

This effectiveness in reaching around media and getting directly to the public Nixon attributes to his "remarkable effectiveness in using television." The Checkers Speech and his tough Vietnam stance in a Nov. '68 tv talk are cited as evidence. Nixon also held press conferences infrequently and when it suited him. "Instead of trying to win the press, to cater to them, to have backgrounders with them, RN has ignored them and has talked directly to the country by tv whenever possible," he wrote using the third person. "He has used the press and not let the press use him."

Book covers the difficulties Klein encountered as White House director of communications -- in an administration headed in an iron-fisted manner by adman Bob Haldeman using his adman protege, press sec'y Ron Ziegler. As David Halberstam says in The Powers That Be, "It was a new kind of campaign, a mostly closed one. The press would cover what the Nixon people wanted it to cover." (See pr 9/13/79.) Strategy won two elections, excited the silent majority, and went into history as The Selling of the President, Joe McGinniss' political classic.

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO PROFESSIONALS

Illinois newspaper has a Bureau of Accuracy and Fair Play which sends an unsolicited form to subjects of its coverage. It asks for corrections of any errors, presents 5 questions: 1) are names correctly spelled; 2) are addresses, ages, titles etc. accurate; 3) "does the story present a factual and unbiased report of events"; 4) is all essential data included and 5) is the headline accurate? Comment on overall reaction to treatment of the story is solicited. Decatur Herald and Review sent pr's editor one after it ran an article on his speech to a PRSA chapter there. (For copy to pass along to your local media, write pr.)

The Love Canal story in detail from 1892 to the present is told in a Hooker Chemical public affairs booklet. Provides keen appreciation of how you can have the facts on your side and still encounter the most serious problems in the court of public opinion. Write Michael Reichgut, mpa, P.O. Box 4289, Houston, Texas 77210, for Factline No. 11.

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

DIED. Ralph Major, Jr., (New Canaan, Ct.) 60, mpr for Pitney Bowes Business Systems nationwide. Long career in pr including vp of several top pr firms; ed, Coronet; asst ed, Newsweek; WWII correspondent.

Vivien Simon (Houston) dir of continuing educ, Houston Baptist Univ; mbr of 1980 PRSA Accreditation Board.

Salih Al-Asad (Beirut) pres of own firm. A pr pioneer in Middle East, working as mpr for Tapline prior to forming own company.

ELECTED. 1980-81 officers for Southern Public Relations Federation are: pres, Roland Carson (Dow Chemical, La.); vice pres, Danny Mitchell (Jackson Public Schools, Jackson, Miss.); sec'y, George Elliott (South Central Bell, Birmingham,

Ala.); treas, J. Donald Turk (Florida Farm Bureau Federation, Gainesville); historian, Neal Cirlot (Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Miss., Jackson).

SOMETHING YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT THE 1ST AMENDMENT

Two resolutions in Congress authorize the President to proclaim an annual Freedom of Information Day -- March 16, birthday of James Madison, proponent of the Bill of Rights. SJR 196 (Proxmire) & HJR 602 (several sponsors) are basically identical. But 25 senators and 218 representatives must co-sponsor to assure passage. First Amendment Congress (pr 9/15) urges practitioners to write their Congressmen and enlist their sponsorship.

U.S. PROPOSES JOB STANDARDS FOR GOV'T PRACTITIONERS, TO BE UNIFORMLY TITLED "PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALISTS"; REFLECT ADVANCES IN FIELD, BUT STILL A SERVICE FUNCTION

U.S. Office of Personnel Management has proposed new standards for the estimated 20,000 federal public relations positions. While many were formerly called public information officer, both "public information" and "officer" will be dropped if the recommendations are adopted. The standard term will become "public affairs," the basic title "public affairs specialist." Managers will be termed "supervisory public affairs specialists." Since 1913 the federal gov't has prohibited use of the term "public relations" for job titles.

HOW FEDERAL JOB DESCRIPTIONS EXPLAIN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Job Categories

1. Positions that directly inform, familiarize, and obtain feedback from an agency's various publics concerning the programs, policies, services, and regulations. They analyze input from the publics to present feedback to the agency's decision-makers. Such positions are located in functions referred to as public information or education.
2. Positions that provide information to agency employees concerning programs, staff achievements, awards, and information of personal benefit to employees such as pay, benefits, retirement, charity appeals, blood drives, etc. Such positions are found in activities known as internal information, internal relations, employee communication or information, command information, etc.
3. Positions that establish and maintain relationships with representatives of the news media, utilizing methods and techniques of the media, to provide information about agency programs, policies, and services through the print and broadcast media including newspapers, magazines, press releases, fact sheets, radio, television, films,

etc. Such operations are referred to as media relations, press relations, etc.

Types of Activities

1. Develop and disseminate informational and educational materials directly to the general public or specialized target groups and obtain and analyze feedback or input from such sources to provide program management officials with reaction concerning agency programs.
2. Provide information of particular value and interest to agency employees including material related to agency programs, policies and information of personal benefit to employees.
3. Establish and maintain effective working relationships with representatives of the print and broadcast media and develop and disseminate informational materials to the various publics through the media.
4. Organize, plan and direct a public affairs program in a department or agency, or in an organization of a department or agency.

