

FIFTEEN CASE STUDIES IN INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

**The Evolution of Public Relations:
Case Studies From
Countries in Transition**

**Judy VanSlyke Turk
Linda H. Scanlan
Editors**

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The Institute for Public Relations, University of Florida, PO Box 118400, Gainesville, FL 32611-8400

Phone: 352/392-0280, Fax: 352/846-1122, E-mail: iprre@grove.ufl.edu

www.instituteforpr.com

PREFACE

FIFTEEN CASE STUDIES IN INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

Case studies in international public relations are hard to find. We are pleased to present fifteen case studies which we hope you find interesting, informative, and useful.

Even when major international disasters occur, it is often difficult to get all the facts needed to prepare a fair and appropriate public relations case study. Often the principals involved do not wish to discuss details of the situation for legal and other reasons.

During late June and early July 1998, outstanding faculty members from leading, accredited public relations programs in the United States were invited to conduct "how to" workshops and help design communications programs for students attending university communications programs in Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, and the former Russian Republics.

To prepare for these sessions of "teachers teaching teachers," U.S. faculty members gathered a series of case studies to show how informed public discussion helps to crystallize public opinion and how open, accurate communication is essential for broad based understanding of public policy and economic reforms.

Fortunately for us all workshop instruction was conducted in English, the language of most public relations texts and research journals. The program was funded by the Open Society Institute as one of its projects in support of higher education.

The Institute is honored to be asked to publish these case studies and thanks all of the authors for granting permission to publish their research so it can be made available for use by practitioners and other academic instructors.

The Institute for Public Relations is the only independent foundation in the field of public relations. It sponsors academic research, competitions, awards, seminars, lectures and publications -- all dedicated to improving the professional practice of public relations around the world.

Workshop directors were:

Judy VanSlyke Turk, dean, College of Journalism and Mass Communications, University of South Carolina; co-author, *This is PR*; visiting lecturer, Latvia, Romania.

Linda H. Scanlan, retired journalism chair, Norfolk State University, Virginia; Fulbright lecturer, Bulgaria; USIS teaching fellow, Latvia.

Workshop directors were:

Dean Kruckeberg, coordinator, public relations degree program, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa.

Ray Laakaniemi, associate professor, Bowling Green, Ohio, Fulbright lecturer, Estonia.

Douglas Ann Newsom, professor, former chair, Department of Journalism, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas; co-author, *This is PR*; Fulbright lecturer, India.

Robert I. Wakefield, professor, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; chair, International Section, Public Relations Society of America.

Dennis L. Wilcox, professor, San Jose State University, San Jose, California; co-author *Public Relations Writing and Media Techniques*; Fulbright lecturer, Africa.

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INTRODUCTION

Public relations in one country is not necessarily public relations in another.

The culture, economic environment, political system and customs of one country are not the same as another's. And since culture, economic and political systems and customs influence how organizations and institutions communicate with their publics or stakeholders, what is effective communication in one country won't necessarily work in another.

Most of the published, and thus readily available, case studies of public relations draw upon Western experiences, primarily those in the United States of America. But since what works in the United States won't necessarily work in another country, it is important to develop a body of literature, a collection of case studies, that describes how public relations has been, and can be, practiced in other social, political and economic systems.

We intend this collection to be of particular usefulness to professors and teachers of public relations in non-Western countries and cultures, who so desperately need examples and models with which their students and their countries can identify. We expect that practitioners as well will appreciate the models and case studies we present.

We hope we have created such a cross-cultural, international collection of case studies. We are indebted to the public relations practitioners and educators who have contributed to this collection, for they have made this volume possible.

Linda H. Scanlan, APR
Judy VanSlyke Turk, Ph.D., APR, Fellow PRSA

**Public Communication Campaign
for the World Bank Air Pollution Abatement Program
in Slovenia (1996-1997)**

**Dejan Vercic
Pristop Communication Group
Slovenia**

Executive Summary

Air pollution caused by the use of dirty fossil fuels (coal, wood, heavy oil) for power generation and heating is one of the biggest environmental problems in countries in transition. In Slovenia, a newly independent country in Central Europe with a population of 2 million living on 20.296 square kilometers, the heating of buildings, flats and individual houses utilizes about one third of the total energy consumption and is therefore responsible for the same proportion of air pollution with sulfur dioxide and smoke.

The Government of Slovenia established the Environmental Development Fund (Eco-Fund) within the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning to manage loans for gas conversion. The World Bank had established a credit for an Air Pollution Abatement Project in Slovenia from which the Eco-Fund provided attractive low interest loans to households to convert their dirty heating systems to more environmentally friendly systems. From June 1995 to May 1996, 117 loans were made to individual households.

In 1996, the European Union through its Phare program issued a public tender seeking proposals for a “Pilot Testing Phase of the World Bank Air Pollution Abatement Program” that would evaluate and improve the Eco-Fund project management capabilities, design and launch an extensive public communication campaign, and design and provide computer courses and purchase computer and communication hardware and software for Eco-Fund staff. A Slovenian consortium of four public relations consultancies won the tender.

This case study described how Pristop Communication Group, which was responsible for the design and implementation of the public communication campaign, increased ten-fold the use of loans by individual households. The public communication campaign started in May 1996 and by its end, 1,896 Slovenian households converted from dirty fossil fuels heating systems to more environmentally friendly heating systems.

The purpose of this case study is to show how good use of research and straightforward execution can be effective even within externally imposed time and financial constraints and in economically hard times.

The Problem

Slovenia has a population of nearly 2 million people, living on 20.296 square kilometers and generating a GDP of US \$21 billion. It is located in the middle of Europe between Austria, Croatia, Hungary and Italy. From its capital, Ljubljana, it takes two and one-half hours by car to get to Venice (Italy), or five to Vienna (Austria). It gained its independence from Yugoslavia on June 25, 1991. Since then it has changed its currency (from Yugoslav Dinar to Slovenian Tolar),

political system (from a one party “people’s democracy” to a multiparty parliamentary democracy), economic system (from “socialist self-government” to market economy) and social system (from a closed to an open society), and accomplished privatization of formerly “social-owned” capital, denationalization of the property that was nationalized under socialism and internationalization of the economy into the broader European and global market.

Air pollution caused by the use of dirty fossil fuels (coal, wood, heavy oil) for power generation and heating is one of the biggest environmental problems in countries in transition, including Slovenia. Most Slovenian urban areas are situated where air inversions frequently occur during heating season.

The heating of buildings, flats and individual houses utilizes about one third of the total energy consumption in Slovenia and therefore is responsible directly or indirectly the same proportion of air pollution emanating from big power stations.

Although efforts have been made in Slovenia to reduce air pollution from burning dirty fuels, the problem still exists. Previous efforts have been directed primarily at reducing air emissions from big power stations because of their concentrations of air emissions on one site.

Starting in 1995, Slovenia successfully launched an air pollution abatement program that was financially supported by the World Bank and the European Commission (through the Phare program).

The purpose of this case study is to show how use of research and straightforward execution can be effective in public communication and changing public behavior even within externally imposed time and financial constraints and in economically hard times.

Time and financial constraints are common in public communication campaigns, particularly if providers of communication services are selected through a public tender (bidding process) which usually pre-defines what has to be done, in what time and with what resources.

The social and economic environment also play an important role in the execution of any public communication campaign. Usual goals of public communication campaigns are public goods--clean air in this case. Although in general nearly everybody agrees that the public goods are needed, the question is who is to pay for them.

The “polluter pays principle” that is often accepted in environmental matters can be complicated if the polluter comes from a low-income strata of society. In this case the major target public was retirees, who are in post-socialist countries in a very vulnerable financial position. However, it was found through research that some (grown-up) children in Slovenia

were prepared to pay for the convenience of their elderly retiree parents. The campaign theme as a result broadened from environmental to financial questions and the convenience of newer heating systems.

Background

The Government of Slovenia established the Environmental Development Fund (Eco-Fund) within the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning to manage loans for gas conversion. The World Bank had established a credit for an Air Pollution Abatement Project in Slovenia from which the Eco-Fund provided attractive low interest loans to householders to convert their dirty heating systems to more environmentally friendly systems. The Eco-Fund served only as the overall loan managing institution, while the funds themselves were disbursed by a group of banks led by Nova Kreditna Banka Maribor.

In 1996, The European Commission through its Phare program issued a public tender (request for bids) for a “Pilot Testing Phase of the World Bank Air Pollution Abatement Program” that would evaluate and improve the Eco-Fund project management capabilities, design and launch an extensive public communication campaign, design and provide computer courses and purchase computer and communication hardware and software for the Eco-Fund staff. A Slovenian consortium of four public relations consultancies (ITEO, Pristop Communication Group, Sistemi Shift, and E-Net) won the tender.

The consortium collaborated through a project board that held 13 meetings and a project assurance team that held 32 meetings during the time of the project. The total value of the project contract was ECU 400,000 (U.S. \$456,000) of which ECU 154,800 (U.S. \$176,500) were designated for the public communication campaign.

The public communication campaign started in May 1996. One month was designated as an inception phase, 11 months as the implementation phase and 1 month as the finalization phase.

Goals and Objectives

The initial formative research for the design of the public communication campaign was executed in May and June 1996. It used both formal and informal methods. The latter consisted of in-depth interviews with the management and staff of Eco-Fund and interviews with some of their target audiences. The formal research consisted of a poll of a representative, quota sample of 1,163 households representing the population of 645,000 households in Slovenia. Face-to-face interviewing for the poll was executed from 20 to 28 June 1996. Situational analysis of publics, which was used to analyze the willingness of the population to enter into communication on the project's topics, showed that half of the population could be viewed as a willing target.

From the poll it was concluded the average member of the target population had the following characteristics:

- * s/he is older
- * lives in urban environment
- * is employed by state/public company
- * lives in a family with one provider
- * has middle or lower family income
- * is more receptive to communication activity as level of education increases

From in-depth interviews it was found that an important group especially interested in the conversion of their heating systems were retirees. It was found that the grown children of these retirees were prepared to financially help their elderly parents convert to gas heating for the reason of convenience.

Following the research, three broad goals were defined:

- * to train and increase the communicative capability of the Eco-Fund management and staff
- * to increase awareness about the loan program in the target population
- * to influence the target population and other enabling groups to do the necessary preparatory work, apply for loans, take the loans and convert their heating systems. Five major audiences were identified for the public communication program:
- * the target group within the general population that should be persuaded to apply for loans to convert old and environmentally unfriendly heating systems
- * enabling publics (those institutions directly involved in the loan program that have an influence on the success of the program such as banks, labor contractors and natural gas and district heating distributors)
- * media (journalists and editors of both print and electronic media on local and national levels)
- * energy consultants and professional associations (professional energy associations, municipal energy consultants)
- * a political public (Parliament, Government, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, environmental pressure groups)

Strategic Tactics and Techniques

The tactical plan consisted of using eight types of communication tools:

- * launch event: “open day”
- * training and seminars for Eco-Fund management and staff
- * advertising
- * live radio talk shows
- * media relations
- * brochure
- * toll-free telephone line
- * national roundtable on environment

Launch: “Open Day.” The public communication campaign was launched with an “open day” reception at the premises of the Eco-Fund in May 1996. Representatives of local communities, managers of leading energy supply companies, bank executives and journalists met with the management of the Eco-Fund and their staff for a briefing on the project and its goals.

Training and seminars. After research and the initial planning phase of the project, the communication campaign started with the preparation of the Eco-Fund management and its staff for their role as communicators about the loan program. This consisted of training them for the preparation of public delivery of a short statement (30 seconds), and open statement (no time limitation), an interview with a journalist and training for participation on a TV round table (September 1996). As a result of that part of the training, a Question & Answer manual on those topics was prepared. The training was followed with seminars on the following topics: “basics of communication management and public relations,” “from interpersonal to organizational communication,” and “public affairs” (October 1996). As result of and as supplements to those seminars several documents for internal use were prepared under the following titles: “definition of the communication problems in air pollution abatement program,” “situational analysis of the Eco-Fund’s publics,” “definition of communication goals,” “Eco-Funds target audiences,” “definition of communication goals for each public,” “communication areas,” “communication model for strategy implementation,” “plan of activities,” “public relations program schematic presentation” and “media relations plan.”

Advertising. A creative team that consisted of the campaign art director and a copy writer, designer, TV sport director and expert for media planning completed and submitted a comprehensive plan for the media campaign. The creative work was finished in July 1996 and the materials were presented to EcoFund executives with a presentation map. The presentation map for the Eco-Fund management included: suggestions for the main slogan, copy text, layout of

a print advertisement, scenario for a TV spot and radio advertisement. The creative work was approved by the Eco-Fund management. TV advertisements in the length of 16 seconds were run on both major national TV stations, one public (TV Slovenija) and one private (POP TV) in September 1996 (the first wave) and in March 1997 (second wave). Its first airing reached 70 percent of the Slovenian population 443 GRP (gross rating points) and 6+ OTS (opportunity to see). Its text was short and simple. After naming the sponsor of the advertisement (*The Environmental Development Fund of the Republic of Slovenia*) it started in black and white, showing a young girl running towards a rocking-chair as green colored more and more of the picture: *Don't you think that you spend too much money polluting the environment? / Change your source of Energy! / Take advantage of favorable loans for cheap and environmentally friendly heating.*

Radio spots were placed on nine national and regional radio stations in March 1997: Radio Brezice, Radio Celje, Radio Dur, Radio Glas Ljubljane, Radio Maribor MM1, Radio Ognjisce, Radio Trbovlje, Radio Triglav and Val 202. Print advertisements were published in September 1996 and in March 1997 in 10 national regional and local dailies, weeklies and bi-weeklies: *Delo, Dnevnik, Dolenjski list, Gorenjski glas, Ljubljana, Novi tednik, Ptujski tednik; Slovenske novice, Vecer and Zasavc.* Print ads were one quarter of a page and like the broadcast ads identified the Eco-Fund and banks that were facilitating the loans. The text was: *Don't you think you're spending too much money on polluting the environment? / The blackness surrounding us is becoming greater each day because many Slovene homeowners are still heating their dwellings with environmentally hazardous solid fuels. / But coal- or wood-fired furnaces can soon become your black past. / Use favorable loans for environmentally friendly and comfortable heating! / The Environmental Development Fund of the Republic of Slovenia offers favorable loans to everyone living in areas with more polluted air and who would like to change to using cleaner fuels. In order to limit environmental pollution and at the same time provide comfortable heating, we recommend the introduction of a heating system for remote heating, gas, heating oil, heat pump or solar energy. Favorable loans are available for installing the aforementioned types of heating systems. / Choose pure comfort. / Loans for environmentally friendly heating are available from the following banks: Nova kreditna banka Maribor; LB Domzale, Dolenjska banka, Celjska banka, LB Zasavje, LB Koroska banka and Gorenjska banka. / Information may be obtained from: / The Environmental Fund of the Republic of Slovenis/ Telephone: (061) 17633 44/MO7TO: Change the source of energy! / LOHGO: Environmental Development Fund of the Republic of Slovenia d.d.*

Live radio talk shows. To spread more information about the loans and how to obtain them and to get the target audience to join discussions on the loan program and on the environmental issues, 21 live radio talk programs were organized (from September 1996 to June 1997) on the following national and regional radio stations: Radio Studio D, Radio Triglav, Radio Ptuj, Radio Brezice, Radio Tribovlje, TV Impulz, Radio Kranj, Radio Glas Ljubljane, Radio Celje, Radio Dur, Koroski radio, Radio Maxi, Radio Sora, Radio Univox, Radio Trbovlje, Radio Cerkno, Koroski radio, Notranski radio, Radio Morje, Radio Koper and Radio Izola.

Media relations. A total of 27 articles were published in the national press and 35 in the regional press. A total of 660 minutes of time were aired on electronic media. Special background materials, progress reports, press releases, fact-sheets and feature stories were prepared.

Brochure. To provide the target audience with useful information in a friendly “take-home” form, available in appropriate locations, a booklet entitled “Loans for Environmentally Friendly Heating Systems” was prepared, printed and disseminated. In the booklet readers found information about loans (how to get them, who can ask for them, necessary documentation...). In the booklet was a list of useful addresses such as the Energy Advisory Office and banks. Approximately 14,000 copies of the booklet were disseminated. Its contents included: *basic information concerning loans for environmentally friendly heating; technical data on environmentally friendly heating systems such as remote heating, natural gas, liquefied petroleum gas, light heating oil, heat pumps, and Solar-powered heating systems; what the loans could be used for; who is eligible for the loans; how to apply for a loan; how to obtain advice on energy consumption; available energy consulting service and information and application documentation.*

Toll-free telephone line. Intensive feedback from the public has been recorded in 975 phone calls on the published telephone number. Numerous other calls on other Eco-Fund phone numbers or to the live radio talk shows also were received.

National roundtable. A national roundtable on environmental priorities and necessary measures to stimulate air pollution abatement activities in Slovenia was organized on April 22, 1997 International Earth Day. It was addressed by the Minister of Environment and Physical Planning, Dr. Pavle Gantar. As its result, a coordinating body was established that included representatives of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, Ministry for Economic Affairs, Environmental Development Fund, Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Efficient Energy Use, Chamber of Commerce and energy distributors. The coordinating body is responsible for suggesting, adjusting and supervising the loan program.

Results Achieved

Prior to the campaign reported in this case study, the Environmental Development fund (Eco-Fund) published its first public offer of favorable loans to enable citizens to convert to environmentally friendly heating systems in June 1995. Through May 1996, 117 loans were distributed.

Within 10 months of the implementation of the public communication campaign in May 1996, 1,896 loans were distributed and an equal number of households converted to environmentally friendly heating systems. Thus the campaign resulted in a ten-fold increase in loans.

In December 1996, Pristop Communication Group conducted research to evaluate the progress of the communication campaign and to discover major problems and obstacles that loan-takers had been dealing with in the process of administering the loans. Six in-depth interviews, two focus groups and a telephone poll of 140 loan-takers were conducted.

Research results confirmed prior assumptions about the feasibility of the loan program:

- * the population of loan-takers was older than the general population of Slovenia, with retirees forming 40 percent of loan-takers

- * the availability of financial resources in the form of an Eco-loan was named as a reason to take the loan in only 15 cases

- *major reasons given for applying for the loan and converting heating systems were the convenience of the new systems (57%), environmental reasons (55%), and age of the previous system (30%).

- * 56% of respondents identified print advertisements as the primary source of information on the loan, 25% friends and relatives and 16% television advertisements

- *the brochure was identified as an important source of information on the loan by 40% of respondents, while only two of them identified it as the primary source.

For a third of the interviewees, it took more than a month to complete all the required technical and financial documentation for applying for the loan. That “user unfriendly” paper procedure was identified as a major obstacle to deal with in administering future loan programs. That and other findings from the evaluative research were presented to the management and staff of the Environmental Development Fund. (Socio-economic and other personal data could not be obtained from loan applications due to legislation protecting personal information that is provided to an institution for a limited purpose -- in this case to banks for the purpose of obtaining a loan.)

Further knowledge also was gained about household decision making on the question of converting heating systems, about the work of enabling institutions, etc. Another workshop was organized for researchers from the Pristop Communication Group, staff of the Eco-Fund and the management of the loan program at the Nova Kreditna Banka Maribor, the bank that coordinated the work of all other banks involved.

At the end of the project, written recommendations for further efforts on behalf of the loan program--including public communication--were provided to the management and staff of the Eco-Fund.

Although the project that is the focus of this case study was successfully completed in July 1997, the Eco-Fund continued communication activities using its own staff and resources. Due to the success of the first project, the European Commission issued a second tender through its Phare program to support the activities of Eco-Fund in 1998.

Conclusion

This case study is based on two four-page case summaries that were prepared by Darinka Pek-Drupal, the project director of the campaign at Pristop Communication Group. The case study has received two awards: the United Nations Award, given out by the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) in cooperation with the UN for a single project in a year that best meets the working guidelines of the United Nations, and an Award of Excellence from the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) - Europe.

