

"Forget the gripes of the past. Attitudes have hardened into a Fortress Business/Fortress Gov't mentality." The people are tired of conflict and want cooperation "to propel us into better economic times." Every time business & gov't "bash each other over the head, it brings down public respect for both."

Payne feels business must: 1) talk to gov't before it acts, instead of whining after; 2) take a broader view, don't be so narrow; 3) don't ask for special treatment or subsidies under any guise unless want gov't intervention in business.

Gov't must: 1) not be arbitrary in actions but use a consultation approach; 2) exhibit consistency in pronouncements, instead of ministers contradicting one another; 3) achieve cooperation between the different levels of gov't.

ITEMS OF CONCERN TO PROFESSIONALS

¶It's now Canada Day, not Dominion Day. Canadians celebrated their country's 116th birthday on July 1 with a renamed holiday. The change is opposed by traditionalists, who are irate that the legislation authorizing the change was acted on when few MPs were in the Commons. Newspaper reports suggest nothing will be done to revert to the old name. However, some opponents are continuing to use it. pr is guilty of using it, too, in the 6/27 issue -- and we've never been called traditionalists.

¶The social class of the writer of even a short memo may be discernible in the near future by an artificial intelligence study now underway at IBM. International Resource Development reports the program can evaluate the style of a letter or document, check syntax & construction, then "determine the social origins, politeness & general character of the writer." Called EPISTLE, Evaluation, Preparation & Interpretation System for Text & Language Entities. Main purpose is to improve automated correspondence. But social class applications might provide ability to reply to a letter with language to which the sender would directly relate. (For more info, write pr.)

— DOES THE DOUBLE-TAKE WORK? —

Theory is that it makes an especially memorable impact by forcing us to look twice at hidden meaning. Here's a current bumper sticker employing the technique:

"If you've seen one nuclear war, you've seen them all."

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

ELECTED. 1983-84 CPRS officers: pres, William Wall (supvr pa, Trans-Canada PipeLines, Toronto, Ont.); 1st vp, Luc Beauregard (Beauregard, Hutchinson, McCoy & Capistran Et Associes, Montreal, Que.); 2nd vp, Cynthia Balfour (pr rep, Canterra Energy Ltd, Calgary, Alta.); treas, Frank Paznar (sr vp, Mediacom Industries, Toronto, Ont.); sec'y, Bruce Fredstrom (dpr & info svcs, McCain Foods Ltd, Florenceville, N.B.).

AWARDS. Presented during CPRS' 35th nat'l conf:

Lamp of Service to Louise Rousseau (dpa, Imasco Ltd, Montreal, Que.);

Shield of Public Service to Bill Rees (comms dir, Alberta Housing & Public Works, Edmonton);

Award of Attainment to Edsel Bonnell (pres, Bonnell Public Relations, St. Johns, Nfld.).

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WORLD COMMUNICATIONS YEAR HOLDS MESSAGE FOR ALL PRACTITIONERS, CPRS CONFERENCE TOLD; DIPLOMACY & MULTICULTURALISM ARE UNIVERSAL BECAUSE ORGANIZATIONS AS WELL AS NATIONS HAVE CULTURES

Even smaller organizations located in the middle of the continent need to think globally today. Every business, school, hospital or public agency now faces challenges from new immigrant groups -- Mexicans, Central Americans, Cubans, Koreans, Thais, Vietnamese, et al -- & the rediscovery of ethnicity. The problem, says Jack Shellenberger, pa counselor at the US Embassy in Japan, is "registering messages in diverse cultures."

He told CPRS' 35th annual conference about the ambassador who wanted to remove the Hiroshima picture from the touring "Family of Man" photo exhibit, thinking it would embarrass the US and anger the Japanese. He was counseled to leave it in -- and that display of candor won credibility for the embassy.

"A good understanding of the way the world works is more important than basic public relations techniques," adds Luc Beauregard, Montreal counselor who also chairs the agency managing "Man and His World." He ties professionalism to being a well-rounded practitioner, not a "technician" who knows only communication. "Get out of kitchen work and onto larger problems."

"Is diplomatic external relations public relations? Yes," concludes Glen Buick, ex-ambassador who is now deputy minister, Alberta Dep't of Culture. "Public relations is mostly marketing -- marketing the image of a country, marketing policy, marketing the gov't to its citizens."

Understanding national cultures helps in learning about organizational culture. "Every institution has a culture, mores, rules, relationships, hidden agendas, real vs. public structure," counsels Elias Buchwald, v chrm, Burson-Marsteller. "Look at goals. Look at values. If divergent, they

If public relations practice is applied human nature, CPRS conference attendees witnessed a potent reminder by sharing their hotel with British royalty. Human love of ceremony & symbolism brought crowds to the barricades erected in the lobby to keep gawkers a respectable distance from "the King and Di," as wags call Prince Charles & Princess Diana. To allow conferees a chance to express their human nature, sessions were postponed the afternoon of the royal couple's arrival -- when most of Edmonton's 650,000 residents seemed to be on hand.