Some gov't practitioners, especially those recently arrived from news media, claim they are not in public relations. Their work is strictly informative, they say. Professionals outside gov't, plus many senior pros inside, feel this is erroneous and misreads the public relations function. Gov't must inform, they say, but also explain, advocate & stimulate public participation -- using all the techniques of pr. Professional societies like PRSA argue that confusion around this topic harms public understanding of the field, keeps gov't staffers from reaching full potential.

The new standards will please neither group. PA jobs are described as essentially communications work. But research, obtaining feedback, program planning and -- at upper echelons -- "advising top management officials" are among the specifications. Skill requisites are 1) written communications, 2) oral communications, 3) interpersonal relations and 4) analytical skills.

Comments are requested -- by Nov. 19, to Standards Development Center, OPM, D.C. 20415. 84-pg document (Public Affairs Series, GS-1035) reiterates job content & qualifications from several angles. Very specific "characteristic duties" are spelled out. Pages are devoted to nature of pa, structure of pa positions, the communications process. Standards replace similar effort of April '61, "Public Information Series, GS-1081."

Consumer affairs posts are excluded, given a separate rating of their own. Rationale: "these positions also apply substantial knowledge of various subject matter fields." This is one subject on which comments are especially solicited by OPM. Specialty jobs are not covered either. Writers & editors, a-v, exhibits, photography have own categories, not in pa series.

MORE FROM ANNUAL SURVEY:
GOV'T PRACTITIONERS WORRY
ABOUT IMAGE & LEAN BUDGETS

Whatever their job titles may become, practitioners working for gov't appear to be on the defensive. On the federal level the key concern is with declining confidence in the institution of government and with accompanying public apathy. On the state and provincial level, inflation and recession are mentioned most frequently because they fuel the taxpayers' revolt. This concern is also echoed on the local level. There is recognition of "increasing citizen awareness of costs/benefits for government services." Local gov'ts also realize they have to be "doing more with less dollars."

Military public affairs officers report "low morale of military members" (in West Germany) and "a growing discontent with the volunteer army" (in S.C.). More defense dollars are wanted.

Education of the public is frequently mentioned as an issue. Actually, it is seen as a cure for restoring public credibility in each gov't unit's mission. For example, the military speaks of the need for "public perception of the threat [to nat'l security]" and "communicating the importance of a strong Army Reserve establishment." On the local level, "the effective involvement of citizens in government" is seen as both an issue and a solution.

Of Related Interest: The first professional to command a military public relations activity has retired. Brig. Gen. Jerry Dalton turns over the Air Force's worldwide program to Col. Richard Abel, also a pr professional. Dalton's deputy Jerry Hickman, also retiring, joins Gulf Trading & Transport (Houston) as dpa. In his 30-yr stint, Dalton became the first career pr

professional to attain the rank of general. He has been named Washington dpa for Electronic Data Systems Corp (Dallas). An active PRSA member, Dalton recruited many Air Force practitioners into the professional society.

UPDATE ON ECON ED: STOP BLAMING OTHERS,
START WITH POLITICAL REPORTERS

Respondents to prr's Annual Survey (9/22) called for public economic education. Rexnord (Milwaukee) dis-

agrees. And a recent publication suggests public isn't the best target.

Rexnord CEO R.V. Krikorian advises businesses to 1) "stop blaming others for our problems," and 2) says business' communication efforts are failing "because of what we're saying." Among the counterproductive messages he spotlights "If they only understood economics!" Research shows there is no "correlation between understanding economics and supporting business." Other "deadly speech topics" that are hurting business are "Profits are good for you!" and "Get the gov't off our backs: they're paperworking us to death!"

Krikorian points out an example of executive behavior which makes such messages ridiculous. They "line up at the public trough" for tariffs, protection from competition, subsidies, preferential legislation. Then they demand freedom from gov't regs. More positive steps are 1) adhering to a written code of conduct that applies to top execs as well as line workers; 2) making sure business does not condone or make excuses for businessmen who abuse the system.

Political reporters may be villains in problems of economic illiteracy, states a monograph from Nat'l Ctr for Business & Economic Communication (Wash, D.C.). Press covering the presidential races concentrate on the "horse race" aspects, ignore serious economic issues, says author Luis Kohlmeier. Economy should be top subject in current campaign, he feels. But rather than asking tough questions about unemployment, inflation & productivity, reporters give easy playbacks on set speeches and latest polls. Unparalleled opportunity for public education is missed. (Copies are \$10 from the Center at The American University, 3301 New Mexico Ave. NW, Suite 243, Wash, D.C. 20016.)

KLEIN'S BOOK LOOKS INSIDE
NIXON'S GO-AROUND-THE-MEDIA TACTIC

Altho it was the press that eventually brought him down -- or more accurately, one tenacious newspaper -- Richard Nixon makes a good case for ignoring reporters in Herb Klein's new book, Making It Perfectly Clear (Double-day). In a 1970 memo to Klein, ex-editor turned communications consultant and now returning to media, the then-president states he "wouldn't be where he was if he had to depend upon nat'l news media and the pollsters." As evidence, RN cites the number of times media commentators "wrote him off" -- only to have him return victorious.

"It's not helpful to criticize the guy at a machine, nor to bemoan the 'vanishing work ethic,' or point the finger at labor unions. And it doesn't help to lay all the blame at the foot of gov't bureaucracy and regulation. We managers are also part of the problem. When we're talking about productivity or product quality, let's talk about our need as managers to improve our own performance."

-- R.V. Krikorian