The author of this case study, Dejan Vercic, is a Partner in Pristop Communication Group and was member of the project team, acting as its research director. For this case study, original research and both interim and final reports of the project were reviewed along with project documentation that is archived at Pristop Communication Group.

After receiving the UN award, Pristop Communication Group prepared a video case study of the communication campaign. The 5' 55" (VHS) videotape with the case study is available from Pristop Communication Group, Selanova 20, PO Box 3249, 1001 Ljubljana, Slovenia.

**Biotechnology in a Third World Context: Mobilizing Public
Awareness, Understanding and Appreciation**

**Mariechel J. Navarro
National Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology
Philippines**

Executive Summary

The science of biotechnology in the Philippines is at its peak. While initial gains in terms of commercial products already are felt, negative publicity to create apprehension of biotechnology is being waged by pressure groups. They have used the mass media and various other communication techniques to foster a one-sided negative opinion of biotechnology.

A strategic public relations campaign was thus conceptualized and implemented to counter this negative publicity and at the same time clarify issues and allegations that undermine biotechnology research and development in the country. The National Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (BIOTECH) obtained commitments from mass media, non-governmental organizations, cultural communities, peoples' organizations, academic institutions and some government agencies to help disseminate correct information on biotechnology. Public involvement that resulted from the campaign improved public-research and development relations and generated stakeholder support for research endeavors. This was possible through increased scientific literacy and by demonstrating the application of biotechnology concepts to peoples' lives.

Because of this value-added information, people were empowered with alternatives and options necessary for decision-making.

The Problem

Conventional technology alone cannot solve the myriad of social, economic and political problems which plague countries everywhere. New technologies, particularly biotechnology, are expected to augment conventional technologies currently being used. Of particular importance is the application of genetic engineering which involves the use of transgenic crops in which a gene or genetic construct has been introduced by molecular techniques.

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST), the Philippine government agency tasked with charting the directions for research and development in the country, has identified biotechnology as its flagship or vanguard program to propel the country into industrialization.

Background

Biotechnology is broadly defined as the use of living organisms to make commercial products (Morehouse, 1986) that triggers today's biorevolution in agriculture, health and industry. The introduction of biotechnology in the Philippines has brought about positive developments in terms of improved production and diversified product outputs (dela Cruz and Navarro, 1994). In developing countries like the Philippines, biotechnology interventions have been mainly used to solve basic concerns in agriculture like finding fertilizer substitutes or

complements; developing local substitutes for imported products; and producing products that increase yield or reduce input cost.

At the helm of biotechnology research and development in the Philippines is the National Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (BIOTECH) based at the University of the Philippines Los Banos. BIOTECH was established in 1979 to develop products and services that are cheaper and more effective alternatives to conventional ones. At present, a network of institutes in the University of the Philippines system as well as a few government entities conduct biotechnology research with health, agricultural, environmental, industrial and marine applications.

After a decade of biotechnological research, several products are already in the market or ready for commercial manufacture and distribution in the Philippines. These include microbial-based inoculants, animal vaccines, enzymes, diagnostic kits, yeast strains and biofertilizers. Most promising are potential products like transgenic rice and crops with drought resistance and/or delayed ripening qualities.

However, recent international scientific breakthroughs like cloning of sheep through genetic engineering and breakthroughs in transgenic crops have raised concerns about biotechnology. Not only are there questions about the products that result from biotechnology but the very concept of biotechnology itself is being scrutinized. Unlike other scientific fields, public debate on biotechnology including its products and services has been wide and intense. Environmental groups, consumer organizations, religious groups and agricultural organizations actively participate in public debates (Commandeur, et al., 1996).

In Japan, where the word “bio” has a positive connotation, a survey in 1993 revealed that while a majority expressed appreciation for research and development in biotechnology, they also feared the dangers of human misuse or interference with nature, and also had ethical concerns with respect to genetic engineering (Commandeur, 1995).

The Philippines has shared the same public sentiment. Alleged negative aspects of biotechnology have been played up by media due to active advocacy by lobby or pressure groups. Even in public consultations or public forums for comment, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been vocal in their opposition to genetic engineering work. Debates have centered on the moral, ethical and environmental dimensions of biotechnology. Issues raised dwell on scientists “playing God” and tampering with nature; researchers creating “monsters” with no safeguards, and potential risks of contamination or transboundary movement of microorganisms or genetically modified organisms.

Adding fuel to the controversy are articles in national newspapers portraying the “dark side of biotechnology” and giving a Jurassic Park scenario of “what ifs”. Scientists’ replies to these articles only added to the problem because their highly technical perspective made their explanations of biotechnology too difficult to comprehend. It was easier to understand the negative side. Inevitably, the whole debate only strengthened public thinking that science is shrouded with mystery and speculation.

How have the NGO pressure groups affected biotechnology R and D in the Philippines? In 1995, the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in Los Banos, Laguna submitted to the National Committee on Biosafety in the Philippines a request to field-test promising rice varieties in the Philippines. A few months later, participants in the Fourth Sustainable Agriculture Fair held in Jaro, Iloilo came out with a position paper regarding IRRI’s research in genetically manipulated rice with *Bacillus thuringensis* gene. They called for a stop to genetic engineering on crops.

Soon after, House Resolution No. 280 was drafted to stop importation of transgenic rice and research by IRRI on this. Through the initiative of some non-government organizations (i.e. Center for Alternative Development and Kilusan Magbubukid ng Pilipinas), legislative support was obtained from three Congressmen, one of whom was head of the ecology committee. A position paper was signed by some 50 peoples’ organizations and non-governmental organizations questioning IRRI’s work.

Aware of the repercussions of this resolution on transgenic rice and biotechnology research in general, the science community, led by DOST Secretary William G. Padolina, lobbied against it at a public hearing or inquiry in aid of legislation held February 21, 1996. Though the resolution was not approved, IRRI decided to conduct its study in Thailand instead.

Goals and Objectives

Acceptance, appreciation and involvement of various sectors of society toward certain issues and concerns are significantly determined by their understanding of key concepts and by exposure to information.

The possibility of public opposition is minimized when the public has adequate information. As shown by Hoban, et al. (1992), public opposition to a concept like genetic engineering is mediated by three intervening variables, one of which is awareness of the concept. Moral objection was found to be the strongest predictor of opposition. Similarly, opposition was also related to lower awareness and less faith in institutions.

Notably, Cardenas *et al.* (1993) suggest that proponents often assume that people will accept projects because of the economic benefits they bring. However, the potential that people's interests, perspectives and values have for creating opposition is often not considered.

According to Guerrero *et al.*, (1993), information can be manipulated, withheld, distorted, modified, amplified and consumed by people to serve specific needs. Thus, first-hand public participation becomes more meaningful and empowering because it goes beyond mere information sharing and dissemination, simple persuasion and routine consultation.

Realizing that public sentiment (although admittedly expressed by a vocal minority) could derail R and D initiatives and that a favorable public attitude base was crucial, a public relations strategy was initially conceptualized and implemented by BIOTECH with the support of the Philippine Council for Advanced Sciences and Technology Research and Development, (PCASTRD), part of DOST, in 1996-97. PCASTRD and another DOST agency, the Philippine Council for Agriculture and Forestry Resources Research and Development (PCARRD), have committed to expand the program in 1998.

The initial project sought to create greater awareness of the two scientific concepts of biodiversity and biotechnology among the general public. Its heterogeneous audience included those from grassroots and non-governmental organizations, to mass media, all of whom have relatively little knowledge of the concepts of biotechnology. Secondary and tertiary general science level teachers as well as some government agencies tasked with disseminating information on agriculture, health and environment were also targeted.

In addition to being an awareness program, the project sought to create a multiplier effect of communication by providing a venue for constructive dialogue and commitment sharing across different levels and types of audiences. The project provided an opportunity for dialogue among stakeholders, interest groups and scientists that could lead to modifying their position toward certain issues on one hand, and in changing a perceived apathy or cognitive ineptness on the other.

Strategic Tactics and Techniques

In a country where smooth interpersonal relations are crucial, it was deemed essential to use face-to-face interaction. Workshops were held in various parts of the country to initiate the multiplier effect of informational dissemination. These were strategically held in Manila; La Trinidad, Benguet; and Davao City and Puerto Princesa, Palawan, places where environmental consciousness is relatively high. Support communication materials in the form of videos in Filipino and English; and primers in Filipino, English and Cebuano were produced to

supplement the technical inputs in the workshops. The 24-page primer, an introductory publication on the concepts, contain definitions, examples and illustrations. It uses a combination of text, artwork and photos. The 15-minute video complemented the printed material by using the same conceptual framework.

Through the series of workshops, participants were informed about biodiversity conservation, biotechnology and locally generated biotechnologies; and given a venue for direct interaction between and among scientists, government agencies, peoples' organizations, mass media, non-governmental organizations and cultural communities.

Figure 1 summarizes the workshop approach. Inputs from specialists were preceded by a video presentation, exhibit viewing and reading of illustrated primers. This was followed by focus group discussions where participants analyzed the relevance of the concepts to their respective lives. Specifically, this involved enumerating local problems and determining if biotechnology interventions could provide solutions.

Results Achieved

It was validated in the workshop that what little knowledge citizens had on biotechnology had come from negative write-ups in the mass media on the ethical or moral dimension of biotechnology. Technical inputs from resource persons enabled participants to increase their level and degree of conceptual understanding. They were able to enumerate the following issues for action: conservation and protection of biodiversity, misconceptions of genetic engineering, importance of bioresources, implications of intellectual property rights, potential risks of biotechnology and biosafety. As a result of the workshop, participants were able to add to their body of knowledge, notably issues like genetic engineering, biosafety, and intellectual property rights.

A major development was the participants' change of attitude toward biotechnology: participants reacted positively to identifying local problems that might be solved through the intervention of biotechnology.

Concomitant to the shift in orientation toward biotechnology as a concept was a call for monitoring of institutions that use biotechnology to ensure their strict compliance with biosafety guidelines. Participants also felt that "bioprospecting" or "biopiracy" regulations were significant issues to address because their communities were affected. The monitoring of activities was deemed crucial to protect and conserve resources. Made aware of the possibility of biological smuggling or related illegal activities in their communities, participants likewise voiced the importance of determining community rights to any intellectual outcome of scientific endeavors that used resources obtained in those communities.

Another significant output of the workshops was the expressed commitment of the

participants to multiply efforts in the future aimed at fostering greater awareness of and understanding of the two concepts, biotechnology and biodiversity. The following list highlights efforts to be made:

1. Incorporate concepts in secondary/tertiary curricula/science courses
2. Conduct seminars or community outreach programs to update various target publics
3. Foster linkages between and among relevant publics
4. Enhance multi-media dissemination
5. Strengthen resource development
6. Consider setting up of regional botanical/geological parks
7. Offer short-term courses that incorporate the two concepts

The more pragmatic contribution most likely will come from the academic community. Teachers already have identified the different courses (existing and proposed) where the concepts of biotechnology and biodiversity will be integrated.

The positive response to the information exchange across sectors and publics helps ensure that an adequate number will demonstrate greater understanding and appreciation of the two concepts. Participants gained functional knowledge of biotechnology and the scientists gained insights into what information was of value and relevance to stakeholders. This “knowledge sharing and joint discovery” plus the resulting feeling of equality are very much central to participatory communication.

Conclusions

The project contributed to demystifying science as something shrouded in mystery and speculation. As Department of Science and Technology Secretary William G. Padolina stressed in announcing his support of the campaign, “Making the concept of biodiversity and biotechnology better understood by a wider audience presents a greater number of people with a wider array of options. They are thus empowered to define problems, propose solutions and participate in charting the courses of action.” He adds: “Today, information is power. Those with access to the right information at its moment of value have the power to make crucial decisions and change the direction of their lives.”

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Promoting Popular Awareness, Understanding and Appreciation of Biodiversity and Biotechnology

Workshop Map

General Objectives:

- * Promote awareness, understanding, and appreciation of biotechnology and biodiversity among the public
- * Determine issues and concerns that affect public perception regarding biotechnology and biodiversity
- * Plan a course of action to promote biotechnology and biodiversity

Activities:

Session 1

Overview of Biotechnology and Biodiversity

Session II

Surfacing of Biotechnology Issues and Concerns

Session III

Preparation of Action Plan

Synthesis

What Next?

Figure 1.

**The European Community's "Phare" Program for
13 Eastern and Central European Countries**

**Andreas Rossbach
Word Express
Belgium**

**Doug Newsom
Texas Christian University
United States**

**Bob J. Carrell
Emeritus The University of Oklahoma
United States**

Executive Summary

The European Union (EU) launched the Phare program in response to the unprecedented political events in eastern and central Europe in the late 1900s. The program's goal was development of a larger democratic family of nations within a prosperous and stable Europe.

In its first phase, 1989-1993, Phare fulfilled its role primarily by providing grants to finance the transfer of know-how and expertise.

In the current phase, starting in 1993, Phare continues to provide grants to finance economic, social, and political development. Phare also facilitates accession to EU membership by raising awareness of the EU's policies, institutions, and advantages of membership in candidate countries such as Hungary and Poland.

This case study highlights the communication activities during the first phase of Phare, and takes an in-depth look at the model communication program developed in November 1997 by a Brussels-based public affairs consultancy for use by the EU delegation in those 10 countries that are currently candidates for EU membership. The model program can be used module-style to fit the political and economic situation and cultural variables of a country. It emphasizes one-on-one communications such as networking and presentations to multipliers rather than public relations activities involving the mass media.

Included are examples of communication activities carried out in 1996 by the EU delegations in Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic. They show how the Hungarian delegation increased its role as an information source for its key target audience and how its Polish colleagues are gaining visibility among rural target audiences by providing seed financing for local projects.

This case study also looks at the consultancy's role in conducting survey research, working to improve coordination between several EU departments and increasing the influence the public relations function has for high-level decision making.

The Problem

In response to the unprecedented political events in eastern and central Europe that culminated in the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the disintegration of the former Soviet Union shortly thereafter the European Union (EU) launched its Phare program. This EU program was designed to support young democracies and free markets in about a dozen countries that make up a region with close historical and cultural links to the western part of the European continent.

Started in 1989, the Phare program promotes “the development of a larger democratic family of nations within a prosperous and stable Europe.” The original goal was to ensure that nations such as Hungary, Bulgaria and Poland could rejoin the mainstream of European development and strengthen their political and economic ties with the EU.

In its first phase from 1989 to 1993, Phare fulfilled its role primarily by providing financial grants to support the transfer of know-how and expertise. In turn, this promotes the development of democratic structures and institutions as well as free-market mechanisms in Phare partner countries.

Now that this goal has been largely achieved, albeit to varying degrees, Phare’s focus has shifted to promoting accession to EU membership through direct communications to well-defined target audiences in 10 of the 13 countries currently covered by its programs.² And in the other three countries which are not candidates for membership, it continues to give financial grants for economic, social and political development.

This expansion of Phare’s objective began in 1993 when the European Council decided at the Copenhagen summit that those countries that had signed an association agreement with the EU would be able to become EU members if they so desired.³ The prerequisite for EU membership is the ability to assume a member’s obligations by satisfying specific economic and political conditions. This means that Phare in practice continues to support infrastructure projects, from Phare’s first phase even while it has moved on to a goal of helping accession to EU membership by raising awareness of the EU’s policies, institutions and the advantages of membership. There is debate within the Commission about whether the EU itself should also be raising issues that could negatively affect eastern European countries if they became members.

At this point, target audiences for Phare’s communications are primarily “multipliers,” such as government agencies and national and regional media, chiefly reached on a one-on-one basis. At a later stage, the mass media may be used to address larger target audiences on specific issues such as citizens’ right to vote in a referendum on EU accession.

The focus of this case study is on the communication activities of the EU’s delegations, either current or to be launched soon, in the 10 candidate countries that benefit from Phare programs and want to become EU members. The delegations disseminate to local audiences information that reflects policies set by the EU’s Directorate General IA (DG IA), which is in charge of the EU’s external political relations with central and eastern Europe and is approved by the European Commission.

The political events of the late 1980s gave the EU member countries a unique opportunity to enlarge the Union eastward and to strengthen the political and economic stability of a region that had been under constant threat from the former Soviet Bloc for nearly 45 years. However, the disappearance of the old order also wrought the threat of serious political and economic instability. The peoples of eastern Europe's former Soviet satellite countries and their fledgling institutions were caught in a vacuum and faced with the enormous task of reassessing their futures. Therefore, the EU responded by providing political and financial support for this task.

Background

In its first five years of operation, from 1989 to 1994, the Phare program made ECU 4.3 billion (US \$4.9 billion) available to 11 partner countries, making it the largest assistance program of its kind. (One European Currency Unit (ECU) equaled 1.14 US dollars, as of December 1977.) It provided expertise from a wide range of non-commercial, public and private organizations to these countries, acting as a multiplier by stimulating investment and responding to needs that cannot be met by other organizations.

Phare also is a powerful catalyst for unlocking funds from other donors through studies, capital grants, guarantee schemes and credit lines. For example, a grant of ECU 33 million (US \$37.6 million) made available to the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development unlocked an estimated ECU 434 million (US \$494.8 million) for investment projects.⁴ Similarly, studies carried out for the European Investment Bank encouraged the approval of an estimated ECU 635 million (US \$723.9 million) of investment funds.

Phare gives priority to the development of the private sector, the restructuring of state enterprises including agriculture, and the development of infrastructure in energy, transport, telecommunications, environmental protection and nuclear safety, to name but a few areas.

Phare's importance for the development in eastern and central Europe is underlined by its budget of ECU 6.7 billion (US \$7.6 billion) for the period 1995 to 1999. For 1995, the sum of ECU 1.16 billion (US \$1.32 billion) was committed to Phare projects, increasing to ECU 1.22 billion (US \$1.39 billion) in 1996, an increase of 5.9 percent.

Three examples show how Phare projects provide "tailor-made" development support. In Albania, Phare provided training and equipment for three map production institutions responsible for the survey, mapping and registration of over 1.8 million parcels of land. This support helped to make a success of the land reform that was required to make agriculture economically viable.⁵

In Bulgaria, Phare participated in the financing of an emissions reduction system at the Maritsa East power station. This meant that Bulgaria met emissions standards required to unlock financing from the European Investment Bank and others for the modernization of coal-powered

plants. This upgrade helped Bulgaria reduce its reliance on nuclear power.⁶

In Estonia, Phare helped to create the Estonian Privatization Agency, draft relevant legislation, prepare pre-privatization studies on key industries and train future managers and board members. These measures ensured that by August 1994 almost half of the country's large state companies had been transferred successfully to the private sector.⁷

Goals and Objectives

Phare is a program that is coordinated with each country's own reform policies and priorities. In turn, each country is partly responsible for running its programs. Therefore, until 1993 the target audiences for the first phase of the communication program were primarily government agencies at the national and regional level. Communications' most important task was to create awareness of Phare programs, how to obtain more information and how to apply for Phare grants.

As its objectives evolved to the second phase in 1993-94, it became necessary for Phare to also provide support towards the preparation of candidate countries for accession to EU membership. Thus, Phare's activities now concentrate on two areas:

1. The first priority is to help the national and regional administrations, as well as regulatory and supervisory bodies of the candidate countries, in the process of institution-building. To this end, Phare helps familiarize them with EU institutions, objectives and procedures.
2. The second priority is to help all partner countries bring their industries and major infrastructures up to EU standards by mobilizing the investment required. This effort focuses on areas where EU norms are becoming increasingly demanding, such as environment, transport, industrial plants, quality standards in products and working conditions.

Thus, to explain issues regarding accession to EU membership, Phare's communications activities are directed at a mix of the following target audiences, depending on the requirements in each country: 1) the media at national, regional and international levels; 2) national politicians; 3) government officials; 4) the business community; 5) the diplomatic community; 6) non-government organizations (NGOs); 7) academics; and, for certain projects, 8) the audiences of the mass media.