Surely one of the great public relations operations of all time is keeping up the royal mystique. They are today figureheads, symbols, responsible for the ceremonial side of government. Yet people of all nations are intrigued. When the couple appeared at St. Andrews, N.B., near the Maine border, half the crowds were said to be from the US.



will fail. Understanding of strategies and their effect on people -- that is handled by public relations."

Shellenberger advises practitioners to learn the culture & the language wherever you're working. "They're the only constants. Everything else changes."

Another point emerges from the remarks of the several foreign service professionals addressing the conference, whose theme was World Communications Year, proclaimed for 1983 by the UN. Diplomatic positions are mainly public relations jobs, yet practitioners are rarely ever considered for them. They involve lobbying, negotiation, policy explanation, persuasion, information exchange.

"We must develop a new breed of practitioner" who 1) speaks many languages, 2) is raised internationally, 3) is sensitive to & respectful of other cultures, 4) has a sense of worldwide political trends. "These skills will be needed in all organizations," feels Jacques Lefebvre, vp-pa, The SNC Group, "and we, as our part of management, should be supplying these services first."

ECONOMIC AS WELL AS FINANCIAL UNDERSTANDING
NEEDED BY STAKEHOLDERS IN ALL ORGANIZATIONS

Practitioners need to give priority to communicating the economics -- not just the finances -- of their organization. Most publics do not have the incentive to learn, to understand the economic facts behind finances, Tom Powrie, professor of economics, UAlberta, told CPRS. The public is divided into 3 levels of incentive:

1. Lots of incentive -- professional economists, managers, CEOs. Understanding economics is their life work. CEOs & managers may not have much technical knowledge, but they are well informed and served by specialists who do have that knowledge.
2. Some incentive -- part-time decisionmakers such as small business operators, shareholders, homemakers. They shift for themselves and haven't much economic expertise. They need lots of information and most of it is being provided by the mass media. They are not well-served.
3. Not much incentive -- voters. They are poorly served by those trying to get economic messages across to them. Useless slogans are created to explain the issues -- "let the rich pay," "less government," etc.

The general public needs to learn three points about economics: 1) the economy moves slowly & rapid change is not possible, 2) there is no free lunch; 3) the reality of government controls and price systems in the present-day global economy.

OTTAWA, WASHINGTON NOW BIG ON PR

That North American governments better understand the role of public relations in the court of public opinion is no longer in doubt. Toronto Globe & Mail front-paged this item June 28: "The federal government begins a two-pronged public relations blitz against inflation tonight with a televised speech by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau on the virtue of restraint." A week earlier Washington Post reported: "The White House has launched a coordinated government public relations campaign to persuade special interest groups and other Americans that President Reagan's efforts to counter communism in Central America are vital to US security."

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William Thorsell, ass't editor, Edmonton Journal, says that "an economic education is needed for journalists as well as readers." He adds that "bad news does not sell papers. News sells papers." Media shouldn't be criticized for publishing bad economic news. After all, he notes, it's in their interest to report good news about the economy since that's what gets people to spend money with advertisers.

BUSINESS & GOVERNMENT: HOW THEY CAN GET ALONG,
WHAT PRACTITIONERS IN EACH CAN LEARN FROM THE OTHER

Differences between the public & private sectors are environmental, says David

McAsey, mpi, Dome Petroleum, to CPRS. The public sector has more objectives than the private. Privates are concerned with profit -- long-term profit. All their objectives are tied to it, and must be.

The structure of public organizations is more complex than private companies. In the public sector there is almost always a divergence on task & objectives. In private organizations, the board of directors sets policy & management is there to carry it out.

The efficiency, productivity & drive of private enterprise are lessons from which the public sector could benefit. McAsey told public sector practitioners how they could adopt some techniques and practices of private sector public relations departments to be more effective:

1. Planning: Associate your objectives as closely as possible with the organization's core objectives. Know the unwritten priorities of the organization. Stress the cost effectiveness of your program. When doing proposals keep them to 2 pages focusing on why, cost, & this is better than what.
2. Preselling: Done before the budget or planning process, preselling will enable you to deal with the roadblocks that may stop your program. Before presenting to senior people, presell notions to colleagues. "People who have a voice in creation will be enthusiastic later."
3. Hardware: When convincing superiors about the need for new hardware, sell them the ability to get immediate & important information fast to the people who need it.
4. Measuring the outside world: Your function will become very useful if you can tell people what outsiders are thinking.
5. Employee communications: An internal communications program helps organizational objectives be understood. Unfortunately this most effective area is ignored when budgets are low.

Business-Government
Cooperation

"Governments can't be run like ordinary private businesses," despite the rhetoric to that effect, claims accredited CPRS member Wm. Payne, now serving in Alberta's Parliament & Cabinet. The reason is that gov't must strike a balance between competing interests. Business needn't do this. Nevertheless, from his experience on both sides Payne feels far better relationships between gov't & business are possible.