

ITEMS OF INTEREST

¶More on salaries to add to prr's Annual Survey range for federal gov't practitioners is from high of \$47,500 to low of \$8,366, entering salary for "editorial clerks" at grade GS-3. More realistically, the "public relations" professional starts at GS-11 with initial salary of \$19,263, John Ulrich told prr. He is chief, pub affrs ofc, N. Pacific Dist., Army Corps of Engineers. Conclusion from comparing Survey data: federal jobs don't pay as well in upper range as private sector, but entering salaries are very competitive.

¶Megabucks & political clout ride on last U.S. decennial census, which begins next March. Forms go to 86 million households that month, after 409 temporary field offices open for business. In 1985 mid-decade census will be taken, starting 5-yr pattern decreed by gov't. Only censuses of years ending in zero will be used to apportion Congressional seats to presidential electoral college. When '80 count comes in 6 NE states are expected to lose 11 seats in Congress to 8 SW states. Losers: New York, Ohio, Tenn., Ill., Mich., S.D. Gainers: Fla., Tex., Calif., Ariz., Wash., Ore., Tenn., & Utah. Similar shift occurred after '70 enumeration. In addition to basic marketing & planning decisions by businesses & nonprofits worth billions, census mandates distribution of \$50 billion in federal funds. Census Bureau estimates undercount of 2.5% in '70, is trying to do better this time.

¶Letter-writer zaps editor. "I never noticed until now that you list on page 4 two categories under WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS: People and Vice Presidents. Of course I'm a people, myself, but some of my best friends happen to be vice presidents. Some of them have even been in my home. I think vice presidents should be treated just like people, although you and I know it will take a little time and a lot of education," proposes Bob Button, mgr pr svcs, GAF (NYC).

¶Yellow ochre is most popular color for proxy materials, tender offers, prospectuses. Rust & blue are runners up, according to Sorg Printing Company (NYC). Many of these formerly dull pieces now being done in two colors, some four color with photos. Despite negative connotations, red is sometimes used.

HARD-TO-FIND BOOKS NOW AVAILABLE

Two books for practitioners, not available at your bookstore, may be ordered from prr:

Guidelines for Effective Writing:

Qualities and Formats. Tells how to achieve readability, clarity, flow, color, organization etc. Second section discusses specific formats such as speeches, booklets, reports, news releases, features etc. Practical approach includes analysis of professional copy. Co-authored by Al Sullivan, renowned teacher of writing for pr at Boston Univ./School of Public Comms, and Walter Lubars, his colleague who became professor after years as practitioner. 160 pgs, \$5.25.

Selections from Managing the Human Climate. Provides information, analyses & opinions to help in formulating strategies. 107 lively topics useful for anticipating issues...knowing what coming news hooks are apt to be...discovering how groups are likely to position themselves. Collected from first 58 issues of Philip Lesly's provocative newsletter. 174 pgs, \$9.00 (\$6.00 to educators for classroom use).

As a reader service, we occasionally offer high-quality professional books that cannot be purchased thru normal trade channels. We are not in the book business, however, so must ask that check accompany order.

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CASE STUDY:

STATISTICAL OPINION READINGS ARE NOT ENOUGH;
NUKE ISSUE SHOWS INTENSITY EQUALLY IMPORTANT

Public attitudes toward nuclear power haven't swung dramatically in response to Three Mile Island. Attitudes now are different, however -- which shows how statistics can mislead. Year ago, 57% were in favor, 31% opposed. Now split is 52% vs. 37%, according to recent poll by Louis Harris & Assocs. Pros/cons have shifted back & forth with events since atom was split.

According to Mark Schulman, vp at Harris, intensity has changed. Anti's are becoming more so. So are pro's, judging from nuclear zealots now collaring passengers in airport lobbies (alongside Moonies & others with deep beliefs).

One reason nuke support hasn't bottomed out is because public sees few energy options. Majority favors all-out solar research. But only 32% see it as major source of electricity by year 2000. 25% see nukes as basic supply then -- and beyond.

Second reason: "Public had already factored into their opinions a certain amount of nervousness so they weren't as surprised by TMI -- despite the optimism of the nuclear industry." Majority also believes energy underpins economic system. So while recognizing risk, public prefers to accept it rather than sacrifice lifestyle.

Despite Poll Majorities,
Nukes Still Have Problems

All does not bode well for nuke industry, Schulman predicts. Major problems will be siting. Risk is worth taking "so long as it's not in my backyard."

Waste -- not radiation -- continues to be top public concern. Overwhelming 79% say it's very serious problem.

HISTORY AS PREDICTIVE TOOL:
MORE OF KEVIN PHILLIPS' VIEWS
IN RESPONSE TO REQUESTS

U.S. politics since WWII has been a series of short cycles -- 8 years, to be exact. Parties rise and then fall again in that time. It works like this:

1. Party wins presidency
2. Then gains seats in Congress at mid-term election (2 yrs)
3. Wins landslide reelection (4 yrs)
4. Loses heavily in Congressional elections at mid-term (6 yrs)
5. Loses presidency to other party (8 yrs)

This has been true of GOP Eisenhower era ('52-'60), Democratic Kennedy-Johnson years ('60-'68) and Repub. era of Nixon-Ford.

Is Carter's unpopularity apt to break this chain? No, thinks Phillips -- especially if Teddy Kennedy takes nomination away. Dems gained Congressional seats in '78



election. Present indicators are Teddy would beat any GOP candidate in a landslide. Prediction based on this history must be, therefore, that Republicans will not recapture White House in '80. Current polls agree.