Phare wants to be a cornerstone of the EU's pre-accession strategy. To fulfill this purpose, communications with the audiences in each candidate country must explain the issues surrounding accession and contribute to the debate on that subject. In comparison,

communications in preceding years focused on raising the profile of the Phare program in those countries to which it was available. Because communication activities cover 13 countries, no quantifiable overall goals have been defined.

Strategic Tactics and Techniques

In September 1997 the European Commission's Directorate General IA (Central and Eastern Europe) gave Brussels-based public affairs consultancy APCO the brief to develop a communication strategy for the 10 candidate countries that would allow local EU delegations to communicate effectively with relevant target audiences. The brief is initially for one year and can be renewed twice for one year each. Annual fees for the consultancy are ECU 400,000 (US \$456,000) per year, while the total information budget for the Phare program is around ECU 3 million (US\$ 3.42 million).

The current emphasis is on research. The first project APCO Europe started was a survey on how the EU and the accession process are perceived both locally and among key Brussels audiences. Work on this project remains in progress. The survey results will be used in the formulation of a strategic plan and message statements.

However, one result of the research is already clear. While Phare was once seen as a way to "recycle" EU funds into consultants' fees, that perception has changed completely because the impact of Phare's activities is becoming more visible.

Personal interviews are being conducted in the 10 candidate countries, typically with government representatives, political experts, journalists and members of the EU delegation, to get a feeling for attitudes and opinions regarding the EU and accession. In Brussels about 100 people are being interviewed, including members of the European Parliament, the European Commission, member state representatives, pan European lobbies, pressure groups and journalists. In all cases, the audiences are too small to represent a random sample.

The second on-going project for the consultancy is to work on improving relations and coordination between DG IA and DG X, the information department of the Commission. The latter is regarded as not being quite as "serious" as the other directorates because its sole purpose is to inform. This is a relationship that often exists between corporate marketing and public relations departments, in which the marketing people tend to see themselves as the ones who "know best" and thus always are protecting "their turf."

However, both directorates can draw from the other's existing resources, thereby reducing duplication of activities and in the production of information material. APCO Europe is encouraging this process by showing the advantages of a dialogue in actual situations and pointing out the potential for cost cutting. APCO Europe has also recommended that

representatives of both DG X and the consultancy participate in DG IA meetings in which policy decisions with relevance to Phare are made. This advice has been followed.

In November 1997 the consultancy completed an “Information Handbook” that gives practical advice for EU delegations in candidate countries on how to manage their communications activities effectively. At this point, only the EU delegation in the candidate countries communicate locally, drawing support from Brussels where required. The consultancy does not carry out direct communications activities but provides support through DG IA.

The handbook provides hands-on tools to ensure that delegations can effectively raise the EU’s profile in their countries. It spells out the need for opinion research as the basis for all communication activities and shows how to carry this out. It explains how to define target audiences, how to manage media relations, how to develop long-term relationships with key players, how to handle crisis communications, how to produce media releases or newsletters and how to organize media events such as press conferences. Moreover, it contains a model communication program that can be applied as needed in a particular country’s situation. This also means that a delegation can “pick and chose” from the model program, depending on its staff levels. Sufficient budgets have been approved for the years ahead.

Model Work Programs

The remainder of this case focuses on these work programs as they demonstrate in practical terms how to effectively communicate a highly complex topic to opinion leaders, gatekeepers and multipliers. The three sections of the work programs focus on research, communications activities and products.

- A. **Research** Surveys can be carried out either face-to-face, over the telephone or through a written questionnaire. In all three cases, the objectives are:
1. To understand better the relationship between the delegation and its key target audiences.
 2. To serve better the information needs of target audiences.
 3. To inform constituencies of research findings that drive the communication strategy underpinning all the delegation’s activities and products.

The target audiences for the face-to-face and the telephone interviews are national politicians, government officials, the business community, the diplomatic community, academics and NGOs. On the other hand, the written questionnaire is suitable for the business community,

regional journalists, schools and universities, as well as mass audiences. It can be mailed, faxed, e-mailed and made available on the delegation's website. To carry out this type of research would require 30 days for the personal interviews and the written questionnaire, while the telephone interviews could be completed in 15 days.

B. Communication activities The model work program lists seven communication activities, starting with the rapid response service whose objective is to reply swiftly to journalists' questions, negative media coverage and general inquiries. The target audiences in this case are the media (international, national and regional) and a mass audience (interested parties within the population). Responses can be distributed daily by telephone, fax, e-mail and conventional mail.

The next step is the placement of articles or letters in the media (international, national and regional) with a target of two insertions per month. The objectives are:

1. To improve understanding and raise the profile of the EU and its pre-accession strategy.
2. To improve understanding of the issues surrounding accession. The distribution channels for placements are interviews, fax, mail and email. Delegations need to monitor media in order to support the rapid response service and to identify and understand trends. This is an internal activity which targets the media (international, national and regional) on a daily basis.

Networking is a very important activity for delegations. Three ways of networking are suggested, all of which target these audiences: national politicians, government officials, media (international, national, regional), the business community, the diplomatic community, academics and NGOs. In all cases, the channel of distribution is personal communication.

The first networking venue is a journalist lunch. A delegation could host up to five of these a month, for example. The format is an informal discussion of the preceding month's events related to accession, both locally and in the EU. The objectives are:

1. To improve relations with key journalists.
2. To bring together journalists and key speakers.
3. To raise the profile of the EU and the delegation.

The second networking venue is an "enlargement debate" in four parts, to be held at a university, with a target of four debates per month. The topics of the four segments will be:

1. How democratic is the EU?
2. Is Country X ready for accession?
3. What is the relationship between Country X and the European Monetary Union?
4. What is the status of reform of agriculture in Country X?

The objectives in this case are:

1. To raise awareness of the issues surrounding accession.
2. To raise the profile of the EU and the delegation.

The third networking venue is a Phare project seminar, at the Ministry of Transport of Country X, with presentations by civil servants seconded from the EU. The objective is to improve the understanding of the EU's contribution to the accession process. The preparation time for this project is 10 days.

These networking activities must be coordinated to avoid repetition and conflict with other groups' activities. Here the target audiences are the European Integration Department, the Robert Schumann Foundation and the Info Points run by the delegation or the host country's government. (Info Points are shop-front offices that provide comprehensive information on the EU and accession.)

The fifth communication activity in the model program is crisis communication. The delegations should schedule one meeting per month to discuss political issues, media trends, forthcoming events that might cause problems. The objectives are:

1. To prepare the delegation for potential crisis,
2. To clarify the lines of communication during crises.
3. To train the press office in basic crisis management techniques. The target audience in this case consists of the delegation's head and its press office.

The sixth item is media training. The recommendation is for the delegation's head and its spokesperson to participate in two professional training sessions per year. The objective is to train them in basic interview and crisis techniques for use with all media.

The final communication activity is on going database maintenance to ensure the accuracy of target audience contacts and thus to improve the efficiency of all communication activities.

C. Communication materials The third part of the model program lists five "products" or materials for distribution. At this point, the range of materials remains limited because the

emphasis is on personal communication.

The news release is the most universal means of informing a target audience through the media (international, national and regional). The objectives are:

1. To inform key audiences about news, declarations, upcoming events, etc.
2. To improve coverage of and attendance at delegation events.
3. To increase the delegation's control over its key messages.

News releases will be distributed by fax, e-mail and Internet. The time budgeted for preparation of each release is two days.

Second, delegations have the option of publishing a monthly newsletter that targets national politicians, government officials, the business and diplomatic communities, universities, academics and NGOs. The objectives are:

1. To improve understanding of the accession process.
2. To raise the profile of the EU and the delegation.

The newsletter is to be distributed by mail, from delegation Info Points and at libraries such as at universities. Its production requires two people full-time.

Third, to target a mass media audience, the delegation can co-produce with a local television partner a 12-part national television series on the EU and accession issues, entitled "The Old Continent." The objectives are:

1. To improve the understanding of the accession process.
2. To increase the profile of and support for the EU.

A TV production company would be in charge of distribution of the series. This project requires one person full-time.

The remaining two options for the production of materials focus on translating DG IA and EU documents, targeting national politicians, government officials, the diplomatic community, universities, academics and NGOs. One additional public for EU documents is a mass audience in order to reach collectively interested publics. The DG IA materials suggested in the model program are Agenda 2000, information on the EU's pre-accession strategy, Phare interim evaluations and Phare's annual report. The objectives are:

1. To improve understanding of the accession process.

2. To raise the profile of the EU.

Distribution is by database mailings, from delegation Info Points and through universities.

EU topics suggested for translation are EU enlargement and institutions, questions and answers about the EU, with the objective of raising the profile of and support for the EU. Distribution is through the same channels as for DG IA documents, plus book stores and schools to reach a cross section of the population.

Results Achieved

Communication activities are under way in Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland. Political conditions in the 10 candidate countries vary considerably, of course, and therefore require different communication approaches. The following examples are intended to highlight this diversity. All activities were carried out by the EU delegations in Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland in 1996.

Hungary: EU and Phare gained visibility in 1996

Supported by the government's communication activities during the year, interest in all EU matters increased from a number of key audiences. The delegation took advantage of this trend and increased its own visibility along with that of the EU and Phare. One key objective was to intensify media relations in response to increasing media attention to integration issues. The delegation sent out nine news releases, held 19 press conferences related to important events such as visiting Commissioners and arranged for more than 30 interviews. In most cases the head of the delegation was interviewed by television and radio stations and print media.

Delegation representatives also made about 35 public appearances at conferences and panel discussions. Specifically on Phare, the delegation arranged for five lectures given by EU experts from Brussels for key contacts within existing Phare programs. On average, each lecture was attended by 100 people.

Another highly visible public appearance by the head of the delegation was the presentation of the 1997 project winners in the Phare Democracy Program, which he attended together with the president of Hungary and a member of the European Parliament. The event included an exhibit on the previous year's Democracy projects and on EU/Phare topics. Coverage in the Hungarian media was extensive with positive content both on the Phare Democracy Program and integration in general.

The delegation organized six "Europe Days" in 1996, designed to inform rural key

audiences of Phare's regional assistance programs. The strong involvement of the head of the delegation meant that contacts could be established with municipalities and other rural institutions, including the media. Thus, the delegation raised awareness of the EU-Phare among target audiences that easily can be neglected by communication activities originating from the capital.

Responding to a sharp increase in requests for information, the Budapest delegation hired a librarian and set up a documentation section that also is open to the public. This meant that requests for materials or on funding possibilities could be handled more efficiently. Most requests in 1996 came from young people, university students, the business community, NGOs, ministries and libraries. Poland: National Government Gives Little Information

In Poland the political situation presents its own challenges. While 80 percent of Poles support the country's accession to EU membership, most people base their judgment on intuition rather than on a good understanding of the issues involved. Polish politicians tend to declare themselves in favor of Europe but sometimes act in a contradictory manner, leading to misunderstandings among potential voters regarding the pros and cons of European integration.

Therefore, the Warsaw delegation's goal for 1996 was to expand its role as a source of information. It did this by focusing on two issues: 1) the implementation of the Europe Agreement (under which Poland became a candidate country) and 2) the creation of a positive flow of information on the EU, thus favorably affecting the pre-accession debate.

The delegation added the Catholic Church hierarchy and Catholic intellectuals to its list of target audiences, seeking an open dialogue with this influential institution in Polish society often known for its openly anti-Europe position. The goal is to counter the Church's anti-European stance.

Another new and important target audience in 1996 was the rural population, which received increasingly nationalistic rhetoric from the anti-European peasant party, PSL, as well as a right-wing political formation called AWS. The head of the delegation visited several rural regions, resulting in high visibility and positive media coverage. Making a small financial contribution which helps set some local initiative in motion turned out to be another effective instrument to gain access to media or opinion leaders which the Warsaw delegation now uses.

The delegation continued to give high priority to media relations and maintained good contacts with a large number of leading journalists. In 1996 it also started to build contacts with the regional media and the Catholic press. The head of the delegation met journalists on a regular basis, allowing open and in-depth discussion of important issues. Meetings with the local media were usually scheduled as well during regional visits.

Another important tactic to distribute the delegation's messages was to network with

partner organizations that could act as multipliers. To this end the delegation maintained close contact with organizations and groups actively involved in promoting European integration. Because the Polish government was not informing the country's population sufficiently about EU-related issues, the delegation's Information Center, which also is open to the public, has an important role of satisfying a large number of requests for information. The delegation also made it a priority in 1996 to expand the number of publications available in Polish. A total of 50,000 copies of documents such as "The Single Markets" or "Europe in 10 Lessons" were slated for distribution in Poland.

The Czech Republic: Interest in EU Issues Increased

For the Prague delegation, 1996 was also a year of heightened interest in EU affairs, following the country's application for membership in January. Thus, the goal was to meet the resulting demand for information from media and other key publics. As support for EU membership dropped from 66 percent in 1993 to 51 percent in November 1996, the delegation worked to coordinate its information activities with those of the Czech administration.

Visits to the country by EU president Jacques Santer and three Commissioners were used for highly visible public appearances. Santer, for instance, participated in a roundtable discussion entitled "The Future Enlargement of the EU," organized by the Bohemiae Foundation.

For the second time the delegation was among six sponsors of the Prague International Marathon, which counted more than 30,000 participants in 1996. The objective was to promote the EU with special emphasis on reaching young people. Information on the EU and promotional materials were available to participants and spectators. The race's winner received the EU Cup from the head of the delegation.

In another effort to communicate with young Czechs, the delegation set up the EUROBUS project together with an international student organization, AIESEC. The bus visited five universities during "European Days" on campus. Delegation representatives participated in a series of conferences aimed at students, lecturers and administrators.

To reach multipliers such as political and business opinion leaders, journalists, teachers and scientists, the Prague delegation launched "Team Europe Plus" in 1996. The goal of this project was to provide this audience with information about the EU and its activities through seminars and lectures. This project was also a key tool for the delegation in communicating with rural audiences, which had been underserved until then because programs concentrated on the capital.

Like their Hungarian colleagues, the Czech delegation continued the well-established tradition of a monthly European Press Lunch. The informal setting tends to lead to in-depth

discussion and exchange of information. Similarly important were news releases, of which 40 were sent out in 1996, and press conferences.

Information specifically on Phare appeared in EuroInfo, a bimonthly publication that replaced the newsletter CzechInfo Phare. A Phare Address Book for the Czech Republic appeared in March 1996 with an initial printing of 2,000 copies. A brochure on Phare programs was first published in English and then in Czech.

Conclusion

There are a great variety of political and economic contexts in which each delegation must communicate. Furthermore, each of the 13 countries currently covered by Phare is at a different stage of democratic and economic evolution and at a different point on the public opinion continuum regarding EU affairs. This ranges from strong support, as in Poland, to skepticism or even hostility. Similarly, economic development may be closer to the European mainstream, as in Hungary, or still quite remote from it, as in Albania.

The goal for each EU delegation should be to meet the specific information needs in its country, be it with the support of the local government, as in Hungary, or without it, as in Poland.

Therefore, it is necessary and correct to make opinion research the starting point for the planning process of communication activities, as was done in September 1997. Similarly, the consultancy's goal of improving coordination between DG IA and DG X is mirrored in some of the delegations' wishes for improvement in the flow of information from headquarters. Likewise, it can only be beneficial if the public relations function is represented in the decision-making process at the highest level of DG IA because communication functions also benefit the political process.

One central objective for the planning process should be to transfer as much expertise as possible from one country to another. If, for instance, the Warsaw delegation's approach of open dialogue with the Catholic clergy helps to diminish the Church's hostile stance to European integration, then this approach may well work in other countries with other groups that oppose EU membership. A consultancy, being on the outside, should be well placed to coordinate communications activities and to provide additional, objective expertise from within its own network because it does not have to protect a "turf" of its own as internal departments often do.

While results from the communication activities described in this case are not yet available, it seems certain that all EU delegations face the enormous challenge of providing accurate information on EU issues in a timely fashion and in sufficient quantity. Rising to this challenge is of vital importance to the future development of Europe.

Notes

1. "How to work with Phare", European Commission publication, DG IA, Feb. 1995, p. 2.
2. Currently, there are 13 partner countries under the Phare program. Ten candidate countries that receive Phare support for the purposes of EU accession are Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia. Other central European countries that continue to receive Phare support for the purposes of economic transition and reinforcement of democracy are Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
3. "How to work with Phare", European Commission publication, DG IA, Feb. 1995, p. 6.
4. Idem, p. 6.
5. Phare 1994 Annual Report from the European Commission, p. 17.
6. Idem, p. 18.
7. Idem, p.21.

**Preparing for Full Stewardship:
A Public Information Campaign for the Panama Canal**

**Maria E. Len-Rios
Georgia Southern University
United States**

Executive Summary

The Panama Canal is extremely important to the economy of the Republic of Panama, and thus to the residents of the country. Revenues from the Panama Canal in fiscal year 1996 were \$486 million, with \$105 million of that revenue for the Panama government¹. The Panama Canal also is one of the wonders of the world and a valuable historical feat as well as an important tourist attraction for the country.

Since completion of the Canal in 1914, the United States has owned and operated the waterway. The Panama Canal Treaty of Sept. 7, 1977, implemented on Oct. 1, 1979, mandates that the United States transfer full stewardship of the Panama Canal to the Republic of Panama on Dec. 31, 1999. To properly administer and operate the Panama Canal, the Panamanian people must learn about and understand this diverse and complex organization: its historical context, its growing involvement with advancing technology and its importance as a focal point for Panama's growing maritime industry.

This case study examines a public information campaign from February through November 1996, sponsored by the Panama Canal Commission's Office of Public Affairs and the Panama Ministry of Education to make Panamanian schoolchildren more aware of this important waterway and to prepare them to be part of its work force. Some of the challenges of the campaign were designing the appropriate materials for the multimedia capabilities (or lack thereof) of the classrooms of this largely underdeveloped country and targeting the message for a variety of age levels.

The Problem

The Panama Canal Commission (PCC), an executive agency of the U.S. government operating on a break-even basis, was established by the 1979 Panama Canal Treaty to oversee the smooth transition of the Panama Canal to the Republic of Panama at noon on Dec. 31, 1999. As part of the Canal transition process and the PCC's *Milestone Plan for the Transition of the Panama Canal*, a public information campaign was devised in February of 1996 to prepare Panamanian youth to participate effectively in decisions that will be made about the future of the Canal, as well as in its management and operation. It also was designed to provide an accurate history of the construction of the Canal which had been "politicized" in part.

"An important goal of the public relations efforts of the Panama Canal Commission is to educate the citizens of Panama about the history of the Canal," said Willie K. Friar, PCC director of public affairs, "and to encourage them to take pride in operating the waterway in the same highly efficient manner which has been a tradition since it first opened to international commerce."

This was an opportunity for the PCC to send a message to the children and educators of Panama that the Canal is important to the country, historically, politically, and economically; that it requires care and maintenance; and that it provides many varied job opportunities. For the Canal to continue to function effectively, it is important that the Canal retain a dedicated and trained work force, maintain its managerial and financial autonomy, develop relationships with surrounding communities, and be preserved by the Panamanian people.

Background

The United States completed construction of the Panama Canal in 1914, and has owned and operated the Canal ever since. Until 1979, this was done within the confines of the Panama Canal Zone, a strip of land 50 miles long, the length of the Canal, and 10 miles wide, 5 miles on either side of the waterway. The Canal had traditionally employed experts primarily from the United States and a few others from other countries in its management and administrative positions. The relationship between the U.S. employees and Panamanian communities was not particularly close but was somewhat complex: it wasn't common for Panamanians to anticipate pursuing a position working for the Canal.

In 1979, with the implementation of the Panama Canal Treaty of 1977, the PCC was created to carry out the mandates of the Treaty and to assure a smooth transition and transfer of the Canal to Panamanian hands on Dec. 31, 1992. During the 20-year treaty transition period, some of the PCC's local objectives have been to increase the Panamanian work force, educate the citizens of Panama about the Canal and publicize the opportunities it offers the country. This not only has created ties between the community and the PCC, but has helped the community understand and identify with the needs of the Canal and see how they will benefit from a well-run Canal.

