

should be an advocate for agriculture...a policy advisor to other departments of the federal government, & an important part of the Executive Branch." In other words, there should be an official voice right within the gov't. But another plank reads, "We oppose the use of tax monies by government agencies for public relations, self-promotion & the expression of partisan political opinions."

¶Fundraising letters masquerading as opinion surveys are another pollutant of the endangered research environment. They are the mail version of the telephone "poll" which turns out to be a sales pitch for encyclopedias & siding. pr has received several. In bold red letters across the envelope are words like "CONFIDENTIAL OPINION SURVEY." "For addressee only" is printed below the address window. "Please return enclosed survey form within 10 days" appears at bottom right. Overall impression is that an important survey is enclosed. NPO's name & address is printed in tiny letters on back flap. Inside, at top of survey form, is a solicitation for funds.

¶Master's degree program in corporate public relations -- first of its kind in the US -- has been established at NorthwesternU's Medill School of Journalism. Issue management pioneer Ray Ewing is acting director. Students will be prepared to assume management-level positions in Fortune 500-type companies following 4 quarters of study and an 11-week internship. Initial class, fall of '86, limited to 20 students. Format & course of study has been reviewed by pr pros, including senior members of PRSA & the Public Affairs Council. Courses include marketing management, organizational behavior, research/statistics, consumer behavior, comms theory, corporate pr strategy & techniques, finance/investor relations, employee relations.

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

DIED. William Leslie Jr, mpa for Chevron USA; PRSA Board member since Jan '85; Nat'l Conf Chrm in '84; So Pacific Dist sec'y in '83; Calif Inland Empire Chapter pres in '82.

AWARDS. Ramon Greenwood (sr counsel, Cranford Johnson Robinson Assocs, Little Rock) receives Aluminum Award from PRSA/Arkansas Chapter -- highest award given by chapter for distinguished pr career.

ELECTED. Florida Public Relations Ass'n officers for 1986: pres, Mary O'Reilly (exec vp, Fineline Communications, Largo); pres-elect, Cathlean Coleman (comty rels dir, Palm Beach Visiting Nurse Ass'n, West Palm Beach); vp's, Richard Baumbach (chrm, Baumbach & Fisher Assocs, Melbourne), Robert Davis (assoc prof, UCentral Fla, comms

dep't, Orlando), Sallie Parks (comty rels dir, Mease Health Care, Dunedin), Ruth Smith (sr biz dev'l specialist, CH2M Hill, Gainesville); treas, Gerald Gee (assoc prof, Florida A&M Univ, Tallahassee); ass't treas, Judith Paul (comty rels & dev'l dir, Waterman Medical Center, Eustis).

Public Affairs Council officers for '86: chrm, Malcolm MacKillop (sr vp-corp rels, Pacific Gas & Electric, SF); chrm-elect, Henry Lartigue Jr (mpa, Exxon, Houston); vice-chrm, L.D. (Dandy) Witty (dir pa & pr, Pitney Bowes, Stamford, Ct), Forrest Coffey (vp-gov't aftrs, Boeing, Seattle).

National Investor Relations Institute's 1986 chrm is Johnnie Johnson (ass't corp comptroller-investor rels, US Steel, NY).

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INSTEAD OF MAKING A PUBLIC ISSUE OUT OF DISAGREEMENTS,
HOW ABOUT DIRECT NEGOTIATION WITH THE OTHER SIDE?
PR, WITH WIN-WIN SOLUTIONS, TAKES ON THE LITIGATORS

Concerns about our litigious society -- trumpeted for years but with a rather hopeless air -- are returning, this time with some positive aspects. Richard Ferris, United Airlines CEO, devotes his monthly column in the carrier's in-flight mag to the topic. He notes that business and other institutions are starting to realize the costs to them -- & everyone -- of litigiousness.

Even when disagreements don't end up in court, too often they become big issue battles -- fought this time by public relations/public affairs. Professionals know there is no such thing as a victory here. The losers only lick their wounds waiting for another day. Only making mutual accommodations thru establishing productive relationships is win-win. It is in this arena practitioners can push lawyers out of the spotlight & lead society to more productive functioning.

THE PHILOSOPHY. "Before you gear up the media relations campaign, before you create your lobbying strategy, before you energize the grass-roots, ask yourself a disarmingly simple question. Have you tried talking -- and listening -- to 'the other side'? In other words, have you tried quiet, direct discussion?" asks John Paluszek in "Public Affairs Presents 1985," the annual monographs of PRSA's Public Affairs Section.

Paluszek writes on "alternative dispute resolution" -- the term given to organized listening & talking. It's a structured series of meetings with an impartial mediator. It's an alternative to expensive litigation. Or fighting it out in the court of public opinion, which nearly always has some negative side effects.

THE BARRIER. "You should join forces with your adversaries to seek consensus solutions to problems," advises Richard Long, Dow Chemical's mgr ext'l comms & issues. But he warns the toughest sell for reasoning together is often your own management -- especially if they're engineers, scientists or other "logical thinkers." "You'll find the sides are not so far apart once they sit down. The problem is getting them in the same room."

Learning mediation & relationship techniques is important now, Long believes, because he foresees rough times. "We're in a lull before more turbulent times, depending on the outcome of the 1988 presidential election, the performance of the economy, Congress' lack of fortitude in dealing with federal spending, runaway litigation (& related problems, such as insurability) and industry's inaction on major national priorities, such as hazardous waste. The news media have been, relatively speaking, less combative lately than during the late 70s. I bet on stormier times ahead."