Phillips, political & gov't rels strategist who addressed '79 PRSA Institute (pr 7/30), shares his views in two newsletters: Business & Public Affairs and The American Political Report (sample copies from Amer. Political Research Corp., 4312 Montgomery Ave., Bethesda, Md. 20014).

AUTO TRADE ASSN TRANSLATES TV PSA FOR SPANISH AUDIENCES

Have you seen Motor Vehicles Mfrs. Assn. 30-sec spot in which car fails to stop for school bus, hits child...but at moment of impact, man is shown in bed waking from nightmare? Released last year in English -- and well-received, says MVMA's Fred Chapman -- psa has just gone to 36 Spanish language stations.

A first for MVMA, it "recognizes growing importance of Spanish language television stations and their audiences." Nat'l Television News produced, using voice of Roberto Cruz, L.A. broadcast personality. (For feedback on results, call Chapman at 313/872-4311; on production wrinkles, Howard Back of NTN at 213/883-6121.)

Recent predictions by Agency for Int'l Development shows why practitioners need to know Spanish. On basis of projected birthrates, it believes Mexico City's population -- already 13 million -- may reach 35 million by year 2000, becoming world's largest city. Limited economic opportunity will continue to drive many Mexicans north -- legally or illegally entering U.S. & Canada. Experts feel even huge oil discoveries cannot save Mexican economy faced with monumental population increases.

QUOTE YOU CAN USE
"...almost all conventional lawyers, men not steeped in the First Amendment, when asked for an opinion on whether or not to publish, on any issue, will always advise against publication, because they are sound and conservative, because they have no particular love of controversy and harsh truths, and most important of all, because if nothing is published, no one will sue. It is what might be called no-fault advice."
-- David Halberstam, The Powers That Be (Knopf '79)

UPDATES: CORPORATE FREE SPEECH, DEP'T OF EDUCATION, CHURCH IN POLITICS

Assn. of Trial Lawyers of America feels Aetna's ad series criticizing large awards in court cases "has demeaned people hurt by negligence and faulty products." Lawyers are pursuing Conn. suit on grounds "there is no First Amendment protection from false and deceptive commercial speech," dpr Stephen Haracznak told prr. Large jury awards benefit society by forcing reform of shoddy business practices, making products safer, ATLA contends. Aetna stresses measures it takes to ensure accuracy of ads. ATLA claims that they are in fact "inaccurate and contain false information in many cases." One example cited: insurance co. said are 1 million product liability suits each yr. Federal Inter-Agency Task Force said figure is 60-70,000. (For response given, capsule of ATLA position, write prr.)

Nat'l Right to Work Committee fears Nat'l Education Assn. will try to use new cabinet-level Federal Education Dep't to further teacher unions. As reported in last week's issue, NEA came out for Pres. Carter's reelection day after Congress passed president's Dep't of Education bill. In letter to President, NRTWC pres. Reed Larson

probably only stiffened Carter's resistance by opening with these words: "As you well know, it is a fact of American life that politicians often pay their political debts through legislative action. Those who contribute money and manpower to election campaigns expect a return on their investment, and that return often comes at the expense of the public trust. With the creation of the new Dep't of Education, you and the majority leadership in Congress have paid off your political IOUs to the National Education Association-union."

Southern Baptists plan increased political role. 13-million member denomination is forming grassroots Christian Citizenship Corps. Moral slant newsletter will present both sides of issues, "look first to the specifics...then to biblical ethics before we speak," according to William Elder, corps director. Surprisingly -- in face of common perception Baptists are conservative -- action was spawned to fight off organization called Christian Voice, described by UPI as "far-right political organization" seeking to link "conservative politics and conservative Christianity."

"I don't think the Christian faith should be used to baptize any political persuasion," Elder told UPI. "Jesus always frustrated people who tried to classify him in liberal or conservative categories." He's leery of "Christian politicians" who "use their faith to authenticate their position," instead of seeking moral correctives.

MODEL SIMPLE LANGUAGE LAW UNVEILED BY PLAIN TALK

First model law requiring use of plain English in Wash., D.C. has been drafted. If passed, individuals, small business & gov't will have to make sure that documents -- from purchase agreements to information on voting ballots -- are written in clear, readable English. Penalties for gobbledygook to be imposed by Superior Court can be stiff: court costs, attorney fees & damages up to 25% of actual amount but not more than \$50,000.

Plain Talk, nonprofit organization, has based its "Plain Language Act of 1979" on premise that "in a democracy, an informed public is desirable....Clear writing will help people to understand -- both their rights & obligations." (See prr 7/30.) Bill itself practices what it preaches, is easily understood. To accomplish objectives, it insists others use well-known verbal & graphic readability techniques:

- 1. Simple words, usually small, and fairly short sentences (25 words or less)
- 2. Personal pronouns instead of "offeror," "applicant," etc.
- 3. Eliminating legal words & phrases including polysyllabic connectors, "forthwith, notwithstanding"
- 4. Using large type, section headings, margins at least one inch wide
- 5. Avoiding references back to other sections

Plain Talk will hold series of group workshops & panel discussions Oct. 20 in D.C. (For further info. on conference or copy of bill write 1333 Conn. Ave. NW, D.C. 20036; 202/452-1267.)

What one industry group is doing: to be sure the companies they represent get the message, Nat'l Assn. of Professional Insurance Agents has set up office to clarify policies written in legalese. Professional Insurance Answers provide the public with assistance at no cost. (Address is Box 6803, Wash., D.C. 20020; 703/836-9349.)