The PCC's education program also is in accordance with its objective of providing continued excellent service to its customers--the international maritime industry. Over the years, the PCC has built a reputation with the world's shipping industry of the Canal as a cost-effective, safe and efficient shipping route. As the work force has shifted from primarily a U.S. citizen-dominated management team and work force to 92 percent Panamanian in 1997, the shipping industry has continued to maintain confidence in the dedication and professionalism of the Canal's employees.³ To ensure that Panama is able to maintain this traditional shipping industry confidence, it is essential that Panamanians understand Canal operations and become aware of and interested in training for positions with the Canal. Many of the positions are unique to Canal operations and require extensive training and preparation. With Panama's relatively small labor pool population of approximately 2.6 million,⁴ it is in the interest of the Canal to have as large a segment of the population as possible educated about and aware of the employment possibilities and requirements.

The PCC currently employs more than 9,000 employees, 7,500 of them permanent and full-time, the rest temporary workers hired during maintenance of the Canal locks. Types of occupations needed include: ship pilots, launch operators, line handlers, locks operators, machinists, lathe operators, carpenters, electricians, tugboat operators, dredge operators, drilling and blasting experts, engineers, hydrologists, job trainers, computer operators and lawyers.

Also of vital importance to the Canal is the country's knowledge of how important the water supply is to Canal operations. This is especially important for residents of communities near the area of the Panama Canal watershed, which is the source for freshwater from rainfall in the surrounding mountains. The Canal uses water to raise and lower ships in the Canal locks, to create a high-level lake that allows ships to transit at 85 feet above sea level, and to generate the hydroelectric power that runs the Canal locomotives and other equipment. It is essential for the public to know that the Canal cannot function without proper control and maintenance of an abundant water supply.

From informal research, the PCC Office of Public Affairs knew that the Panamanian school system taught about the Panama Canal from a sometimes inaccurate historical perspective, and that information on job opportunities, Canal operations and maintenance of the waterway were largely untouched in the curriculum.

The Office of Public Affairs designed a program of Educational materials about the Canal for the Panamanian schools and presented it to the PCC's Board of Directors, who were highly enthusiastic about the project.⁵ The project was then coordinated in conjunction with the Panama Ministry of Education to target Panamanian students and teachers in the public and private primary and secondary educational institutions.

The education system of Panama is divided into primary and secondary education. Primary education is generally for students ages six through 12, and secondary education is generally for students ages 13 through 19. According to the Office of Statistics of the Panama Ministry of Education, as of 1996 there were 371,250 students enrolled in institutions offering primary education and 221,022 in secondary education.⁶ Figures from 1996 also showed that on the national level, there were 2,847 primary schools and 404 secondary schools. These schools and students were the target audience for this campaign.

The media outlets used for publicity about the program were local television news programs, Panamanian newspapers, an internally produced television informational series for local television and the PCC's internal employee newspaper.

There was a limited budget for this project, and most of the materials were produced in-

house and by low-bid contractors through the U.S. Government Printing Office. The total cost of the program was approximately \$200,000 U.S.

Goals and Objectives

The primary goals of the campaign were to teach the Panamanian youth and educators about (1) how the Canal operates and what is required to maintain it, (2) the benefits the Canal provides to the country, and (3) the types of jobs available at the Canal. This was one means identified in the transition milestone plan to ensure the successful operation of the Canal after its turnover.

Other goals of the campaign were the reinforcement of community ties between PCC and the Panamanian public, making PCC education a required part of educational programs nationwide and aiding in the transition of the Canal from U.S. control to Panamanian stewardship under Panama Canal Authority on Dec. 31, 1999.

Strategic Tactics and Techniques

For this public information campaign, the tactics and techniques used were divided into two areas: (1) educational materials and (2) program publicity. Coordination with the Ministry of Education determined the number of each kind of educational package needed to send to the public and private schools in the Republic of Panama.⁷ Materials were to be kept in school libraries and checked out by teachers for classroom use.

Educational Materials

Instruction packages, all in Spanish, were targeted to three particular student age levels and to each school's ability to access multimedia technology. In an initial meeting on Feb. 22, 1996, members of the PCC's Office of Public Affairs met with representatives of the Ministry of Education, teachers and members of local television education Channel 11 operated by the University of Panama. Prototypes of educational materials designed by the PCC's Graphics Branch were presented. The teachers reviewed the materials and expressed satisfaction with the appropriateness of the materials for the various age levels of the audience. Suggestions were also made.

The local TV Channel 11 was included in the meeting because its educational format and national transmission coverage made it a good medium for showing the educational videos to reach a nationwide television audience. The Channel 11 station representative agreed to start showing the videos as soon as they were available.

To reach the target audience, the PCC created two videos "Que es un Canal?" (What is a Canal?) and "Vistazo Rapido al Canal de Panama" (A Quick Look at the Panama Canal). The

former was produced for primary school students in Panama (U.S. grades one through six) and the latter for the secondary school students (U.S. grades seven through twelve).

The video for the primary school students used two young Panamanian students as actors visiting different sites along the Canal route. The video begins with a young boy asleep in bed with a book about the Canal open in his arms. It then moves to a dream where he and a young girl actually visit the areas he was “reading” about. The language in the video is also adapted to appeal to the children’s age level. The video for secondary school children does not use actors and contains more detailed and technical information on the workings of the Canal and the different functions of the employees who operate the waterway.

Some of the schools did not have videocassette players and were provided a set of 40 slides with an explanation booklet. “Subir, Atravesar y Bajar” (Up, Over, and Down) was created for the primary schools, “Un Vistazo Rapido al Canal de Panama” (A Quick Look at the Panama Canal) was created for the secondary students, and “El Canal de Panama: Una Vision Historica” (The Panama Canal: A Historic Look) presented the history of the waterway for older students and instructors. The slides were numbered in order of the presentation and also were accompanied by two posters, a Canal profile and a locks photograph.

For schools in the interior or rural areas of the country, where there is no audiovisual capability or electricity, a set of illustrated flip charts, based on the slides, were created, again according to age level. Each 11 x 17 inch flip chart was designed to sit upright on a flat surface and was attached in order of presentation by a three-ring binder type enclosure. Each of the charts contained 40 illustrations. The photos or illustrations were placed on the front of the poster cards, and the text for the teachers to explain the illustrations was placed on the back of the previous card; so as one card is showing, the teacher can read the corresponding text on the back of the card. Except for historical photos taken during early Canal construction days, the flip chart illustrations and photographs were in full color to help maintain the attention of the students.

The materials for the children in primary schools included definitions of terms used in Canal operations. For example, students were taught that when a ship goes through the Canal from ocean to ocean, that is called a Canal *transit*. These materials explain the Canal by describing the process of a ship transiting the Canal.

Secondary schoolchildren were provided more detailed information and diagrams. Students were told more about the history of the country as it relates to the current operations of the Canal. For example, students were taught that the construction of the Canal was finished before its scheduled completion date, and under budget. Secondary students are also reminded of the involvement of the French in Canal construction and in completion of the Panama Railroad by a U.S. contractor in 1855.

“El Canal de Panama: Una Vision Historica” (The Panama Canal: A Historic Look) was the flip chart created for older students and focuses on Panamanian history as it relates to the Canal. For example, it mentions Frenchman Ferdinand de Lesseps, builder of the Suez Canal in Egypt, and analyzes the many problems faced by the valiant French engineer in the late 1800s when trying to build a canal through the Isthmus of Panama with malaria, yellow fever, inadequate equipment and finances. The explanation of operations is also presented from a historical perspective illustrating how machinery was designed to operate by a combination of hydroelectric and thermal power when water levels were low.

A total of 600 videos (300 of each version), 900 slide briefings of 40 slides each (300 of each version), 900 full color flip charts (300 of each version) with posters, a profile of the Canal, and 350,000 black and white general information Canal brochures were produced by PCC and distributed by the Panama Ministry of Education. Special requests were accommodated for videos from secondary schools’ foreign language departments.⁸

The materials were created to be used over the years. To ensure the longevity of the materials, packaging was designed for durability and to preserve materials for long-term repeated use.⁹

Program Publicity

Program publicity consisted of two special events, video news releases, photograph and cutline releases, feature stories in PCC internal and external publications and on its television programs, and special airings of the educational videos on Panama Channel 11.

The first event was the presentation of the educational materials by the Panama Canal Commission’s Administrator and Deputy Administrator to Panama’s Vice Minister of Education. This was hosted by the Panama Canal Commission in the warehouse where the materials were packaged to be shipped. The two children who acted in the primary school video were also on hand. PCC’s Office of Public Affairs covered the event and released a Spanish-version video news release (VNR) for Panama’s television channels 2, 4, 5, 11, and 13. The English-version VNR was produced for the Armed Forces Radio and Television Station’s (AFRTS) Channels 8 and 10. AERTS Channels 8 and 10 serve the local U.S. military community, but also are viewed by many English-speaking (bilingual) West Indian descendants of Canal construction-era workers as well as local Panamanians.

The Panama Ministry of Education was responsible for the distribution of the materials to the public and private schools. The Vice Minister of Education held a special event on Oct. 17 to distribute flags to all schools to commemorate Panama’s national holiday,¹⁰ and the PCC Office of Public Affairs seized the occasion as an opportunity to disseminate the materials to the public

schools. A representative from PCC's Office of Public Affairs was present to explain the materials. Representatives from 13 geographical areas, including Panama's nine provinces and the San Blas region, received materials and were designated to distribute them within their regions.¹¹

A separate PCC ceremony was held on Oct. 22 for the presentation of materials to the private schools, with representatives from the National Association of Catholic Schools and the National Union of Private Schools which represents non-Catholic private schools.

The second event sponsored by the PCC, at the Panama Canal Miraflores Locks Theater on Oct. 12, was the first of a series of orientation programs for educators who would be using the educational packages in courses about the Canal throughout the country. The orientation program covered the basic aspects of Canal management and operations. Both Spanish and English language VNRs were produced for the respective media audiences and the program also was covered in PCC's employee newspaper. This event was coordinated by the PCC with the Panama Ministry of Education.

Teachers also were encouraged to arrange for groups of students to tour the Canal's Miraflores Locks Visitors Center. Operated by the Office of Public Affairs, the Center gives visitors a close-up view of canal locks operations together with narration by expert orientation personnel, a theater presentation, a view of a typographic canal map, and a look at replicas and models of some Canal equipment, past and present.

Photo news releases focused on the first event and pictured Panama's Vice Minister of Education and the Administrator of the Panama Canal. Government ministers and the PCC Administrator are widely recognized public figures and attracted much attention in the press because of their prominence. These releases were sent to all Panamanian newspapers, including *La Prensa*, *El Panama America*, *El Siglo*, *El Universal*, *La Estrella de Panama* *The Panama News* and *La Critica*. This coverage was used to build community ties by acknowledging PCC's goodwill towards improving the education of the community.

Other publicity included a centerfold story with photos written about the program in the biweekly Canal employee newspaper *The Spillway* and a segment in a regular feature show on the Canal produced by PCC called "Panama--Un Canal en Transision" (Panama--A Canal in Transition). The employee newspaper is often included in media kits and demonstrates the PCC's commitment to the country's citizens. It also helps to instill pride in the employees by showing them the PCC cares about their communities and country, and supports them.

Results

The results of the public information campaign were measured informally by feedback from the Ministry of Education and teachers, and by growth of related education programs. Publicity was measured by the number of press clippings and informal surveys of VNR use.

Feedback from the Panama Ministry of Education and teachers was very positive. The educators said they have noticed that the students have learned more and teachers have requested the videos in different languages to reinforce the message in foreign language classes. The materials were being used in obligatory courses about the Canal, and have been lauded for their wonderful visuals.¹² Also, the number of student visits to the Visitor's Center have increased.

The education of the community is an ongoing effort, and direct effects of the program are difficult to measure. But it clearly has created a demand for more educational materials. Since the inception of the program, other education programs have been developed by other divisions within the PCC and by Nestle Panami For example, the PCC Liaison Office, in conjunction with the Office of Public Affairs, has developed an educational program aimed at the schools in the vicinity of the Canal. The program centers on the need to protect Canal equipment, especially aids to navigation, from damage and theft, and to protect the Canal watershed.

During the Universal Congress of the Panama Canal, the PCC Office of Public Affairs televised, on closed circuit television, the proceedings from the Universal Congress so students in the Panama Canal College auditorium could watch.

Also, Nestle Panama developed a booklet on the history of the Canal with the aid of the PCC. The booklet had places for illustrations, to be cut out from labels of evaporated milk cans, to paste in the booklet and form an illustrated informational book about the Canal. Entry forms for a drawing were included in the books. Those who entered could win prizes ranging from a two-bedroom home to backpacks for schoolbooks.

The combined success of these efforts ultimately will be measured by the continued excellent service provided by the Panama Canal to its clients--the international maritime community--for decades to come.

Notes

- 1 The Panama Canal: A Vision for the Future, (Balboa, Republic of Panama: Panama Canal Commission) 37, 57, 7-10 Sept. 1997.

- 2 Program Update, Panama Canal Commission, 1996.

- 3 Larry Rohter, "Panama Leader Accused of Cronyism Over Appointees to Run the Canal," New York Times 28 Sept. 1997.

- 4 "Panama - Republic of Panama - Republic de Panama," The World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1996 ed.

- 5 Janet G. Len-Rios, Panama Canal Commission, Personal Interview, 19 Dec. 1997.

- 6 Lic. Herrera, Ministerio de Educaci6n, Oficina de Estadistica, Telephone Interview, 22 Dec. 1997.

- 7 Ana Maria Troitiflo, Panama Canal Commission, Personal Interview, 11 Dec. 1997.

- 8 Ibid.

- 9 Len-Rios, op. cit.

- 10 Nov. 3 is Panama's Independence Day from the Republic of Colombia.

- 11 Anonymous, "Educational Materials Distributed to Local School Systems," The Panama Canal Spillway 1 Nov. 1996.

- 12 Porfirio de Cruz, Instructor, Colegio Javier, Telephone Interview, 12 Dec. 1997.

**Vision 2020:
Multicultural Malaysia's Campaign for Development**

**Anne Cooper Chen
Ohio University
United States**

**Teck-hua Ngu
Institut Teknologi MARA
Malaysia**

**Abdul Halim b. Taib
Bernama News Agency
Malaysia**

Executive Summary

Vision 2020 is the umbrella name for a government economic plan, announced in 1991, that aims to bring Malaysia into the club of developed nations within 30 years. It has two main publics: domestic citizens and overseas business elites.

Vision 2020's centerpiece for enhancing economic development, the Multimedia Super Corridor, a 15-by-50-kilometer model sector, stretches from Kuala Lumpur to the new international airport at Sepang. It features state-of-the-art communications systems and tax-free operations.

Tactics to reach the domestic public with a positive economic development message include stories and PSAs in Malaysia's controlled news media. Overseas, Prime Minister Mahathir and Information Minister Rahmat often serve as 2020 spokesmen. Internet sites are used in addition to personal channels. The government cannot order or guarantee favorable foreign coverage, but news pegs such as building the world's tallest building put the small nation (population: 19 million) on the world's agenda.

Problems confounding the goal of full development by 2020 include the region's fiscal crisis that began in 1997 and uneven prosperity within Malaysia's Malay-Chinese-Indian population. Seven years into the campaign, domestic awareness is so high that even street vendors use the 2020 catchphrase to name their shops. Internationally, numerous companies, especially from Japan and the United States, have begun to construct manufacturing plants in the corridor. A Harvard assessment calls the development goal well within sight.

The Problem

"Why are you still wearing the mask?" asks a Malaysian cartoon character. "The haze is gone." Replies his companion: "My denture is under repair... I cannot show the world my missing front teeth" (Sofiyah 1997).

Unfortunately for Malaysia, the dissipation of the haze from Indonesian fires got much less press than the haze itself. Thus the government mounted a campaign in December 1997--"All clear in Malaysia"--aimed at letting potential foreign tourists know that breathing the air in Malaysia was no longer hazardous to their health.

Government-inspired campaigns characterized the beginnings of and still account for much of the current public relations activity in Malaysia. The short history of that activity began in 1945 when the British established the Department of Publicity and Printing to counter the appeal of Communism (Morais and Adnan, 1996). After independence, the government concentrated on "nation building" (Van Leuven 1996, p. 210) with such campaigns as combating

malaria and promoting racial harmony.

As development proceeded, “practices attendant to the market development phase” became superimposed on those of the nation building phase (Van Leuven 1996, p. 221). Even today, with private agencies well established, “almost every major (public relations) consultancy in Singapore and Kuala Lumpur derives 20-30 percent of its income from one of the various government ministries” (Van Leuven 1996, p. 213).

Government campaigns, formerly directed only at domestic audiences, now sometimes have an overseas public, such as “All clear in Malaysia.”

The topic of this case study--a campaign aimed at getting Malaysia into the “club” of fully developed nations by the year 202 -- has two main publics: Malaysian citizens and overseas elites. Based on past performance, Malaysia has the opportunity to achieve its goal.

The confidence and good will of foreign countries have been crucial to Malaysia’s rising fortunes. The young nation, which has attracted numerous electronics plants from overseas, is turning from an extractive to a manufacturing-based economy and experiencing an 8 percent annual growth rate.

Malaysia has the right natural advantages and has pursued the right policies, according to Radelet, Sachs and Lee (1997). Four factors, on which Malaysia ranks generally high, have been shown to correlate with development:

- 1) initial conditions (e.g., low starting income, high education);
- 2) natural resources and geography (e.g., access to the sea, a long coastline, non-extractive economic base);
- 3) government policy (e.g., openness to international trade, low risk of expropriation, strong rule of law);
- 4) demographics (e.g., high life expectancy, large working-age population).

In a paper written before the Asian currency crisis, Radelet, Sachs and Lee (1997, p. 59) concluded, “Malaysia’s expected rapid growth, albeit perhaps slightly lower than in the past, will bring its income from its current level of 37 percent of U.S. income to about 70 percent in 2025.”

Sachs, director of the Harvard Institute for International Development, gave a speech in Malaysia titled “Asia in the Year 2020” after the downturn, which he called “a crisis of financial markets and not the whole system” (“Don: Malaysia.. .” 1997). But Malaysians see friends lose their jobs, accept half pay and (in the government) experience a wage freeze (personal

communication 12/21/97). The master's degree program in which the first author taught in 1996, financed by a Malaysian university, was cancelled in November 1997, a further sign of economic decline.

In addition to the severe 1997-98 economic downturn, serious ethnic divisions loom as a problem. Ethnically, Malaysia's three subgroups -- Malays, Chinese and Indians -- exist in a delicate balance that sometimes explodes (see "Brief History of Malaysia"). The affirmative action policies favoring Malays (called Bumiputras: literally, "sons of the soil") have drawn much criticism from the foreign media and the non-Bumiputra community in Malaysia. For example, the institution where the authors teach, taught or studied is an affirmative action university; only Muslim students may attend. Professors represent varied ethnicities and religions, but Malays usually hold most of the deanships and higher offices.

The golden opportunity of the Vision 2020 campaign, now beset by new economic problems, requires persuasion and confidence building to succeed. When the campaign began in 1991, it had seemed just a matter of getting out the word.

Background

On February 28, 1991, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Malaysia's prime minister, gave a speech to the inaugural meeting of the Malaysian Business Council entitled "Malaysia: The way forward." What Mahathir said was "quite ordinary and something we would have expected in any political speech, especially that of a prime minister" (Shamsul 1992, p. 1). But the unexpected results have changed the country.

