

At issue is a poster, distributed at various McDonald's restaurants, which tells kids, "People can help save some endangered animals' lives by not buying products made of ivory, fur or feathers." The food chain has come under fire recently for its use of styrofoam packaging, a fact the fur industry finds ironic. "This is undoubtedly a move to pacify the protesters," says Fur Age Weekly. "The fact that it has been influenced by animal rights factors of the environmental movement is astonishing, given that their restaurants are regular sites of anti-meat protests. Apparently, McDonald's has turned a blind eye to that aspect of the animal rights movement in an effort to improve its image." Fur industry also charges poster contains serious inaccuracies since no fur from endangered species is sold in US stores & 75% comes from "fur farms."

"We didn't think it would be misleading, or critical of any industry," McDonald's spokesperson Rebecca Caruso told prr. "McDonald's has withdrawn the posters."

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO PRACTITIONERS

¶ **Mandated Full Disclosure Takes Another Step.** New Food Labeling bill requires more -- and more accurate -- information. Intended to help consumers choose a more healthful diet, it sets more specified standards for what info must be on labels, prohibits health claims not based on scientific proof. Copy of bill from prr.

¶ **Social Marketing Trots Along As Barbie Dolls Use The Technique.** For each doll purchased, maker Mattel will donate to charities specializing in issues important to children, including groups which strive to 1) "clean up our environment; 2) have a drug-free world; 3) end homelessness; 4) give everyone a good education; 5) live in peace; 6) end hunger."

¶ **Getting A Willing Suspension Of Disbelief During The Disruption Of Construction** is tough, so Chicago's Hyatt Regency made its desk clerks part of the action. Since the lobby is jammed with construction workers and the typical mayhem, hotel had clerks wear hard hats & typical construction worker's clothing -- jeans, flannel shirts, coveralls & similar. Keeping them in their usual formal uniforms would have been unbelievable -- since it would convey the visually untrue message that things were normal.

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

APPOINTED. Patricia Harrison, E. Bruce Harrison Company (DC) to the President's Exports Council.

MOVED. William Novelli, pres Porter Novelli, to CEO of CARE (NYC); Jim Tolley, named first paid pres of Institute for PR Research & Education. Tolley, operating out of Sarasota, says relocation of Institute is

under consideration. He replaces counselor Don Bates, who handled the Institute on a client basis.

HONORED. Nat'l Ass'n of Gov't Communicators gives Ginnady Gerasimov Communicator of the Year Award -- the first non-American.

PLAN NOW: COLUMBUS QUINCENTENARY IN '92 IS LAUNCH PAD FOR MAJOR PROMOS, CELEBRATIONS, MULTICULTURAL ACTIVITIES -- BUT REINTERPRETATION OF HISTORY REQUIRES CAREFUL STRATEGIZING

Nothing is easy anymore. "In Fourteen Hundred & Ninety-two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue." In 1892, the Columbian Exposition was the event. Now, with the 500th anniversary of a voyage that indisputably altered the world, less than 2 years away, big things are afoot -- some celebratory, some in protest.

As historical accuracy replaces simplistic myth & symbolism, sensitivities are aroused. Practitioners need to investigate thoroughly before taking part in the most obvious events. (Another example is the revision underway in the Wild West/cowboy/homesteader myth.)

So far, it appears Columbus' "discovery" of the Americas will be celebrated thruout 1992 by: a) visits by the Tall Ships as well as replicas of the Nina, Pinta, Santa Maria; b) numerous conferences; c) traveling art exhibits; d) and much more as celebration is scaled down to local levels. Many organizations will attempt to key into what they presume will be another gala.

QUINCENTENARY COMMISSION EMPHASIZES "ENCOUNTER"

"We are focusing on it not as a discovery, but as an encounter of 2 worlds," Andy Bolton, pr spokesperson, Quincentenary Jubilee Commission (DC) told prr. "We're going to use the opportunity to teach what resulted from Columbus coming here, what has transpired in the 500 years after permanent contact was established between the 2 worlds." Despite flap from activist groups, Bolton says one thing is indisputable: Columbus initiated sustained contact between Europe & the Americas, changing the course of history. Q Commission plans to integrate Native American input thru seminars, conferences, educational projects. Its strategy, which may be a model for organizations, is to highlight fact that despite difficult times, a continent with great cultural diversity evolved.

"There are 2 ways of looking at Columbus the symbol," says Newton Frohlich, author of 1492: A Novel of Christopher Columbus & His World. "One is to find only failure, racial guilt, environmental devastation. But renewed hope, triumph, and freedom also followed. In Spain, Columbus had to hide his identity. In America, people like him no longer had to. The moment of Columbus is one in which mankind glimpsed a dream not yet realized."