Once that hurdle is overcome -- and clearly it is where practitioners must focus -- results are good. Paluszek reports:

THE BENEFITS. "'The Conservation Foundation recently found that agreements have been reached in almost 80% of the good faith "dialogue" programs.' Who benefits? 1) Companies get a more efficient, far-less-costly resolution of complex issues. 2) Public activist organizations attain 'legitimacy' and play an important role in the formation of public policy. 3) Legislators & regulators are no longer buffeted by claims & counter-claims, arguments, and pleadings by adversarial interests."

Edward L. Bernays feels this is the flowering of public relations. He defines presentday practitioners as "societal technicians with the abilities to bring about accommodation in the court of public opinion."

Paluszek says, "Let the lawyers litigate. Let the public relations & public affairs professionals mediate."

PLACES TO START. 1. Join American Arbitration Ass'n. Public service membership org'n "exists to demonstrate disputes can be resolved peacefully & privately thru a variety of methods: arbitration, mediation, negotiation, fact-finding, conciliation, mini-trial, meetings, democratic elections," Frank Zotto told prr. Membership benefits include a professional arbitration journal, other pub'ns, training & educational activities across the country. Many practitioners belong. Contact AAA at 140 W 51st St, NYC 10020; 212/484-4000.

2. Actually conduct some mediations -- for others. AAA's 26 regional US offices conduct about 45,000 arbitrations etc. per year. To provide arbitrators to hear those cases, AAA maintains a panel of about 60,000 professionals from a variety of backgrounds. Public relations professionals interested in joining this panel should contact the Ass'n.

3. Better Business Bureau teaches mediation/arbitration. They have a program called Auto Line which is written into car manufacturers' contracts -- Ford is one -- that it will be the form of first resort for resolving disputes between manufacturers & owners. They give free training, then you in turn arbitrate for them voluntarily, Karen Leichtnam of HALT (DC) told prr.

4. DC Superior Court system & several others across the country do this also. They arbitrate small claims. Offer a training course for free, in turn request you voluntarily mediate 1 case/week for a year.

Arbitration is a legal, adversary process. Each side submits its case before an arbitrator they both agree on. Both sides introduce evidence, cross examine witnesses. While arbitration is more informal than a court case, arbitrator has the authority to issue a decision that will be final & binding on both parties.

Mediation is a negotiation between 2 parties. The mediator's role is to facilitate the negotiation, to try & move both parties toward an agreement. A mediator has no authority to bind anybody to anything. If he/she is successful, the parties find their own agreement. It's not an adversary process in the traditional sense.

5. Join HALT (Help Abolish Legal Tyranny). 116 thousand members nationwide are concerned about litigation and support the concept of alternative dispute resolution. Org'n publishes self-help legal manuals, newsletter, is actively engaged in getting legal reform legislation passed. Contact HALT, 201 Massachusetts Ave, Ste.319, Wash DC 20002; 202/546-4258.

6. Read "Public Affairs Presents 1985." \$10 -- \$5 for section mbrs -- from PRSA, 845 3rd Ave, NYC 10022.

USEFUL INFORMATION FOR PRACTITIONERS

¶NOW has picked abortion as the issue to turn on public support, judging from its fundraising mailings. "Massive public mobilization" is the goal, including "making our case with a strong & compelling media campaign." Outspoken pres Ellie Smeal is keeping her promise to whip things up. Wonder what Planned Parenthood, National Abortion Rights Action League & others think of NOW invading their funding turf?

¶Large size packages of news materials or mailings may be distributed cheaper, faster, more conveniently & more reliably if sent by United Parcel Service, recommends Angela Whitford, publicity ass't for Karin Lippert Public Relations (NYC). Package that would cost \$1.75 1st class via USPS, cost \$1.32 with UPS. "It's cheaper. They get there quicker. When we mail on Friday to people within the city, they get it by Monday. Along the East Coast, they get it within 3 days. And it's a lot more reliable. When we've done these mailings by regular mail, many times people never received them. With UPS they have to sign for them, you can trace them and if something happens to the package, UPS reimburses us for the postage. It's a lot more convenient."

¶Proofreaders are still indispensable despite computer spelling checkers, which can't distinguish affect from effect, principal from principle. prr tripped over the latter last week. This brought a real relationship-building note from Newell Garden, Raytheon dpr: "I think you may want to correct this as a matter of principal. That's just my personnel opinion." His advice: "Smile!"

¶How policy statements sometimes contradict themselves is demonstrated by the American Farm Bureau Federation's official policy statement for '86. Government should treat farmers in a very friendly way. "The Department of Agriculture

PERSUADING OUTSIDE AUDIENCES

...about the profession & its contributions is PRSA pres Tony Franco's objective. Instead of just visiting chapters, he's spending his efforts on groups like American Petroleum Institute, Rotary Clubs & one called Public Technology, Inc. -- an offshoot of National League of Cities & International City Management Ass'n. He spoke to them on the application of basic public relations principles to local issues such as building community pride, increasing use of city services, retaining businesses & residents. Franco's program is designed to heighten awareness & understanding of public relations among executives, professionals & others who use the services of practitioners. You can help by locating good platforms. Contact Donna Peltier, PRSA dpr, 212/826-1750.