The Malaysian Business Council, a virtual Who's Who of Malaysia, includes top civil servants, politicians, academics and the captains of Malaysian industry. The group of advisors who wrote the speech had "to discover something to replace the NEP [see "Brief History of Malaysia"] after 1990. The National Economic Consultative Council (NECC) had failed to come up with anything useful and thus the duty fell on Mahathir to deliver." (Shamsul 1992, p. 11)

The addition of the word "vision" by local media (Shamsul 1992) derives from the coincidence of Mahathir's target date for development with a familiar concept from optical science. According to Webster's New World Dictionary, 20/20 vision means "normal visual ability, i.e., seeing clearly at 20 feet what the normal eye sees at 20 feet." Since the distant goal of full development requires Malaysians to look into the future, the term "vision" fit perfectly. The government thereafter used "Vision 2020" as an umbrella concept for its development plans.

The domestic media's role in coining the phrase was only the beginning of its role in selling the concept. While Malaysia's Ministry of Information can only attempt to reach and influence the campaign's overseas audience, it directly sets the agenda for the domestic

audience.

The majority of the media in Malaysia are either directly owned by the government--such as Radio-Television Malaysia (RTM), which operates two of the existing three nationally televised television channels (TV 1 and TV 2) and all but two of the radio stations in the country--or indirectly owned by the political parties in power through their corporations.

In Malaysia, media usually “accept, if not embellish, news releases pertaining to government campaigns” (Van Leuven 1996, p. 211). But to think of Malaysia’s media as “mail carriers” for the Ministry of Information or other ministries would oversimplify the situation. Individual media assume a “cultural interpreter” role for the government, crucial “in a single country that must work in an environment with diverse groups” (Grunig et al. 1995, p. 183).

Reflecting Malaysia’s multiracial, multicultural and multiethnic makeup, the mass media in Malaysia are also diverse and varied, with specific media catering to the needs of particular ethnic groups. The country’s 37 daily newspapers include titles in Malay, English, Mandarin Chinese and Tamil, for example. Fearing that the mass media could exploit delicate racial sensitivities, the government has instituted strict regulations.

Malaysia’s media, rated “not free” by Freedom House, play a role quite different in government campaigns than media rated “free” (AI-Enad 1990). Freedom House gives Malaysia the following marks for 1996:

	laws/reg	polit.controls	econ.factors	repression	TOTAL
b’cast	9	9	0	8	
print	9	0	0	16	61

Note: all dimensions rank 0-10 except repression, at 0-20. Totals are rated 0-30 free; 31-60 partly free; 61-100 not free.

The public to which the domestic media communicate represent the following seven major groupings, according to a study conducted by Survey Research Malaysia (SRM) in 1990 (Hashim 1994):

1. THE RURAL TRADITIONALIST (32 percent): ethnic Malays who stay in rural villages. They are also largely conservative and traditional in outlook.
2. THE KAMPUNG [VILLAGE] TRENDSEUERS (16 percent): about 60 percent of this group are ethnic Malays. However, they are from a younger age group and are largely rural dwellers. Unlike the Rural Traditionalists, they are ambitious, outgoing and brand and fashion conscious, but are also family and community oriented.

3. THE REBEL HANGOUTS (16 percent): mainly young, urban ethnic Chinese with high personal incomes. They are nonconformists and the least religious and moralistic of the groups.
4. THE SLEEPWALKERS (12 percent): mainly ethnic Chinese females over 40 years of age. Pessimistic and the least houseproud. They are also not very family or community oriented.
5. THE NOT QUITE THERES (10 percent): largely young ethnic Malays with good personal incomes. Moralistic, but introverted and lacking in confidence.
6. THE INCONSPICUOUS (10 percent): urban female ethnic Malays with average income. Moralistic, introverted and lacking in confidence, but with high optimism.
7. THE UPPER ECHELONS (5 percent): urban ethnic Malays in the high-income bracket. Socially active, ambitious, confident and perceive of themselves as leaders. Similar to most ethnic Malays, they are family oriented, moralistic and nationalistic.

Goals and Objectives

In his 1991 speech, Mahathir (1991, p. 2) called for full development “in our mould,” not merely following in the path of the already developed, mostly Western countries. Mahathir (1991, p. 2) further envisioned a development beyond mere economics, a Malaysia that is: fully developed along all the dimensions: economically, politically, socially, spiritually, psychologically and culturally. We must be fully developed in term of national unity and social justice, political stability, system of government, quality of life social and spiritual values, national pride and confidence.

Mahathir and his advisors set a target of doubling Malaysia’s GDP every 10 years between 1990 and 2020, from RM (Ringgit Malaysian) 115 billion in 1990 to RM920 billion in 2020. The target would require average annual GDP growth of 4 percent for the next 30 years.

Some of the goals enabling Malaysia to reach the target include the establishment of a competitive economy, promotion of small- and medium-scale industries, encouragement of foreign direct investment, development of human resources and relying on the private sector as the primary engine of growth.

In elaborating on the last goal, Shamsul (1992 p. 9) says that Mahathir “introduced the concept of MALAYSIA INC. with clear corporatist overtones, and reemphasized the fact that the traditional role of the government is to serve private capitalist interests. There is a touch of Japan Inc. in this policy.”

As the program has evolved over the past six years, other goals were articulated, especially by Information Minister Datuk Mohamed Rabmat. Over all, he said, stands the

philosophy “that we will accept what is good from outside and reject what is bad. So basically, what we want to do is to develop ‘self-censorship’ within our population” (“Malaysia’s MSC...” 1997). Goals include:

- *teaching the people to use multimedia intelligently;
- *creating an awareness of the importance of information technology; and
- *protecting indigenous values, which has the effect of disavowing pornography.

Sometimes coordination of goals has been a problem, such as when Mahathir’s personal views conflicted with those of other planners. For instance, at the World Bank International Monetary Fund meeting in Hong Kong Sept. 20, 1997, Mahathir personally blamed multimillionaire philanthropist George Soros, a Hungarian-born citizen of the United States, for creating the Asian fiscal crisis. Vision 2020 policy, however, has a goal of attracting overseas investment. Thus a few days later, Malaysian finance minister Anwar Ibrahim “tried to assuage investors, saying that Malaysia has no intention of implementing regulations like those proposed by his boss” (Switow 1997).

Strategic Tactics and Techniques

In his 1991 speech, Mahathir (1991, p. 1) consciously chose the 2020 time frame to represent the year when the children of today’s young parents would reach maturity: Hopefully, the Malaysian who is born today and in the years to come will be the last generation of our citizens who will be living in a country that is called ‘developing.’

A “generation plus” worked out as $1991 + 252016 + 4 = 2020$, a time frame that enables today’s young parents to envision their grandchildren in a brave, new Malaysian world.

Based on experience with the NEP (see “Brief History of Malaysia”), a 20-year policy, this alternative to the NEP will have a life 10 years longer. It will clearly take longer than 20 years to create a group of Malay entrepreneurs. The NEP had not by 1990 enabled Bumiputra ownership of the country’s equity to equal 30 percent. So the revised goal aims at a higher percent over more years.

The Vision 2020 centerpiece is the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC), a 9-by-30-mile (about 15 km by 50 km) zone that will stretch from the capital, Kuala Lumpur, to the new international airport at Sepang. Starting in March 1997, overseas high-tech firms could apply for MSC status.

The following tactics, set forth in the MSC Bill of Guarantees, are designed to attract foreign high-tech IT companies (Langenfeld 1997):

- *wiring with state-of-the-art telecommunications systems;
- *restricted employment of knowledge workers;
- * exemption from local ownership requirements;
- *tax...free operation for up to 10 years; and
- *no censorship of the Internet.

The last was an about-face for a country with a “not free” press.

Mahathir himself often makes the key MSC-related announcements and, to personally woo investors, often makes overseas trips, including to the Silicon Valley of California and Tokyo. Once given MSC status, corporations themselves, like Japan’s Nippon Telephone and Telegraph, take on MSC promotional roles. Other stakeholders include the Selangor state government, landowners in the corridor and all related government departments.

Other planned components of Vision 2020 include a paperless national government in a new location at Putrajaya and “smart schools” linked by the Internet. Possibly the most ambitious project is Malacca’s Multimedia University, the first private university in Malaysia, which started taking students in October 1997. Some will learn on site, while others will join by distance learning. Stanford University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology helped design the academic programs.

The government also has brought people into its fold by creating various boards, each of which has designated spokespersons. Members of the Multimedia Development Corporation coordinate all activities in the corridor. The 30 members of the International Advisory Panel include personnel from Microsoft, IBM, Apple and Taiwan’s Acer computer firm.

Naturally, a high tech project will make use of electronic channels to deliver its message, both to potential investors and the merely curious. A link from “Malaysia” on Yahoo, for example, explains a service for businesses called Borderless Marketing that will “create and deliver marketing messages, customer services and information products to their multicultural and multinational customers.” The message comes from Tan Sri Dato Dr. Othman Yeop Abdullah, executive chairman, Multimedia Development Corporation.

The worldwide audience that uses traditional media knows mostly about the bricks-and-mortar components of Vision 2020, designed to create built-in news pegs. At 1,483 feet, the twin Petronas Towers, new home of Malaysia’s oil monopoly, have taken “tallest building” bragging rights away from Chicago’s Sears Tower. Still in the planning stage, Linear City is billed as the world’s longest building.

Journalists can’t ignore stories like these. Thus by consciously beating a record for height

or length, Malaysia reaches readers worldwide. But while superlatives gain Malaysia a place on the international agenda, the Ministry of Information cannot control the tone of international stories as it can control domestic ones.

Domestically, the media constantly carry good news of progress. In addition, trailers of Vision 2020 air frequently during prime-time television slots. Other media, such as billboards highlighting the campaign, sprang up like mushrooms after the rain shortly following Mahathir's 1991 speech.

However, international coverage lacks fawning (or suitably respectful, by Malay standards) attention toward high officials, such as a Christian Science Monitor piece that began (Switow 1997): If Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir had his way, international financier George Soros would be out of a job and possibly behind bars.

Even a piece on the Petronas Towers and Linear City contains words like "grandiose," "colossal," "building spree" and "megaprojects" not meant as compliments ("Malaysia thinking.. ." 1996).

Results Achieved

Vision 2020 clearly has brought Malaysia mixed results. The Malaysian government decided to focus on the Multimedia Super Corridor, a small, clearly defined geographical area, to symbolize Vision 2020 first, before introducing the multimedia environment to the whole country. Six years into the Vision 2020 campaign, how have the two key publics, domestic and overseas, reacted?

Domestic awareness has been phenomenal, while acceptance has been positive with reservations. The terms "Wawasan 2020" and "Vision 2020" have "achieved a magical mantra status in present day Malaysian social life" (Shamsul 1992, p. 2). Popping up constantly in conversations, the terms have such positive associations that entrepreneurs, according to (Shamsul 1992, p. 2), have even adopted this term for marketing purposes. Hence we could now go to a "Vision 2020 Unisex Salon for a hairdo, or "2020 Entertainment Center" for a game of snooker or "Tom Yam 2020" stall if we are hungry, and for those with poor vision, there is a "Syarikat Cermin Mata 2020" in almost every major town in Malaysia today.

Malaysians' consumer confidence in the second quarter of 1996 was far and away at the top, 93.4 of 100, of 12 Asian-Pacific nations, according to a survey by MasterCard International. Measuring employment, the economy, income, the stock market and quality of life, the 93.4 self-report for Malaysia contrasted with Japan's rating of 35.0. However, the survey was taken before the currency crisis of summer-fall 1997.

Recent anecdotal evidence shows some misgivings (personal communications to third author). A teacher, for example, flatly declares that the government should defer the MSC, especially now when the country's economy is floundering.

“One needs to have a healthy mind and healthy body to think intelligently,” he says. “There are still thousands of people, especially in rural areas, the farmers, rubber tappers, fishermen, laborers who are still lacking the basic necessities. At this stage, they do not need a computer in their house, nor do they want to know about MSC or the Silicon Valley; they need a steady income to bring up their children, educate them and then direct them to the information age.”

“At this time when the Malaysian currency is depreciating, and the economy is somewhat unstable,” agrees a computer programmer, “there's no way that construction work on the MSC should be carried out as scheduled, although the government has not deferred the project.”

An auxiliary positive result of Vision 2020 for the domestic public is the decision to allow free information flow on the Internet.

Any Malaysians with Internet access can help themselves to uncensored news. In mid-1997, the Information Ministry further decided to rescind the law that requires foreign news agencies to distribute their news through BERNAMA, the national agency (“Malaysian news.. .” 1997). Foreign agencies may now channel news directly to subscribers. These moves may eventually lift Malaysia's domestic media out of its current “not free” status.

Malaysia's neighbor Singapore still regulates Internet flow, and yet continues to attract business interest. With only three service providers, all licensed, the small city-state can easily control communication. Yet it accommodates more than 4,000 foreign companies, including 1,200 American multinationals. In a recent survey of over 6,000 top executives in Asia by the Far Eastern Economic Review, 42 percent chose Singapore over other Asian countries as the preferred base for their regional operations.

The domestic Malaysian public, which lags behind Singapore in information technology, cannot make full use of its access rights. An index that measures the basic tools of international telephones, computing power and faxes puts Malaysia 25th of 45 nations, with a 3.496 index (“Asia ranks...” 1997). Singapore ranks 4.818, the highest score for any Asian nation other than Japan. (The United States first-place score is 6.689.) Vision 2020 has to date brought Internet technology to only about 2% of its domestic public.

Results regarding Vision 2020's overseas public can be measured in terms of commitments to locate businesses in the Multimedia Super Corridor. Hundreds have expressed interest, while to date some, including NH of Japan, have made firm commitments. Based on the

assessment of Harvard economist Jeffrey Sach in November 1997, after the currency crisis, Malaysia's projected growth of 4% a year should result in "a fulfillment of Vision 2020" ("Don: Malaysia. . ." 1997). An assessment of Vision 2020 in 2005 will bring the story up to date.

BRIEF HISTORY OF MALAYSIA

Located where sea routes linked the markets of India and China, Malaysia experienced multicultural influences from its earliest history. In the late 1200s, Muslim traders from India brought Islam to the archipelago. Next came the Portuguese, who in 1511 conquered the trading town of Malacca. Subsequently the Dutch laid siege to and won (in 1641) the port, which the British in turn took over in 1795. Japanese forces invaded in 1941, but the British returned after the war. The British practiced the "divide and rule" method of governance in Malaya. The Malays were kept at their traditional way of life at their villages; the Indians were recruited for the plantations and civil service; and the Chinese were mainly recruited to work the tin mines. Even today occupational divisions persist among the races. When Britain gave Malaya (the peninsula) its independence in 1957, the economy was based on extractive and agricultural industries, such as palm oil production. British firms owned large rubber plantations and tin mining companies, making Malaya the world's largest exporter of rubber and tin. Malaysia as a nation was formed in 1963 when Malaya and the British Borneo states of Sabah and Sarawak as well as Singapore, formed a federation. Singapore left the union in 1965. Today the city-state still has intimate economic ties with its neighbor. Despite various development plans, in the late 1960s, the Chinese and Indians still had higher income levels than Malays. The disparities were exploited during the 1969 election, sparking off racial riots that saw several hundred people killed. As a result, the government introduced the New Economic Policy in 1970 to address this imbalance.

It was aimed at giving the Bumiputras (Malays and indigenous tribes) a chance to catch up and own at least 30% of the economy. In 1981, Dato' Sen Mahathir Mohamad, a medical doctor by training, took office as Malaysia's fourth prime minister, a position he still holds.

MALAYSIA AT A GLANCE

Population

18,410,000 (1992 est.)

Malay 59%

Chinese 32%

Indian 9%

Geography/Politics

area: 127,316 sq. mi. SE tip of Asia, plus N coast Borneo, 13 states, 2 federal territories

govt: federal parliamentary democracy
(constitutional monarch elected by council of

sultans every 5 years)
capital: Kuala Lumpur (pop. 1 million)
Literacy 80%
GDP/capita \$2,670 (1991)
Life expectancy (years)
male- 66female-71

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**Dubai Department
of Tourism and Commerce Marketing**

**Badran A. R. Badran
Department of Mass Communication
United Arab Emirates University Al Am
United Arab Emirates**

and

**Dean Kruckeberg
Department of Communication Studies
University of Northern Iowa
United States**

Executive Summary

Public relations has been an important part of the travel-and-tourism/hospitality industry for many decades, as evidenced by the large and highly professional Travel & Tourism Section of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). Each year, practitioners enter in the PRSA Silver Anvil competition to promote leisure travel to a wide range of tourism and recreation sites.

Such promotional efforts become more complex, however, when a site wants to promote its venue both as a tourism and as a business locale. The task becomes even more challenging when international visitors are sought who have relatively little knowledge about a geographic region that may be viewed by some as politically unstable, with uncomfortable weather and a barren landscape and a culture that may be unsympathetic toward others' perception of recreation.

However, Dubai can be perceived by the well-informed tourist to be highly safe (Does a German tourist want to be carjacked in Miami or visit pleasant beaches where there is virtually no crime?), be viewed as "exotic" (yet with "First-World" amenities as well as an indigenous population that commonly speaks English) and as having a fascinating, rich and ancient culture.

The Problem

Tourism is one of the fastest-growing areas of the world's economy. International tourism receipts constitute a higher proportion of the value of world exports than do most other sectors. Many studies forecast continued growth for this sector globally at a minimum rate of 4.2 percent per year until 2005 (World Tourism Organization, 1994, pp. 1, 4). A study prepared by Euromonitor estimated tourism revenues worldwide in 1996 at \$404 billion. By the year 2000, revenues are estimated to reach \$560 billion (*Al Khaleej Daily*, May 23, 1997, p. 29).

According to the Madrid-based World Tourism Organization (WTO) classification (1994, p. 66), the Middle East region is expected to witness growth in international tourist arrivals during the 1990s and beyond (World Tourism Organization, 1994, p. ix). Between 1980 and 1992, the overall rate of growth of arrivals to the region was 1.5 percent a year (World Tourism Organization, 1994, p. 31). Regional wars, the perception of instability, the low capacity and quality of tourism facilities and the lack of marketing activities in support of the region's tourist products are among the main reasons cited by the WTO for the overall modest growth in inbound tourism to the region during that 12-year period. Terrorism can be added to this list, most recently evident in a November 1997 fatal attack on tourists in Luxor, Egypt.

The countries of the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council (AGCC) -- which includes Saudi Arabia, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain -- received 25 percent of

the total visitors to the region in 1992, a 322 percent regional increase since 1982. Most of these arrivals came to Bahrain, Oman and the United Arab Emirates--countries that were largely unaffected by regional instability.

A study published by the *Economist* Intelligence Unit considered these three states to be among the “winners” in tourist arrivals to the Middle East during the period from 1984 through 1994, with the United Arab Emirates showing a 222.7 percent growth (International Tourism Reports, 1995, p. 76). However, internal unrest in Bahrain, especially during 1996, caused a sharp decline in inbound tourism.

According to the World Tourism Organization, the effective development, operation and management of tourism in a country require certain institutional elements. These elements include: 1) organizational structures, especially a government authority and private-sector tourism associations; 2) tourism-related legislation and regulation; 3) education and training programs for tourism staff; 4) availability of financial capital to develop tourist attractions, facilities, services, infrastructure and mechanisms; 5) marketing strategies and promotion programs for tourists and tourist-information facilities and services in the destination areas; and 6) travel facilitation of immigration, customs and other facilities and services at the entry and exit points of tourists (World Tourism Organization, 1994, p. 6).

National tourism organizations (NTOs) have responsibilities in the licensing and supervision of travel agencies, the classification of hotels, enforcement of legislation designed to protect tourists, etc. Two other important functions are: 1) conducting tourism marketing research, which includes the planning, implementation, analysis and publication of surveys; investigations of tourist motivations and behavior; travel trade surveys; assessment of promotion effectiveness and other; and 2) carrying out tourism promotion, which includes planning, execution and control of advertising; and sales support and public relations campaigns, both domestically and abroad, with the aim of increasing tourism flow, reducing seasonal variations in arrivals and accelerating the growth in occupancy rates of newly-created tourism facilities (World Tourism Organization, 1994, p. 40).

