

5. detailed **preparedness plan** -- a how-to guide for handling food safety issues.

"When you think of networking, you tend to poo poo it as a career builder of the 80s. Think of it as a management & communications tool. These kind of initiatives can't prevent food scares on all fronts, but can provide forums for addressing timely consumer concerns."

**REBIRTH OF SOCIAL ACTIVISM,
RISE OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY,
PREDICTED IN UNITED WAY SCAN**

Trends are identified in United Way's Environmental Scan Committee report, "What Lies Ahead: Countdown to the 21st Century." Report looks at

research, trends, statistics in the social, economics technological, political & philanthropic arenas. It reports:

1. "The public agenda pendulum is swinging decisively in the direction of social concerns.... Accompanying this shift is likely to be less tolerance for business action which the public perceives as harmful to society, such as financial actions which harm the economy, and pollution which threatens public health." (See pr 1/8/90)
2. During the 90s, the US economy will generate enough jobs for everyone, but the skill level of available workers won't match the needs of the jobs. Economic growth will slow as a result.
3. Self-sufficiency will then become a national issue casting a different light on social issues. Those previously viewed as isolated problems (welfare dependency, illiteracy, unemployment, child poverty, worker displacement, persistent poverty among urban blacks) are now being seen as part of a single problem -- underinvestment in the country's human resources. "And integrated perspectives are likely to breed integrated solutions, which are more likely to succeed."

(109-pg report, \$20 from United Way of America, Sales Service Division, 701 North Fairfax St, Alexandria, VA 22314; 703/836-7100)

ITEM OF INTEREST TO PRACTITIONERS

¶ **Report Scopes European Broadcast Industry.** Practitioners who have a stake in EC '92 or plan to practice there may be interested in report by Edelman PR (NYC). Incorporating its findings with research from Saatchi & Saatchi, Booz Allen & Hamilton and Television Business Int'l, Edelman finds, for example, that VNRs & b-roll are gaining in acceptance. Report also looks at 10 key European countries -- their broadcast systems (satellite, terrestrial & cable), laws & capabilities. Germany & Italy, are the most open while Ireland & Sweden are restrictive. (More info from Edelman, 1500 Broadway, NYC 10036; 212/768-0550)

pr reporter

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**IN AN ERA WHERE MONEY IS TIGHT AND ALL ISSUES ARE HOT,
PUBLIC SERVICE GROUPS MUST BE EXTRA SKILLFUL TO GAIN SUPPORT;
THEY ARE A STRATEGY & IDEA SHOWCASE FOR ALL PRACTITIONERS**

Many of the most effective techniques now common to pr practice were developed during the 60s & 70s -- not by counselors or corporate pros but by activist & public interest organizations. Lacking the resources (and in those days, the access to opinionmakers & media), these groups are forced to base their programs on ingenuity.

Several factors are at work now to undermine nonprofits and their missions: a) competition for donors is at an all-time high. Never before has society been fragmented into so many groups, all desperate to stay afloat, let alone effect change. This feeds the b) info glut -- it's hard to be heard when people are drowning in appeals. Plus, c) money just isn't there. As the economy slides, a growing percentage of the population is finding charity begins & ends at home. Ingenuity is again becoming the NPO's response, offering positive & negative lessons. A purview:

1. **CARE is supporter-friendly, combines 3 messages in 1.** Card reads, "Let me add this note of ap-preciation for your support last year and concern because we have not heard from you recently." Piece then expresses sensitivity about mail proliferation. "I know you receive many requests for help and can't answer all of them. If you indicate how often you wish to receive letters from CARE, we will honor your wishes." Such thoughtfulness is guaranteed to inspire responses, if not contributions.

Mission statement of the Feminist Majority Foundation: "Our long-term education work -- changing minds for today & tomorrow by marshaling compelling facts in a dramatic & unforgettable presentation -- is essential." But this raises a fundamental question: will communicating facts change minds?

2. **Fellowship Of Reconciliation Tries Clutter Buster.** To fuel its campaign for worldwide peace, FOR sent supporters black paper strips pre-glued to adhere around empty film canisters -- which then resemble miniature oil barrels. "No Blood For Oil" is printed in white letters. Piece is pre-addressed to President Bush with room for a stamp & return address. "We were having a meeting with our board about the Gulf Crisis," exec sec'y Doug Hostetter told pr. "We wanted to start something that would have symbolic & visual impact, that people could easily do." Film canisters seemed easily accessible, a household item. "Who knows? They may restrain our president from doing something disastrous," (he said prior to the start of hostilities).



Flipside Risk: Package also includes a picture which may aggravate some -- FOR members with a group of nuns around a Baghdad memorial to Iraqi martyrs of the Iran-Iraq war. "We thought about it but hoped people would read the copy and realize these types of monuments are memorials to human failure. 500,000 Iraqis died in this senseless war. We instinctively joined hands around this symbol of nationalism & death in an international circle of prayer for life. The picture signifies what we are and what we are trying to do. We don't want it to link us with Iraq's political position."