But practitioners, look out! Many publics may not be in the mood to party, among them:

1. **Jewish Americans.** Historians say Columbus' quest was funded by money garnered from the Inquisition and exile of the Jews from Spain. Iberia Airlines is sponsoring "Jewish Heritage Tour" of photos. One set of pictures is on the Spanish Inquisition & the 1492 Expulsion, bringing the Jewish role into perspective. Tour will visit galleries, synagogues & universities around the country.
2. **Native Americans,** for the obvious reason that they were here first, and were subjected to torture & plunder. Columbus' diary makes several references to them as kindly, giving people, ripe for slavery. Later entries, recorded when they became resistant, call them "savages."
3. **African Americans.** Columbus inaugurated the transatlantic slave trade when he shipped 500 Taino Indians back to Spain.
4. **Christians,** appalled by link between their faith & greedy expansionism.
5. **Women,** disgusted with continuous reverence for "great men" in official celebrations.
6. **Non-Europeans & Educators** fed up by historical emphasis on Europe as the great creator & discoverer of all that is of universal value.

"The omissions & distortions that will pollute the celebration make me angry, not just because of the \$100 million being spent to promote them, but because they are dangerous in their portrayal of Europeans as civilizers & Christianizers and of Native Americans & Africans as primitive, ignorant savages," says Emory Searcy, exec dir Clergy And Laity Concerned (Decatur, Ga). CALC is launching a counter campaign "Rediscovering the History of the Americas: 1492 - 1992." Itinerary includes conferences, educational seminars, protests, etc.

POINTS TO CONSIDER 1. Controversy is a reaction to a personality cult -- Columbus as a brave, ingenious hero. What happens when a person becomes a symbol? Symbolism is by nature simplistic; heroes are indefatigable. In this era of information, heroes hold out only temporarily, with faults & foibles soon exposed. Even those long dead are being denigrated. Antidote: emphasize principles involved, not the person.

2. Counter-celebrational activities could be perceived as rain on the parade. The spectacle of the Spanish caravel replica, Tall Ships sailing from Spain to the US, are bound to incite an enthusiastic, spirited

"The arrival of the Europeans was, in fact, an invasion which began a long history of imperialism that enslaved people and stole their land," Mark Reeve, editor CALC Report told prr. "When those Tall Ships sail from Spain in 1992, we expect there will be demonstrations. Some Native American groups are planning outright disruptions."

response. Any blatant attempt to spoil the mood may backfire.

3. **Hispanics** are still settling into place in the American culture, and many suffer from poverty, racial stereotyping. Undercutting Columbus may not win a friendly response from them.
4. Columbus was **Italian**, but he was a **Jewish Italian**, converted to Christianity to avoid persecution. And he sailed for **Spain**. 3 groups may therefore claim him as their own. Stay out of this aspect? Or promote it as a uniting factor?
5. EC 92, the Japanese influx, and the ever-widening gap between the haves & nots is creating renewed racism (pr 9/6/89). Is this an opportunity to spotlight multicultural benefits, the oneness of us all?

"Progressives need to change the tenor of the events from a 'celebration' of one man to a 'commemoration' of all peoples, places & events shaped by 1492," says Philip Tajitsu Nash, City U of NY Law School. (For package of materials and list of resources & ideas, contact prr.)

**FARM INTERESTS ENUNCIATE
MODEL REALISTIC STRATEGY,
LAUNCH OUTREACH EFFORT**

After years of getting clobbered on several fronts, research by the Farm Bureau shows the public wants farmers to speak out on food safety issues & educate on farming practices. FB interprets this as a sign the farm community must get more involved and take a higher profile. "We need to tell the public what we're doing and why we're doing it," says pres Dean Kleckner.

But the challenge, he points out, isn't just fighting hard but fighting smart. "This means the Farm Bureau must avoid the tendency to turn to the strategies of:

1. **denial** by saying 'there is no problem,'
2. **defensiveness** by saying, 'environmentalists are brainwashing Americans,'
3. **chemical advocacy** by saying 'pesticides help us feed a hungry world,'
4. **self-congratulations** by saying 'we have the best food supply in the world.'

To carry out this realistic strategy -- far different from the typical "poor us" response -- FB launched an outreach effort by members to explain what they do on the farm and how and why they do it. Its theme is "Today's Farmers & Ranchers: Professionals From The Ground Up."

**MCDONALD'S POSTER PERCEIVED
BY SOME AS GREENWASHING TACTIC**

Was McDonald's sincere in its effort to boost kids' environmental awareness, or was it merely "greenwashing," trying to deflect scrutiny by singling out other industries as environmentally unsound?