According to Schmoll (1977, p. 36), the primary responsibility for promoting tourism falls on the NTOs rather than the private sector because that is a “logical extension of (their) responsibility for planning and directing the development of tourism facilities and installations.” The state or public authorities, wholly or in part, own important elements of the tourism infrastructure in the AGCC countries. Also, tourism is an important factor in the national economy of many countries, a significant earner of foreign exchange and a source of employment.

The private sector, represented by individual tourist operators, is responsible for several marketing and promotional activities to attract customers to its airlines, hotels, tours, rental

vehicles, restaurants, etc. Both the functions of the public and private sectors are, however, inter-linked. Public-private sector collaboration is thus vital to the cost effectiveness of tourism marketing (World Tourism Organization, 1994, p. 33). A common practice is to establish a joint promotion board for coordinating and carrying out promotional activities (World Tourism Organization, 1994, p. 47).

Official government-sponsored and publicly financed promotion of tourism is especially strong in international tourism. Promotional activities are one of the basic functions of NTOs. They are responsible primarily for the preparation, production and distribution of tourism publicity material; public relations; the organization of local visits for travel writers, journalists and travel agents; the preparation and implementation of advertising programs for press, radio and television, and the production of tourist films (Schmoll, 1977, pp. 36, 37).

Communicating the promotional message to the public usually involves four distinct methods: 1) advertising the product through a selected medium, such as television or print media; 2) using staff to engage in personal selling, either behind the counter, over the phone or calling on clients as sales representatives; 3) engaging in sales promotion activities, such as window displays or exhibitions; and 4) generating publicity about the product through public relations activities, such as inviting travel writers to experience the product in the hope they will review it favorably in their publications (Holloway and Plant, 1992, pp. 97-98).

As part of this promotional mix, exhibitions play a major role in international tourism promotion nowadays, providing opportunities for buyers and sellers of travel products to meet and do business. Some, like the World Travel Market (WTM) in London and the Travel and Tourism World Trade Fair (German acronym) International Tourism Exchange (ITB) in Berlin, have become of international significance (Holloway and Plant, p. 166-167). In the Middle East, the annual Arabian Travel Market performs an increasingly pivotal role in promoting both inbound and outbound tourism to-and-from the region.

In most promotional exhibits that involve tourism, printed materials frequently are used to “inform existing and prospective customers and stimulate demand for specified products, or facilitate their use and enjoyment” (Middleton, 1988, p. 176). Print materials are either promotional or informational.

Promotional print includes: tour operators’ brochures; hotel, holiday center, caravan park, campsite and other accommodation brochures; conference center brochures; specific product brochures (e.g., activity holidays, theater weekends); attraction leaflets (theme parks, museums, amusement parks); car rental brochures; sales promotion leaflets (specific incentive offers); posters and show cards for window and other displays in distribution networks; tourist office brochures (general and product-specific); printed letters and inserts for direct mail.

Informational print includes orientation leaflets and guides; maps; “in-house” guides and “in-house” magazines (accommodation and transport); menus, tent cards, show cards and folders used “in-house”; hotel group directories and “what’s on” leaflets.

The latest addition to the promotional mix is the Internet’s World Wide Web. The web has recently become an important tool for promoting businesses, organizations and destinations. It is increasingly used for event promotion in particular (*Conference and Incentive Travel*, Feb. 1997, p. 93-94).

The concept of urban tourism is ideally suited for many of the Gulf countries and emirates such as Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and Dubai because they are city-states that have little to offer to tourists outside their capitals (with the exception, perhaps, of the so-called desert safaris). Saudi Arabia and Oman represent two different models of religious/pilgrimage travel (*International Tourism Reports*, 1997, p. 51) and eco-tourism, respectively. When viewed in conjunction with the aforementioned characteristics of quality tourism, urban tourism becomes the milieu or environment for inbound Gulf tourism in general, and Dubai’s in particular.

Background

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federation consisting of seven emirates located on the Arabian Gulf: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras Al-Khaimah, Umm Al-Quwain, Ajman and Fujairah. The federal capital is Abu Dhabi, and the second most important city of the federation is Dubai.

The main cities and towns of each emirate are all on the southern shores of the Arabian Gulf except for Fujairah, which is a coastal strip on the Gulf of Oman outside the Strait of Hormuz. The United Arab Emirates has borders with Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Oman. The land area of the United Arab Emirates is 77,700 square kilometers (30,013 square miles) (*UAEU Guidebook*, 1996, 13). The country’s population is 2.377 million (1995 census).

As far as the authors can determine, there are no published academic studies that recount the history of tourism in the United Arab Emirates. The available sources--World Tourism Organization (WTO) and *Economist*

Intelligence Unit reports -- describe the current status only. It is assumed that modern tourism as defined by the World Tourism Organization (N. D., 2) started only in the 1980s, two decades after the discovery of oil in the country and following the rapid construction of the country’s modern infrastructure. Before then, only traders and foreign commissars came to this part of Arabia.

Today, the United Arab Emirates is emerging as a promising tourist destination for the region and the world. It has recreational and commercial facilities offering almost tax-free products, and it is endowed with clean beaches and has historical and archaeological sites. The combination of these attractions, in addition to the country's advanced network of roads, ports and airports, the availability of modern hotels and resorts and the prevalence of security, make the country an attractive choice for many tourists.

In addition, many sports activities (including international tournaments) are regularly organized in the country, primarily in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, which provide an incentive for tourism. They include traditional sports such as camel-and horseracing, and modern sports, such as boat racing, golf, snooker, chess, bowling, soccer, basketball and volleyball.

Other important incentives to the tourism industry in the United Arab Emirates are the low tariffs imposed on imported goods and the availability of goods from throughout the world, the environment-friendly beaches and desert dunes favored by many tourists, the lack of restrictions on importing and exporting hard currencies and the geographic location of this country that is situated between Europe and the Far East (*International Tourism Reports*, 1993).

The Emirate of Dubai

As mentioned earlier, Dubai is the second city in the United Arab Emirates in terms of population, with a total of 674,101 (1995 census). The United Arab Emirates has witnessed remarkable and swift economic development since its federation was enacted in 1971. Oil has been a major asset in this quick development, but not the only one. From the beginning, trade and commerce for an emirate such as Dubai have been as vital as have been oil revenues. The certainty of declining oil revenues has set the leaders of the country on an ambitious path to place the United Arab Emirates on the international tourism map. The risks taken have proven to be very successful and profitable. The United Arab Emirates, by looking at new and diverse ways to bring in outside investments and revenues, has successfully started to establish trade and tourism as revenue for oil substitutes.

The government of Dubai has deliberately sought to create an environment that is well ordered without being unduly restrictive. As a result, Dubai offers business executives operating conditions that are among the most liberal and attractive in the region. Dubai ranks as one of the world's leading trading centers and gateway to a market of more than one billion people in the Gulf States, Middle East, East Africa, Asian subcontinent and a few former Soviet republics. Dubai is committed to liberal, free-market policies and to the creation of a business environment that is conducive to commercial activity.

Dubai's Tourism Infrastructure

Dubai International Airport (DIA) is linked to most European and Asian capitals with direct daily flights. About 80 international and regional airlines take advantage of Dubai's "open skies" policy and operate to and from Dubai International Airport (DIA) to more than 112 international destinations, making this one of the Middle East's busiest airports.

To meet future expansion of inbound tourism, Dubai's government has announced plans to expand and to modernize the airport before the end of the century, which would make DIA one of the most modern airports in the world.

Demand for Dubai International Airport is evident from statistics: in 1993, 50 airlines used the airport, compared with 80 airlines in 1996, an increase of 37.5 percent in just three years. The number of passengers using Dubai International Airport in 1990 was 5.1 million. In 1992, the number rose to 5.4 million. In 1994, 6.2 million passengers used this airport, and the number again rose to 7.1 million in 1995. The new airport is expected to accommodate up to 12 million passengers per year, as well as 750,000 tons of cargo (*Al Bayan Daily*, March 21, 96).

Port Rashid is Dubai's main maritime gate. It has modern facilities and provides efficient handling of cargo. Another commercial port is that of the Jabal Ali Free Zone (*Emirates Today*, June 1995).

In 1997, the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing launched a drive to put Dubai on the cruise liners' world map. The Queen Elizabeth II and the Crystal Symphony, two of the world's most prestigious cruise ships, called on Dubai in April 1997. Fifteen other cruise liners are expected to visit Dubai during 1997 (Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, 1997).

Dubai's fast-growing airline, Emirates Airlines, plays a major role in the emirate's tourism industry. Launched in 1985 by the Government of Dubai, the airline prides itself on a fleet of modern aircraft, a growing network of regional and international destinations with convenient connections to North America and a high level of in-flight service.

By the end of 1996, Emirates will service 42 destinations in the Middle East, Europe, Africa, West Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, the Pacific Rim and Australia. Since its inception in 1985, Emirates has won more than 100 international awards that include "Airline of the Year 1994," voted by 40,000 readers of the UK-based *Executive Travel* magazine and "Cargo Airline of the Year 1004/5" by readers of *Air Cargo News* (Emirates External Relations, N. D.).

Dubai's hotel industry has witnessed huge growth during the last decade. Dubai had only

42 hotels in 1982 (*International Tourism Reports*, 1993, p. 40), compared with 233 hotels in 1996. Between 1995 and 1996 alone, there was an increase of 4.5 percent (*Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing*, April 14, 1997). Many of the world's best-known hotel chains have properties in Dubai, including the Hyatt Regency, the Ritz-Carlton, Intercontinental Hotels, ITT Sheraton and Hilton International.

Five-star hotels comprise 11 percent of the total properties. Four-star (11 percent) and three-star (22 percent) hotels also cater to budget-minded tourists. The remaining hotels constitute the highest percentage (58 percent). Consistent with UAE national tourist statistics, the largest block of tourists visiting Dubai were Europeans (35.5 percent) (*Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing*, April 14, 1997). Hotel revenues during 1996 increased by 17.9 percent over 1995, when profits were estimated at \$400 million (Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, April 14, 1997 and *Al Hyatt Daily*, September 21, 1996).

Dubai has been named the world's top conference venue for the second year in a row at the 1997 "Business Travel World" awards in London in March 1997. The exhibition sector is believed to contribute UAE Dirhams 1.5 billion to the emirate's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Conference and exhibition facilities include the newly opened Dubai International Congress Centre, with its 1,650-seat multi-purpose auditorium, and the fully equipped conference facilities of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry and of the leading Dubai hotels, all of which also offer first-class banqueting arrangements (*DTCM News*, January 1996).

The main exhibition facility in Dubai, considered to be one of the best in the region, is the Dubai World Trade Centre's seven interconnected exhibition halls (33,000 gross square meters) built to international standards. These exhibition facilities are almost fully reserved during the year by local and international exhibitors (Dubai World Trade Centre, 1996). During 1996, the Dubai World Trade Centre hosted 44 exhibitions, attracting about one million visitors (Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, N. D.).

The Emirate of Dubai has, in recent years, earned a deserved reputation as a leading sports center in the Gulf. First-class sports available to tourists include golf, swimming, diving, wind-surfing, sailing, fishing, tennis, squash, snooker, table-tennis, shooting, archery, go-carting, ice-skating and even sand-skiing. Moreover, international powerboat racing as well as car-racing competitions are regularly staged in Dubai. Traditional sports such as horseback riding and camel racing are also available.

In the sport of golf, Dubai is the pioneer in the Middle East with championship-standard grass courses. Two golf clubs have both 18-hole and nine-hole courses, and a third club has a nine-hole course. Emirates Golf Club hosts the annual Professional Golf Association (PGA)

Desert Classic, which attracts many of the world's top players (*Destination Dubai*, 1995).

In addition to Dubai's sports clubs, hotels and public beaches, visitors also can enjoy Dubai's parks for picnics, relaxation or beach sports. Dubai has several excellent parks throughout the city, which are equipped with full amenities, including restrooms, canteens and picnic tables.

Finally, Dubai has to its advantage a modern network of roads and highways, government and private health services, reliable water and electricity supplies, a relatively crime-free environment, a tolerant and liberal society and, last but not least, almost year-round sunshine.

Dubai's reputation as a commercial center is one of its biggest attractions. As an open port with low import duties, Dubai's retail prices are very competitive, and the variety of products available matches that of any international city. Freed from taxes imposed elsewhere, many top brand-name products are cheaper in Dubai than in their countries of origin. Dubai has both traditional "souks" and ultra-modern shopping malls catering for all shopping needs (*Destination Dubai*, 1995).

For many tourists, the shopping experience in Dubai is unsurpassed. Whether the visitor seeks Persian carpets or modern electronic products, Indian textiles or European fashions, household goods or accessories, gold or silver, all is available in Dubai and in neighboring Sharjah at reasonable prices. A study by the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry ranks Dubai as one of the world's top-three gold-trading centers, along with Zurich and London (Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, 1996). The ancient Eastern art of bargaining is an added incentive, especially in the old souks. Traders from the Gulf, the Indian subcontinent, Iran and other countries all vie for a share of this lucrative market.

The "Dubai Shopping Festival" is a shopping extravaganza that was launched in 1996 in which participating outlets attracted overseas and regional customers by offering big discounts on top-quality goods. The second festival, held in March 1997, also featured 122 major cultural, entertainment, art, sports, travel and other events. As part of the promotions, more than 100 Lexus cars and 40 kilograms of gold were given away as raffle prizes during the festival as part of the promotions. The chairman of the festival-organizing committee saw the event as "a dedication of Dubai as a major tourist destination in the region" (*Al Khaleej Daily*, March 21, 1997, p. 31).

Dubai has many highly professional inbound tour operators who offer a range of services both for individual tourists and the travel trade. The major operators are well equipped to provide a full-destination management service covering hotel bookings, airport transfers, ground

transport and a daily program of tours and activities with multilingual guides.

All the leading inbound tour operators and some smaller specialty companies offer tours ranging from a couple of hours to several days that are devoted to special-interest activities, sightseeing or exploring neighboring emirates (*Destination Dubai, 1995*).

Goals and Objectives

The Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM) is the primary organization promoting Dubai regionally and internationally as a viable commercial and tourist destination. Thus, the DTCM provides an excellent model of a young national tourism promotion organization in the Middle East. This case study presents the experience of Dubai in developing its tourism sector during the past decade. Despite its short history, tourism in Dubai has witnessed a rapid and solid growth during the 1990s. This case study outlines the steps taken for the integrated development of the tourism sector in Dubai and its most apparent characteristics and outcomes.

The Emirate of Dubai led the other emirates in setting the framework for tourism planning and development by establishing an independent department that is responsible for promoting tourism and commerce in the emirate. The decision to establish this department was a result of a 1988 survey that investigated international awareness of Dubai. The survey questioned several prominent international corporations and businessmen from selected industrialized countries that maintain economic and commercial ties with the emirate. The results of the survey indicated that the promotional campaigns for Dubai carried out before 1988 were not effective (Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, 1996).

In the light of the survey results, it was considered essential to prepare a strategic plan to promote Dubai internationally. This plan would integrate the existing promotional efforts under one organization: the Dubai Commerce and Tourism Promotion Board (DCTPB). This board was established by decree in 1989 as a government body with responsibility for the promotion of Dubai as a major international center for business and tourism. In 1997, the DCTPB became a government department and was renamed, The Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM).

The Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing is chaired by Dubai's Crown Prince, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. The department's executive director is Mr. Khaled bin Sulayem. The department also has an advisory board, which includes local government officials and prominent businessmen and which is an effective arrangement to ensure collaboration between the government and the private sector.

The Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing has a head office in Dubai and 12

overseas offices in key cities around the world. The Dubai head office is organized into four divisions: 1) Dubai Promotions Division; 2) Overseas Promotions Division; 3) Information and Media Division, and 4) Finance and Administration Division. The head office sets the overall plan, including the budget, in consultation with the overseas offices and incorporates their suggestions, proposals and special projects within its plan.

The objectives of the DTCM were defined as: (1) supporting and contributing to the Dubai government's efforts to ensure stable, long-term growth and development by promoting economic diversification; (2) creating new opportunities for the Dubai business community by attracting international companies to trade with the emirate and to establish regional offices, distribution centers and manufacturing facilities; (3) contributing to the Dubai hotel industry and travel sector by attracting tourists, incentive groups, exhibition and conference delegates and business visitors; (4) promoting awareness of Dubai and its commercial and tourist attractions by projecting a clear, consistent and persuasive message to target audiences internationally and by generating positive media coverage around the world; (5) ensuring optimum cost-effectiveness in Dubai's international promotion through close collaboration and coordination with other public- and private-sector organizations in the emirate (Corporate Brochure, N.D.).

Strategic Tactics and Techniques

First, the Dubai promotions division organized about 250 group and individual visits to Dubai annually; sponsored familiarization visits for influential overseas commerce-and-tourism decision-makers and media; coordinated logistics, including flights, accommodation, visas, ground transportation, etc.; organized visit programs, covering briefings, interviews, facility visits, tours, hospitality, etc.; provided assistance to nonsponsored visiting delegations; supported the sponsorship of seminars, conferences and workshops held in Dubai to enhance Dubai's international reputation as a center for such events; participated in the preparation, organization and coordination of international conferences held in Dubai; and provided support for selected projects organized by other Dubai parties, including major sporting and cultural events.

Moreover, the promotions division provided assistance to exhibitors and visitors to trade fairs and conferences through operation of permanent information booths at the Dubai World Trade Centre; organized temporary information booths at other major-event venues; supervised a 24-hour operation of the "Welcome Bureau" at Dubai International Airport; gave practical assistance to visitors on immigration procedures, hotel reservations, etc.; and provided commercial and tourism information on Dubai, including distribution of brochures published by the department and by hotels operating in the emirate.

Second, the overseas promotions division organized participation in more than 30 international exhibitions annually; coordinated Dubai delegations at major fairs and participation in smaller events; acted as the "umbrella" organization for up to 30 hotels and travel-related

organizations at leading tourism-and-incentive fairs; supervised joint participation with public- and private-sector organizations in selected commerce exhibitions; and carried out the planning and coordination of booth design and construction, co-participant liaison, logistics, media interviews, special attractions, etc.; designed promotional initiatives implemented by DTCM overseas offices in their respective markets; and organized Dubai business presentations and seminars with overseas chambers of commerce and other economic organizations.

This division also prepared marketing visits to important potential investors, tour operators, etc.; planned joint tourism road show promotions with Dubai and overseas partners; provided support for Dubai organizations' overseas marketing activities; coordinated for Dubai VIP economic missions to key overseas markets; organized mission programs, meetings, logistics, delegate liaison, etc., for Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing executive missions to new markets not covered by the overseas office network; and arranged Dubai private-sector trade missions to selected export and re-export markets.

Third, the information and media division prepared and disseminated news and information about Dubai in the form of news releases, feature articles, scripts, speeches, brochure texts, etc.; produced DTCM periodicals, including *Enterprise Dubaz Dubai Update*, *Dubai Travel & Tourism News and Bulletin Board*; compiled media kits in support of overseas promotions; published the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing's activities locally through media relations within the United Arab Emirates; planned and implemented an international advertising campaign in selected influential publications worldwide; publicized Dubai's attractions through TV and press advertisements in the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council market, including advertising with other Dubai establishments; and prepared and distributed a comprehensive range of brochures, guides and leaflets publicizing Dubai's commerce and tourism attractions in more than 13 languages.

In addition, the information and media division produced promotional videos that covered commerce and tourism; operated a photographic library; carried out the processing of local and international inquiries by the "One-Stop Information Centre"; collected, compiled and retrieved comprehensive information about Dubai's economy, facilities, regulations and statistics; maintained business contact lists, mailing lists, etc.; monitored regulations and practices affecting business and tourism in Dubai and throughout the region, including preparation and distribution of a *Board Brief* newsletter; provided advice and assistance in the interpretation of regulations, including related research and government liaison and plans; and supervised research surveys and special projects.

The Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing also planned a carefully targeted advertising plan formulated on a regional and global basis in consultation with the overseas offices. In this plan, major tourism and commerce trade publications were selected, and

advertising was placed in each particular region's language. Moreover, major Gulf, Pan-Arab, European Union and international publications were selected for Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing advertising (Corporate Brochure, N. D.)

Results Achieved

Success in tourism promotion cannot be readily measured or quantified. It may be inaccurate to attribute higher inbound tourism, for example, to only one factor such as the DTCM promotion. Other UAE organizations with an international presence, such as Emirates Airlines, may have played a considerable role in promoting Dubai. The contribution of the private sector, i.e., the hotels, tour operators, etc., in the internal and external promotional effort is another factor to consider, albeit on a much smaller scale. Nevertheless, while the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing cannot measure for itself the extent of its success or failure, local hotels, tour operators, exhibitors and others say they have benefited from the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing activities because business has been generated by the promotional programs.

It is possible to summarize some of these benefits from the promotional activities of the DTCM. Locally, there was a high demand from Dubai companies seeking DTCM exhibition space. Also, there was high demand for Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing publications both from within Dubai and overseas. The Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing was successful in generating positive media coverage for Dubai. Moreover, the response to the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing advertisements has been high, with a large number of coupon responses.

Abroad, the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing has won many global tourism awards from prestigious bodies. It also has won many awards in international exhibitions for the high quality of its display design and its publications. The Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing's campaigns have influenced many overseas companies to invest in Dubai or to locate their regional headquarters there. Moreover, the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing has succeeded in persuading major tour operators in the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and elsewhere to include Dubai in their travel catalogues.

During the 1990s, tourism has emerged as one of the fastest-growing industries in Dubai. According to the executive director of the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, tourism's contribution to Dubai's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is estimated at 13 percent (*Al Eqtisadi Weekly*, Nov. 16, 1996), a ten-fold increase in one decade. The number of tourists who visit Dubai each year is rapidly increasing. The number of hotel guests recorded in Dubai during 1996 totaled 1,767, an increase of 10.4 percent compared with 1995. The Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing attributes part of this success to its promotional campaigns (Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, April 14, 1997).

In the recent “incentive house survey” conducted by *Conference and Incentive Travel* magazine, Dubai rated among the world’s top destinations that have strong “brands,” together with Hong Kong, Australia, South Africa, Monte Carlo and France. According to *Conference and Incentive Travel*, these destinations marketed themselves aggressively and effectively (*Conference and Travel Incentive*, May 1996, p. 18).

As mentioned earlier, the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing produced several publications (with updates), including *Dubai Business Handbook*, *Destination Dubai*, *Reflections of Dubai* (a photographic book), *Dubai: The New Holiday Experience* and *Dubai*. These materials were published in 11 languages, including English, French, German, Swedish, Norwegian and Arabic. These high-quality publications were used internally and externally to promote Dubai. By the end of 1996, the DTCM had distributed more than 500,000 brochures, leaflets, etc., worldwide.

Also, the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing produced a 10-minute promotional video in 1997 to market Dubai’s tourist attractions internationally. Copies were distributed to TV stations and the international travel trade via the department’s overseas offices, at exhibitions and through direct mail. Moreover, the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing arranged for South African media coverage of Dubai as a result of an invitation extended to a South African TV crew to visit Dubai (*Al Eqtisadi Weekly*, November 16, 1996). In December 1994, the department invited a crew from N-TV, a German news channel with more than 6 million viewers, to film a four-part program about Dubai. On that occasion, the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing drafted an itinerary for the crew that included filming the Jabal Ali Free Zone, Port Rashid, the Dubai International Airport, Emirates Airlines, Dubai Dry-docks and Dubai City (*Emirates Today*, Feb. 1995).

During 1995, the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing participated in 32 international trade fairs as compared to 26 in 1994. Further, about 240 inward missions were organized or assisted by the department in 1995 including program arrangements, tours, interviews, hospitality and briefings. Moreover, the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing increased its cooperation with TV crews and other media in general during 1995 and 1996 (Trade and Industry, February, 1996). The board also extended its collaboration with other Dubai bodies in organizing and supporting major local events such as the “Emirates International Forum,” “Dubai ‘95 Air Show” and the “Dubai Desert Classic (Trade and Industry, February 1996) as well as the “Dubai Shopping Festivals ‘96 and ‘97.”

The Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing also joined the information superhighway in 1995 by launching its own Web site as part of its information and promotion services. The URL for the site is <<http://www.dctpb.gov.ae/detpb/tourismItourism.html>>. The

site contains useful categorical information about Dubai such as history, geography, climate, population, language, government, international relations, economic policies and statistics. The site also has pages entitled: information, business, tourism, news update and links to other United Arab Emirates sites (Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, 1997).

The DTCM sponsored a comprehensive research study entitled “The Dubai Visitor Survey 1995/96” that highlighted the substantial and growing importance of Dubai’s travel-and-tourism sector. This study was compiled from more than 1,600 face-to-face interviews with individual tourists, business visitors and shoppers; 250 telephone interviews with residents of the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council countries, and 150 executive-level interviews with travel trade professionals in Dubai and overseas.

Data from the study includes a profile of visitors to Dubai and their attitudes, an assessment of the quality of the tourist experience in Dubai, changes since an earlier survey conducted in 1992/93, tourism industry developments, positioning of Dubai in the world market, forecasts of visitor numbers in the medium and long-term and contribution of visitors to Dubai’s Gross Domestic Product.

The results of the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing’s first survey indicated a high degree of satisfaction with Dubai as a tourist destination. United Kingdom visitors, for example, said that the climate (13 percent), friendliness (11 percent), people (11 percent), cleanliness (9 percent) and safety (9 percent) were thought to be Dubai’s best features. Top activities preferred by United Kingdom visitors during their stay included eating out, relaxing, lying on the beach or by the pool, playing golf and going to the disco (*International Tourism Reports*, 1993, p. 49).

Dubai was named the “Gold Award Winner” as Top Middle East Destination at the 1996 World Travel Awards presentation ceremony held in Las Vegas June 6, 1997. This honor tops two successive silver awards in this category in 1994 and 1995 and underlines the destination’s growing reputation in international tourism. The “World Travel Awards,” organized by *Tour and Travel News USA* and *Travel Trade Gazette Worldwide*, are based on a survey of about 200,000 travel professionals in 50 countries throughout the world.

In addition, for the third year running, the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing took the silver award as “Top Middle East Tourist and Convention Bureau.”

Khaled bin Sulayem, chief executive of the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, described the awards as “among the highest accolades in tourism.” He added, “This type of recognition from the international travel trade is an important yardstick for measuring our performance.” Earlier, the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing won the British-Chartered Institute of Marketing Travel Industry Group’s 1996 award for exhibition stand

design.

In the 1996 *Business Travel World* awards that were announced in London in March, Dubai was named as the world's best conference venue. Sulayem, of the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, said upon receiving the award: "This honor reflects the fact that Dubai combines the facilities and services of a major international business center with the attractions of a top tourist destination." He also noted that the growing international recognition of Dubai among business travel professionals complemented the emirate's success in leisure tourism (Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, January, 1996).

In addition to being named as top conference venue, Dubai took four other honors at the awards ceremony. For the second consecutive year, Hatta Fort Hotel, which is located near the small village of Hatta in the Emirate of Dubai, was named as the "Best Incentive Venue" in the Middle East. The Forte Grand Dubai was named "Best Airport Hotel" in a worldwide poll conducted by Britain's *Executive Travel* magazine, as well as one of two runners-up in the "Best Hotel-Middle East" category, along with the Inter-Continental Dubai. The Holiday Inn Crown Plaza Dubai was runner-up in two categories: "Best Conference Hotel" and "Best New Hotel." (Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, January 1996 and July 1997).

The other awards were for "Best International Airport" (Dubai International Airport), "Best Middle East Business Airline" (Emirates Airlines) and "Best Middle East Hotels Group" (Hilton International).

Conclusion

Several obstacles face tourism development and promotion in Dubai. The following are among the most obvious ones, but do not constitute a complete inventory:

1) Stability is a main consideration for tourism planners everywhere. Dubai is situated in an area known for its political instability, with two regional powers (Iran and Iraq) involved in wars during the 1980s and 1990s. The cautious and pragmatic policies of the UAE and Dubai toward regional developments have kept the country unharmed directly, despite the negative effects of wars on regional economies in general. Continued peace in the region is a condition for the continued growth of inbound tourism.

2) Seasonality is another obstacle for tourism development in Dubai. The "different kind" of holiday destination for which Dubai is trying to position itself in the minds of its potential visitors focuses partly on the efforts made by this emirate to use what some may consider a primary disadvantage to its tourism promotion efforts, i.e., its seasonality. Traditionally, visitors and residents stay away from the Gulf during the summer months when temperatures can reach above 50. C (mid-130s Fahrenheit). Therefore, during June, July and August, most of the tourism facilities in Dubai as well as throughout the United Arab Emirates become semi-deserted.

In 1997, the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing announced a scheme to encourage tourists to stay in Dubai during the off-season period by offering considerable discounts on accommodation charges in participating hotels and furnished apartments. Dubai's commitment to provide excellent commercial and tourism services and attractions that stand out as different and unique throughout the year is obvious. It remains to be seen whether these efforts will bear fruit.

3) Another problem may be the local attitudes of UAE nationals toward tourism. Despite the obvious economic benefits that tourism brings to a small destination such as Dubai, there are those who object to the changes that tourism and commerce have brought to the indigenous society. It is a Muslim society, and many nationals object to the liberal lifestyle of foreigners, both visitors and expatriate workers. Despite some measures taken by the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing to educate visitors about local customs and traditions, more is needed to sensitize tourists about local expectations.

4) Although Dubai offers many commercial goods at very competitive prices, Dubai's overall cost as a destination is relatively high. According to *Economist Intelligence Unit*, "The cost of a holiday in the UAE is high compared with other destinations in the region such as Egypt or Turkey... and hotel rates in Dubai are the highest in the country" (*International Tourism Reports*, 1993, p. 37). Certainly, the profile of visitors that Dubai wishes to cultivate is that of a high socio-economic stratum. As a free-market economy and a regional trade center, Dubai has no government interference with pricing, but efforts should be made to encourage lower-priced accommodations in the emirate.

5) Fears also are voiced concerning supply exceeding demand in Dubai, especially with the current rapid expansion in the hospitality sector in particular. Others believe that the Dubai market has traditionally sustained growth and that more hotel rooms are needed in Dubai to meet the projected growth to the year 2000.

6) One of the drawbacks to tourism promotion in Dubai is lack of a uniform message directed to all audiences, regardless of their cultural or linguistic differences. According to Roth (1982), "Similes and metaphors that are familiar in one language, or in the thought process of a language, may not be familiar in another." As a result, he continues, "Translations are an annoying and potentially damaging international communications problem." One Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing advertising campaign is a case in point. The campaign had a slogan that read, "Decide On Dubai." Translated into Arabic, the slogan was not faithfully reproduced but rather was literally replicated as "Qarrir ala Dubai," an incorrect and unusual expression in classical Arabic.

7) Another shortcoming related to tourism promotion is market segmentation. Promoting Dubai alone as a destination, excluding or making only passing reference to other UAE emirates, is a shortsighted promotional strategy. Dubai's strengthening of its position as a leading regional destination for inbound tourism and commerce requires looking at the country as one destination with Dubai as the main product or star attraction, but with other sites as well. There is certainly a great potential for "cultural tourism" in neighboring Sharjah and Abu Dhabi and for eco-tourism in Fujairah, for example. These additional "features" can enhance the value of Dubai as a main tourist product in Dubai's external promotions.

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**Attracting Tourists to a New Lebanon
A Two-Phase Plan**

Ali Kanso, Emerson College

**Abdul Karim Sinno, Clarke College
United States**

Executive Summary

This case study investigates the role of public relations in rebuilding tourism in Lebanon after a 17-year civil war (1975-1991). For years, tourism was a major component of the Lebanese national economy but the war destroyed the image of peaceful Lebanon and left the economy destitute. The study tracks the government's efforts to revive tourism in the country, evaluates public relations strategies and tactics used to convince tourists to visit Lebanon and presents a two-phase plan that helps eliminate tourists' negative impressions and establishes long term relationships between the Lebanese government and potential tourists.

In preparing carefully planned activities that recognize the interests of both the Lebanese government and various publics concerned with tourism, the public relations program highlights basic components of the two-way symmetric model as it relates to tourism in Lebanon. It also includes the formation of a highly specialized committee that involves representatives from the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Emigrants, the World Lebanese Cultural Union and the public sector.

The Problem

Most progressive and developing countries are now interested in tourism. From early times, travel has held a fascination for mankind. The urge to explore new places and seek a change of experience and environment has been evident. Today, rapid development in transportation and communication has made the whole globe one neighborhood and travel has become possible for hundreds of millions of people.

The number of travelers crossing national frontiers grew from 144 million in 1965 to 455 million by early 1990. Their spending jumped from \$103 billion in 1980 to \$300 billion in 1993. Together with domestically-generated tourism, these numbers translate into solid shares of production and trade for many economies (Vitalis, 1995; Bridges, 1993).

Including domestic and international travel, tourism is the world's largest industry. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), tourism in 1995 generated \$3.4 trillion in gross output worldwide. By 2005, this figure is expected to reach \$7.2 trillion (Tourism, 1996). In 1995, the WTTC estimated that travel and tourism would directly and indirectly yield 212 million jobs globally --10.6 percent of the total work force, or nearly one in every nine jobs. In the next eight years, the industry is expected to add 93 million new jobs, or 26,000 new jobs every day (Tourism, 1996).

Lebanon, which often was described as the “Switzerland of the Middle East,” dropped from the list of highly visited countries after 1975. The 17-year civil war, along with military invasions, claimed about 150,000 lives, brought the country’s economy to the edge of collapse and robbed Lebanon of its prized reputation as the region’s quintessential vacation spot.

The Lebanese government is now preoccupied with rebuilding the country through a rehabilitation, recovery and development plan. While such efforts may restructure the country’s infrastructure and modernize the economy, planned public relations activities to revamp tarnished images of tourism and convince tourists to visit Lebanon have been slow to develop. Such activities have been confined to publicity work based on the government perception of tourists’ wants and needs. In fact, the efforts of the government have been to seek a reactive solution to the problem.

This case study investigates the status of tourism in Lebanon, tracks government’s efforts to revive tourism in the country and presents a two-phase plan the Lebanese government could implement to help rectify the situation. The authors believe that the current stable situation provides a real opportunity for an effective public relations program. The U. S. government decision to lift a 10-year-old ban on travel to Lebanon last July is considered a vote of confidence in Lebanon’s return to stability (Kramer, 1997).

To fully understand the significance of public relations in restoring tourism in Lebanon, it is imperative to address the following: (1) characteristics of the Lebanese society; (2) the tourism movement before and after the civil war; (3) publics affected by deteriorated tourism; (4) damage that crippled the economy; and (5) government actions to rebuild the country and revive tourism. The analysis is based on review of government activities, published literature and site visits by one of the authors. The terms “Lebanese government” and the “Ministry of Tourism”. will be used interchangeably in this analysis, since the latter does not operate independently from the former.

Background

The Lebanese Republic is one of the smallest nations in the world. It borders Syria on the north and east, Israel on the south. Lebanon sits on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea with an area of 10,452 square kilometers and a population of 3.6 million. Muslims and Christians represent the two dominant religious groups.

Lebanon is a multinational, multiracial and multilingual society. Though Arabic is the official language, streets in Lebanon are a babel of tongues --Armenian, English, French, German, Japanese and Kurdish. Lebanon’s place in history is assured for the country has witnessed many civilizations and conquests. One can easily find traces of the Egyptians,

Phoenicians, Persians, Babylonians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Mamluks, Crusaders, Ottoman Turks, French and others.

Lebanon adopts a liberal policy in commercial, financial and fiscal activities. Such a policy, until the war, gave Lebanon a distinctive role in the Middle East (Lebanon, 1979). Beirut, the capital, was a center of publishing, banking, trade and industry. From that success came the funds for everything else: the social life, the leisurely pace and the fascination with food and fashion (Tracy, Lunde, Hoye, Mullin, & Cooley, 1982). Lebanon long led the Arab world in literacy, the proportion of university graduates to population, the freedom of publications and other indicators of high cultural standards.

Few countries enjoy the climate or scenic variety of Lebanon. Capsule descriptions of this country usually label its climate “temperate,” with 200 days of sunshine, moderate rainfall, a warm “cold” season, and pleasant “hot” months. The country’s weather satisfies residents and guests alike. If the coastal towns get too hot or humid for them, although the temperature rarely exceeds 32 Celsius (90 degrees Fahrenheit), a half-hour drive eastward gets them into the invigorating coolness of Mount Lebanon, and another half-hour drive into the refreshing dryness of the inland plain--the Bekaa (Lebanon, 1979).

These factors all made Lebanon an attractive vacation spot despite injustice, corruption and poverty below the surface (Tracy, Lunde, Hoye, Mullin, & Cooley, 1982). In 1974, just three months before the outbreak of war, about one and a half million tourists visited Lebanon. Almost two fifths of the tourists were Arabs. The rest were from the United States, Europe, Australia and other countries. These figures did not include the neighboring Syrians (over one and a half million) who entered Lebanon either for a short visit to shop or work (Madi, 1981).

A comparison of 1964 and 1974 figures, based on official records, indicates that the number of visitors increased three times (from 472,176 to 1,449,940 visitors) and the tourism contribution to the gross national product doubled in 10 years (from 9.7 percent to 19.4 percent). Furthermore, tourism, combined with other service sectors, contributed 70 percent to the gross national product (Madi, 1981).

As a result, Lebanon witnessed a growth in tourism related facilities. For example, between 1963 and 1973, the number of hotels grew from 62 to 99 hotels in Beirut and from 188 to 237 hotels in Mount Lebanon. One third of these facilities were classified as three- or four-star hotels. The number of restaurants, coffee houses, night clubs, theaters and other entertainment places also grew but not at the same accelerated pace (Madi, 1981).

Like any other business, tourism needed planners to map out strategies and tactics. The Lebanese government established the National Council of Tourism in Lebanon (NCTL) -- an

organization within the Ministry of Tourism--to promote tourism, build connections with various international travel agencies and publish and distribute print materials such as guidebooks, maps, posters and brochures (Madi, 1981). The Council had offices in major Arab and Western cities and coordinated its efforts with Lebanese embassies to achieve two main goals: enticing more tourists to visit Lebanon and convincing them to extend their stay.

The war had a detrimental impact on every sector in the tourism industry. Just a month after the outbreak of war, travelers' visits to historic and tourist sites declined 36 percent compared to figures published in a previous year during the same period (Madi, 1981). Although the very first round of the war was labeled "intermittent skirmishes," the impact on the economy was clear. Tourists' concern over safety presented the early signal of painful economic consequences.

The 17 years of violence hit most Lebanese towns and cities, claiming about 150,000 lives, rendering many more homeless, and bringing the country's economy to the brink of collapse (Kramer, 1997). The capital, Beirut, received the largest share of destruction. Warring factions turned Beirut's downtown and hotel district into a battleground where fighters used hotels and towers for shelling and sniping. The fierce fighting in these areas led Western media to label it "Hotels' Battle."

At the end of 1977, still in the early stage of the war, large hotels in Beirut lost 1,652 rooms as a result of destruction (i.e. 30 percent of their full capacity). Small hotels in Beirut's downtown suffered more damages--about 83 percent of their rooms were destroyed. It is worth noting that the occupancy rate declined from 86 percent in July 1974 to 36 percent in July 1977 even though there were fewer rooms. The business in surviving hotels was much more gloomy in subsequent years. The most recent published estimates in 1978 show that about 17,000 hotel and restaurant employees -- 71 percent of the work force -- lost their jobs (Madi, 1981). The losses incurred by the hotel and restaurant industry generated adverse effects on other industries that had benefited from tourism in the past (i.e. banks, insurance companies, advertising agencies and travel offices).