3. Easter Seals Media Campaign Aims For Realistic Goal -- Awareness.

New multi-media advocacy project indicates some long-touted pr tenets are sinking in. Consisting chiefly of PSAs, campaign is aptly titled "Awareness is the First Step Towards Change."

"For people with disabilities to be accepted, a change in attitude must occur first," project coordinator Sara Brewster told prr. "Awareness is the first step." Future steps include more lobbying for access. Brewster says project will take 10-20 years to accomplish behavioral goal: full public acceptance of those with disabilities.

4. American Civil Liberties Union Embraces PR Strategies.

New goals: a) build a specialized capacity to measure & analyze public opinion; b) identify, persuade & mobilize swing voters; c) convert public opinion victories into permanent legislative gains; d) use bicentennial as a vehicle for broadcasting civil liberty themes on tv & radio. "Essentially, we are trying to move into other arenas besides our traditional fight in federal court," media rels dir Phil Gutis told prr. "We have to mobilize people at local levels and be aggressive, spotting issues before they become laws." In short: ACLU is counting on pr techniques.

Ironically, ACLU's difficulties come just as it prepares to commemorate bicentennial of the Bill of Rights. Biggest problem is a decade & a half of unfriendly Supreme Court appointments. "These are not normal times," says exec dir Ira Glasser. "Our strategy over the past 3 decades -- relying on federal court litigation to protect & expand civil liberties -- worked only as long as we enjoyed a majority on the Court." Court is increasingly delegating decisions to state legislators -- a trend ACLU sees as a direct threat to civil liberties.

5. **Amnesty International goes for the gut** with graphic accounts of rapes, beatings & tortures of political prisoners worldwide. Another organization sent copies of a Central American booklet giving illustrated direc-

Hostetter: "Older members remembered the 50s when the US was almost at war with China, which was having a severe famine. We sent Eisenhower little bags of rice with the message, 'When your enemy is hungry, feed him.' Years later, a colleague told us he'd worked at the White House at the time. He heard then that there was a discussion about whether or not to use atomic weapons against China. Eisenhower reportedly asked, 'Well, how many of those damn bags of rice have we received?' When told there were many, the president said, 'Then we certainly can't bomb mainland China.'"

tions on how to torture prisoners. Do such visceral appeals work? Or backfire as people manifest the ego defense response? AI's fundraising dir Amy Levine told prr that such mailings reap an amount considered standard in the nonprofit sector. "We have a very successful donor rate."

But success may be more attributable to fact AI invites active participation with Urgent Action Network, thru which members can write directly to governments & beseech the release of specific prisoners. "There is plenty of opportunity to be an activist." AI mailings contain written accounts from former prisoners to show such petitioning works.

ANIMAL HEALTH FOLLOWS PESTICIDE'S LEAD, ESTABLISHES "ONE CLEAR VOICE" NETWORK TO RESPOND TO ALAR-TYPE HYPE ATTACKS

Because of its scientific complexities, biochemical jargon & potential to generate widespread and severe damage, the pesticide industry is prone to acute pr problems whenever it has a crisis. Alar issue exemplifies how negative hype breeds hysteria: moms broke bottles of apple juice in supermarket aisles; school officials pulled apple products from cafeteria menus; celebs publicly denounced the pesticide industry. Meanwhile, EPA & FDA locked horns over the issue while NRDC kept up its wide-range campaign against the chemical.

Pesticide's successful handling of EBDC issue (see box) prompted the animal health industry to form a permanent crisis-response network to link animal health industry & customers to retailers & consumers. "Theirs was an informal coalition, not an organized effort. But we're using it as a model because it behooves us to be prepared." Bercham says EPA or FDA could suddenly ban an animal health product, creating the potential for hysteria. Tho it isn't yet approved, BST is the sort of controversial product that could cause a stir (pr 10/23/89) Components of the animal health network plan:

1. **400 food-related organizations;**
2. **advisory panel** of representatives from producer groups tied to the animal health industry;
3. **core group of 40** organizations that share safety concerns about milk, cheese & eggs. Group meets regularly to brainstorm ideas;
4. **detailed catalog** profiling the 400 organizations, with contacts & resource info. **Info kits** & special **conferences** can be quickly developed which involve sitting down with food editors, enviro groups, gov't authorities to prevent misinformation;

The pesticide industry had learned a lesson by the time fungicide EBDC came under EPA scrutiny. "Businesses, farmers, government officials, grocers & food processors all cooperated to coordinate actions & provide accurate information," Steve Bercham, dpi, Animal Health Institute (Alexandria, Va) told prr. "By the time the ban was announced, they used a networking system within their industry to pool resources & speak with one voice." Result is EBDC attracted coverage for about a day, & EPA is holding up on the proposed ban until it tests produce for trace residuals of the chemical.