a management function, "which is the accepted definition of public relations."

Results show that "although members responding to the survey are largely experienced & senior practitioners, they rate themselves least skillful and knowledgeable in key management areas." These results will form the guidelines for the experimental professional development program.

ACCREDITATION MANDATORY IN 1990. Seen as another way to upgrade the status of the profession. Requirements include 1) 5 yrs as a full-time practitioner, 2) recommendation by 5 sponsors, 3) submit a work sample for approval, 4) written & 5) oral exams. CPRS is instituting this new requirement "in order to identify a minimum standard of competence on the full spectrum of practice," explains Mattila.

TAKING POSITIONS ON ISSUES. Such as legislation requiring lobbyists to register their work & clients, freedom of information, impact of demographic changes in the



workplace, etc. To formulate these positions, a voluntary board has been created: National Issues & Positions Advisory Board.

Responsibilities include: 1) identify & analyze issues and draft position papers for approval by the board of directors; 2) report quarterly to the bd of dirs with drafted positions ranked by priority; 3) anticipate public misconceptions of the practice of public relations and provide guidelines for responding to them; 4) provide guidance regarding content & presentation of briefs to annual caucuses of political parties nationally & provincially; 5) review & modify positions as appropriate; 6) advise CPRS pres in his or her role as spokesperson.

Chairman -- appointed by CPRS past presidents from among their own number, serving a 3-yr term -- is Ron Coulson (Calgary). Regional reps -- appointed by bd of dirs, serving 2-yr terms -- are Wayne Grainger (West), Joyce Mitton (Prairies), Nick Volk (Ontario), Michel Dufour (Quebec), Merle Emms (Atlantic). Representatives of institutes & sections -- elected by membership, serving 3-yr terms -- are Gerald Brown (consultants' institute), Nix Wadden (gov't section).

¶PRSA & other public relations societies have flirted with this idea.

The premise is that the profession's expertise should be injected into public debate on relevant issues. Except in scandals, like the current Mike Deaver influence-peddling episode, the profession is rarely heard from.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE = PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. Using research from members, CPRS positions its annual conference as premiere 3-day intensive professional development seminar. Conference provided overview of key topics in 1) public relations management, 2) professional education, 3) licensing of practitioners, 4) special-interest groups, 5) case studies in building public relationships in crisis situations (sample: Would you like a hazardous waste landfill in your backyard? by T.A.G. Watson of Tricil Ltd).

Sessions began at 7:30am -- well attended despite ritual groans. There was no pre-luncheon cocktail hour. Succinct presentations kept firmly within time limits, allowed questions, yet maintained tempo. Participants were spared the superficialities of national tv news entertainers or media writers. Instead got substantive research findings (samples: on audiences & communications models from Jim Grunig; & public relations management by objective from Norman Nager).

One thought provoker was launched by Brian Milton of Bell Canada. He turned conventional issues management theories upside down by suggesting that the problem is internal -- and the solution an internal communications network that enables an organization to accommodate to change as a way of survival. (For text of papers or tapes, call CPRS, 613/232-1222; 220 Laurier Ave West, Ste.640, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5Z9)

¶Footnote: How do you plan the major banquet of an annual meeting? After the speeches & major awards, try a mixture of lighthearted funny-money casino with a Calgary-style auction & dancing. It worked beautifully for CPRS.

Mid-career education is valued and sought by many, shows survey of working practitioners in 10 central & south central states. 88% report attending training outside their org'n at least once a year. Answering the question, "What mid-career training do you most need?" half listed public relations management skills; 47% said techniques for using public relations in marketing campaigns. Brooks Garner, Okla State U, directed the study.

FUTURE LEADERS OF THE U.S. & CANADA VOICE THEIR OPINIONS ON KEY ISSUES

High school students who hold leadership positions gave these rankings at the Nat'l Ass'n of Student Councils 50th annual conference:

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Support</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
President Reagan's decision to bomb Libya in retaliation for its role in world terrorism.	68.0%	20.6%	11.4%
Should the same approach be used again?	45.0%	31.5%	23.5%
Is there a hunger problem in the US?	80.1%	10.7%	9.2%
US should not abandon the SALT II treaty.	40.4%	24.4%	35.2%
US should continue manned space flights.	93.2%	2.1%	4.7%
Baby Jesse should have received his transplanted heart at the age of 16 days.	84.5%	4.2%	11.3%
Women should be able to have abortions without government interference.	57.9%	30.2%	11.9%

"These are the people who will handle the reins of leadership in a few short years. That's why it's imperative that we provide training & experience on how to lead, how to follow, how to work with other people. Those skills are essential, and students do not necessarily learn them in the regular classroom -- but through student activity programs," says Dale Hawley, dir of student activities for Nat'l Ass'n of Secondary School Principals, sponsor of the NASC. The back-to-basics movement & the cost-cutters want to drop these.

WAY TO CONTROL DRUGS IS PUBLIC RELATIONS TECHNIQUES NOT MANDATORY TESTING, SAYS ACLU

ACLU's position against drug testing in the workplace is explained thru Q&As in its Spring '86 issue of Civil Liberties. 25% of Fortune 500 companies have adopted mandatory testing.

Government installations & the military are devising human reliability programs which include testing. ACLU, however, advocates education & voluntary rehabilitation instead of testing.

Model law, says ACLU, is City of San Francisco's which protects workers in private industry from indiscriminate drug testing. Law requires 3 conditions be met before testing can occur: 1) employer has reason to believe the employee's faculties are impaired on the job; 2) employee's impairment is dangerous to himself or others; 3) at employer's expense, employee has the opportunity to have the sample tested by an independent lab and to rebut or explain the results.

"A well-funded, well-coordinated public education effort, such as the anti-smoking campaign, would do more to bring drug use under control than the most massive program of testing. Such efforts work. Since 1965, the proportion of Americans who habitually smoke cigarettes has gone down from 43% to 32%. Those who have studied this decline attribute it to public education.