As fighting intensified in the 1980s and early 1990s, the tourism industry became "clinically dead." Facilities were destroyed, seriously damaged or closed. The war fostered a state of complete lawlessness where thuggery was practiced by combatants and non-combatants alike. While historic sites did not sustain structural damages, valuable monuments and artifacts were looted and sold in the international market. (The Lebanese government is actively seeking to regain the stolen items through diplomatic and other channels.)

Although Lebanese leaders signed the Ta'if Accord in 1990 -- the blueprint for national reconciliation -- violence continued to breed more human disasters and cause more damage to

the already impaired economy. The war tragedy did not hit only institutions and claim lives it also forced hundreds of thousands of survivors to emigrate and join relatives in the United States, Canada, Europe, Africa, Australia, Latin America and the Arab Gulf.

The war not only prevented Lebanon from pursuing an aggressive tourism policy that meets the ever-changing needs of the international tourist, but also created new problems that still require immediate attention. Among these problems are:

1. A tourism movement has shifted from Lebanon to Cyprus, Greece, Turkey, Egypt, and Israel. These countries now provide adequate facilities and updated services that make the tourist experience a memorable one.
2. Several European countries have been offering their citizens various incentives to promote national and local tourism. Such a competitive move, undoubtedly, has a negative impact on economies that depend on international tourism.
3. High cost of lodging in Lebanon is a barrier for potential tourists who can only afford reasonable cost.
4. Deteriorated roads and intermittent and unreliable water and electricity supplies have discouraged many Lebanese entrepreneurs from investing their money in tourism related projects.
5. Tourists' impressions of devastated towns, cities and war crimes are still strong.
6. Lack of genuine public relations and promotion efforts to change negative impressions of Lebanon remains obvious.
7. Tension between Israel and the rest of the Arab countries keeps the situation vulnerable in South Lebanon. This, in turn, makes travel to Lebanon undesirable.

These problems, coupled with a high inflation rate that reached 100 percent in 1992 and 9.5 percent in 1996 (EDC, 1997) and a budget deficit that reached 55.5 percent in the first 10 months of 1997 (Business Reports, 1997), serve as stumbling blocks to tourism revival.

Strategic Tactics and Techniques

Lebanon's recovery requires drastic and rapid actions. The government is currently implementing a 10-year plan labeled "Horizon 2002" to bring the country back on its feet. If all goes as planned, the program will be completed in 2002 at a total cost of some \$13 billion, with the private sector financing further projects at an additional cost of \$16 billion (Meadows, 1994).

The first three years of Lebanon's planned rebirth are summarized in a document titled, "The National Emergency Reconstruction Program." The estimated cost of the first phase emergency program aimed at rehabilitating the country is \$2.8 billion --about half in the form of grants, soft loans and commercial loans already in the bank and available for allocation and disbursement (Meadows, 1994). Upon the completion of the rehabilitation phase, a recovery

phase will begin and last another three years to ensure that economic and social distortions induced by the war are progressively addressed. Next comes the formal development phase, when Lebanon will have regained its ability to develop and modernize its economy without extraordinary external assistance.

In fact, basic services such as water, electricity and telecommunications, are well on their way back (Kramer, 1997). Patching up roads has been a highly visible activity in the last four years. So far, financing has flowed from major Arab sources, notably Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD). Major non-Arab contributors have included the World Bank, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the European Union and some of its member states (Meadows, 1994).

Results Achieved

The Lebanese government's efforts to revitalize tourism have not been separated from the Horizon 2002 plan for rehabilitation, recovery and development. According to the Minister of Tourism Nicolas Fatoosh (1994), the Ministry conducted the following activities in 1993 and 1994:

1. Reopened Jeita grotto after it was equipped with modern facilities. The grotto used to welcome tens of thousands of visitors a year.
2. Subcontracted Lebanese companies to build eight swimming pools on the seashore and revamp two tourist resorts in Tyre and Sidon.
3. Improved old tourism information centers and established new ones.
4. Continued archeological excavations in various tourist sites.
5. Reactivated programs and accords with neighboring countries to exchange travel tours.
6. Sought technical and financial assistance from regional and international organizations to complete development projects.
7. Exempted damaged tourist facilities (i.e. hotels, furnished apartments, etc.) from taxes.
8. Required tourist facilities to display their fees and prices.
9. Reopened six tourism offices in Arab and Western capitals.
10. Participated in regional and international tourism fairs and exhibits.
11. Encouraged the reawakening of local and international festivals.
12. Assisted in rehabilitating two educational and vocational institutions to better train employees in reception work, wait services and cooking..
13. Produced and distributed calendars, maps, posters and guidebooks.
14. Gave gifts and souvenirs to a select group of tourists.
15. Built a tourist database to provide statistics on number of travelers and visitors of tourist sites, and to keep track of business practices in the industry.

These efforts are a notable improvement and are beginning to have impact. However, for

lack of recent official data and research, it is impossible to measure the full impact of these efforts. Thousands of Americans visited Lebanon even when the U. S. government ban was still imposed, especially in the last three years. The Baalbeck Festivals that drew, before the war, famous artists such as Herbert von Karajan, Miles Davis and the Bolshoi Ballet (Kramer, 1997), are now partially reactivated. The Karakalla group (a popular Lebanese folklore group) and Mstislav Rostropovich (Russian cellist) performed this past summer in the ancient city and their performance prompted much rejoicing among citizens and visitors as well. Also, the Arab Tourist Organization designated 1994 as the International Year of Tourism in Lebanon (Fisher, 1996). However, these indicators, among others, do not necessarily suggest that the government efforts have been effective. If negative international impressions of Lebanon are to be removed, more needs to be done to bring tourism back to its pre-war level and overcome the long-time lack of genuine public relations and promotion efforts.

Future Two-Phase Plan Needed

The Lebanese government has been preoccupied with rebuilding the country's infrastructure. Such a preoccupation is justifiable since the civil war greatly damaged both private and public sectors. Although the government plan may rehabilitate the country, careful planning is needed to restore tourism and instill confidence in tourists' minds. Given that tourism before the conflict contributed more than 19 percent to the country's gross national product, it is safe to assume that the restoration of tourism can create thousands of jobs, bring hard currency and revive businesses in Lebanon.

One must recognize that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to revitalize the tourism industry in Lebanon in a short period of time. Thus, a set of consecutive procedures needs to be executed. The authors of this study recommend a two-phase plan that considers both immediate and long-term actions.

The following is an explanation of these actions.

Phase One: Immediate Actions. The Lebanese government needs to start a public relations campaign that places a heavy emphasis on publicity to change war-torn images of Lebanon and convince tourists that life is back to normal in the country. This publicity effort should be implemented in one year and focus on the following:

1. Inviting 50 international travel reporters to visit Lebanon. These journalists should be selected from the United States, England, France, Canada, Italy, Spain, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Portugal, Austria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Abu Dhabi, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates. Official statistics show that Lebanon before the war attracted tourists from those mentioned countries (Madi, 1981). Also, past experience has suggested that such invitations have been readily accepted by

international reporters. The main objective of these invitations is to show travel and tourism reporters that: (a) the situation is peaceful and everyone can move freely again in the country, (b) the tourist and historic sites are still intact and (c) the free enterprise system in Lebanon is working normally. These journalists, in turn, would convey the peaceful aspect of Lebanon to their respective readers by writing stories on government attempts to rebuild the country to its previous standards of tourist excellence.

2. Cooperating with international travel and tourism agencies to reschedule Lebanon on their tours.
3. Advertising in Lebanese newspapers that have large circulations in the Arab world and in international magazines that reach potential tourists in the U.S. and Europe.
4. Producing and distributing guidebooks, brochures and calendars of festivals and cultural events. Particular attention should be given to the content of these publications. In the past, many brochures and guidebooks did not include specific information on the tourist sites. Tourists sometimes need detailed information because the fast pace does not allow them enough time to learn adequately about these sites.
5. Participating in regional and international fairs and exhibitions to display Lebanese artifacts.
6. Holding "Lebanon Week" in Paris, London and Brussels where major offices of the National Council of Tourism are located. The main objective of this event is to promote Lebanese exhibitions and conferences.
7. Distributing gifts and souvenirs to tourists visiting historical sites. The giveaway items should be handcrafted or manufactured in the visited places.

Along with production and distribution of literature, cooperation should be enhanced with travel associations and agencies such as the American Society of Travel Agents,, the Norway Travel Association, and Pacific Area Travel Association. Also, the distribution of literature should be intensified in the Middle East since many countries in this region are fiercely competing to attract the largest number of tourists. Furthermore, the Ministry of Tourism can cooperate with Middle East Airlines to distribute various kinds of literature. This airline company has more than 80 offices around the world and the outcome of such publicity will benefit both parties.

A preliminary draft version of this report presented by the authors to the Ministry of Tourism in late 1995 recommended the prompt establishment of a tourism home page on the Internet with an interactive forum for prospective tourists to ask questions and get answers (Kanso and Sinno, 1995). The government has recently created Lebanon Internet Directory. (<http://www2.lebanon-tourism.gov.lb/>) Although the Directory is a step in the right direction, it lacks content (Kanso, Sinno, & Nelson, 1997).

Phase Two: Long Term Actions. The immediate actions will temporarily remedy the tourism situation in Lebanon. However, more carefully planned actions are needed to generate long lasting effects. War-torn images cannot be fixed solely by publicity efforts. Continuous public relations efforts are required to rebuild tourists' confidence in Lebanon and to get various publics involved in the restoration of tourism. Therefore, the authors propose a five-year public relations plan guided by the theoretical framework of the two-way symmetric model of Grunig and Hunt (1984). Organizations practicing this model use bargaining, negotiating and strategies of conflict resolution to bring about symbiotic changes in the ideas, attitudes and behaviors of both the organization and its publics (Grunig & Grunig, 1992; Grunig, Grunig, Sriramesh, Huang, and Lyra, 1995). The following section explains the significance of the two-way symmetric model and its application in the tourism situation in Lebanon.

Public relations practitioners in the two-way symmetric model serve as mediators between organizations and their publics. The goal is to create and maintain mutual understanding between organizations and their publics. Communication flows both to and from publics. Research plays a significant role in this model. Public relations practitioners conduct formative and evaluative research. Formative research helps them learn how the public perceives the organization and what consequences the organization has for the public. Formative research also assists practitioners in counseling management on public reactions to practices and how they can be changed to better serve the public interest. On the other hand, practitioners use evaluative research to measure whether a public relations effort has actually improved the understanding between the organization and its publics (Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

In this case study, the model emphasizes relationships between various publics who are concerned with the restoration of tourism in Lebanon.

Due to the extreme importance of the relationship between the media and the government in this study, the authors will treat this relationship in more detail. Consequently, relationships between the media and other publics will be discussed only briefly.

The following is an explanation of the two-way symmetric model as it relates to government and publics' roles and expectations.

Government vs. Media: The Lebanese government role may encompass many activities. However, there are five major areas: planning, information, coordination, subsidy and evaluation.

Planning. The government is to provide the media with present and futuristic plans that pertain to tourism activities. This will enable the media to plan ahead the communication needed,

the proper timing and the relevant context for helping the government implement its plan.

Information. The government should supply timely, accurate and sufficient information to the media about tourists' activities, market expectations, problems, solutions, facilities, supervision centers, etc.

Coordination. The government should have direct and continuous coordination with the media through a committee that represents both sides. The Ministry of Tourism, for example, can establish a pressroom for the media and, on the spot, make information and material available to news reporters.

Subsidy. The government should allot more funds to buy media time and space to promote tourism. The media are capable of playing a very effective role in highlighting tourist attractions and disseminating information about the stable and safe situation in Lebanon. The government should devise national and international campaigns and use the Lebanese media in Lebanon and abroad as the major carriers of such campaigns. Radio Lebanon (a state run radio), for example, can use its short wave to reach listeners abroad through programs that cater to the benefit of the emigrants who comprise a large segment of the tourist target public. One of the authors devised such programs in 1983 when he was the director of Radio Lebanon, but the resurgence of war precluded the implementation of the plan.

Evaluation. The government should provide the media with feedback, evaluation and expectation. This can be achieved through research and professional media monitoring and scanning. The research process should be longitudinal and continuous. The Lebanese Department of Statistics can be involved in the evaluation process. Commercial public opinion polling agencies also can be contracted to participate in the process for objectivity and reliability purposes.

Along with government activities, the media, as agents of power and change, can play a significant role in the restoration of tourism. This role can be exemplified in areas such as tourist programs, diffusion, targeting, persuasion and feedback.

Tourist Programs. Due to the importance of tourism to the country, the media can establish special programs for tourists. Examples of such programs include special reports, interviews, feature stories, live broadcasts and the like. These programs should be designed to inform, educate and entertain tourists about the merits of touring Lebanon.

Diffusion. The media should continuously plan to diffuse tourist-related news and editorials. They can, for example, include stories designed to attract tourists to Lebanon, encourage tourists to stay longer and/or convince tourists to visit Lebanon frequently.

Targeting. The media are especially fit for precise targeting and marketing segmentation. Each news outlet should present to the government a profile of its listenership, readership and viewership. Such information will enable the government, in cooperation with the media, to target tourist prospects inside and outside of Lebanon.

Persuasion. The media are supposed to help the government in:

- (1) Positively shaping public opinion about tourism in Lebanon. This role is especially appropriate for the Lebanese media abroad that can provide stories, editorials, guest editorials, interviews, etc.
- (2) Reflecting public opinion. This can be carried out by improving the quality and quantity of reporting tourism-related subjects.

Feedback. The media should continuously provide the government with feedback on tourists' responses to government and media efforts aimed at improving tourism in Lebanon and making tourists happier.

Government vs. Private Sector: The private sector plays a significant role in reviving tourism since Lebanon is a free enterprise system. The relationship between government and private companies is symbiotic – what affects one affects the other. For example, if hotels and travel agencies attract more tourists, the government would collect more taxes. As a result, more funds and loans for tourist projects and other businesses will be allocated.

The government can offer multifaceted subsidies to the private sector. One facet of subsidy is to set up a financial facility such as a tourism bank where tourism related businesses can get a loan to improve their services to the tourism industry. In return, the private sector should maintain an open policy with the government. To achieve this goal, the media can play the role of a catalyst between the government and the private sector. If the government is responsible, dependable and trustworthy, the media can favorably portray the government to all relevant publics in general and to the private sector in particular.

The relationship between the Lebanese government and the private sector should be based on mutual contributions, trust, support and of course two-way communication. To do so, the government should first survey this sector on the topic of tourism. When this is done, the government should establish an independent coalition or advisory group with members representing both the private and public sectors. The role of the coalition is to: (1) reflect the private sector's needs to the government and vice versa, (2) put these needs into an implementable plan and (3) coordinate with the rest of the publics (i.e. government, media, emigrants, etc.) for support and suggestions to promote the tourism industry in Lebanon.

Actually, the government can consider subcontracting some of its plans to be carried out by the private sector.

Government vs. Tourists: The government should make tourists feel, see and believe that tourism in Lebanon is pleasant, safe, rewarding and relaxing. To help establish and ascertain these attitudes, the government should provide tourists the following:

- (1) Facilities. Advanced communication systems such as telex, fax, cable, satellites, internet and web access, cellular phones and computer network in vital tourist centers should be made available to tourists.
- (2) Guarantee of freedom. Pamphlets, brochures and documentaries should communicate the concept of freedom by emphasizing the fact that Lebanon is still a free and open forum.
- (3) Assurance of safety. Through presenting a pleasant and non-threatening appearance, Lebanese law enforcement agencies and personnel can ensure that tourists feel the situation is back to normal in Lebanon and everyone can move safely about.
- (4) Centers for complaints and inquiries. The government should have an abundance of such locations that can help tourists and at the same time, provide feedback to the government about tourists' needs and concerns.

Government vs. Emigrants: Lebanese emigrants are very crucial to the tourism industry in Lebanon especially when one recognizes that this group of people outnumber the Lebanese residing in Lebanon. Before the civil war, hundreds of thousands of Lebanese emigrants visited their relatives and friends in the native land every year. Needless to say, the group was a main force in helping dwellers survive the 17 years of destruction. Emigrants sent hundreds of millions of dollars during the war and were the first to visit Lebanon when the country restored peace.

Presently, emigrants' policies and affairs are handled through the Ministry of Emigrants. The authors suggest the empowerment of the Ministry to effectively reach out to the various segments of tourist prospects. For example, the government can allocate more funds to the Ministry of Emigrants to carry out national and international plans that revitalize the tourism industry in Lebanon. Although the World Lebanese Cultural Union made some efforts in the past to enhance tourism, these efforts were neither comprehensive nor adequate, perhaps due to lack of resources and the fragmentation of the Union base itself.

The government should establish a tourism attache post in countries with tourist prospects. The government also can reach out to emigrants in those countries through the media, Lebanese embassies and consulates, invitations, conferences and cultural/educational events.

Conclusion

The Lebanese government has taken important steps toward reconstructing tourism; however, much remains to be done. The proposed two-phase plan has one major objective: to revive tourism in Lebanon after a devastating civil war. Such an objective cannot be attained over-night. The authors recommend the formation of a highly specialized committee that includes members representing the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Emigrants, the World Lebanese Cultural Union and the private sector. The committee should coordinate, suggest, plan and supervise activities between and among various publics concerned with the restoration of tourism in Lebanon. Such a committee will be the right tool for the implementation of the Grunig and Hunt (1984) two-way symmetric model.

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**Public Relations in New Market Development:
The Influence of Converging Multi-cultural Factors**

**Robert I. Wakefield, Ph.D., APR
Brigham Young University
United States**

Executive Summary

This article discusses a public relations issue encountered by a multinational organization in the mid-1990s. Through missteps during the process of developing a potential new market, the company lost favor with the local government and was expelled from the country before its operations there could officially begin. This case will examine how several factors that can affect public relations globally converged to create this situation. Although the problem still is not resolved, the article will look at what the organization did in attempts to rectify the situation.

Leaders of the organization probably would refer to the incident as a legal issue, a political quandary, or a question of control, not as a public relations problem. But management reluctance to view it in public relations terms also was one of the significant factors that contributed to the situation.

There are enormous opportunities in today's global marketplace. More than 37,000 multinational organizations already are operating across borders (Kidron & Segal, 1995) through 170,000 foreign affiliates, generating combined annual revenues exceeding \$4.8 trillion (Vogl & Sinclair, 1996). Certainly, thousands of additional entities, large and small, are poised to plunge into the global waters. "Global presence is not a choice, but a strategic imperative for all growing, high-performance companies" (Conference Board, 1994).

When operating across cultural and political boundaries, however, multinational organizations regularly face a myriad of complex, and often unforeseeable, landmines that can hurt short-term sales or wreak more long-term havoc on identities and reputations. As Maddox (1993) states, "Multinational firms are developing a solid track record for their cross-cultural blunders" (p.19). What he said to U.S. managers probably could apply to those in most countries: "We know how we deal in the United States as business people, but in other countries it is very, very easy to delay or ruin a deal due to a cultural slip" (p.15).

This case concerns a rapidly growing and otherwise solid organization that ran afoul of several merging factors all at once -- the dynamics of country development, intercultural communications, politics, law, perceptions, and perhaps managerial naivete in a new and complex market. Although it focuses on a particular company, it also investigates international reputation issues of an entire industry -- network marketing. It is a case that the author knows relatively well, having been at least indirectly involved as the situation unfolded over a year.

Nevertheless, it also is a situation examined with some reservations, taking into account a statement from Maddox (1993):

To look at and analyze these blunders in hindsight..., can be highly misleading. To look at a faulty decision, knowing that it was a faulty decision, is to see clearly why that decision should not have been made. In so doing, we bypass the complexity of the situation in which the decision-maker was enmeshed. (p.19).

Like most organizations operating “overseas,” this company proceeded with the best of intentions. Many of the decisions it made were sound, and most companies likely would perform similarly in the same circumstances. Thus, the purpose of this article is not to criticize the company. Instead, it is meant to show that public relations problems can arise quickly in the multinational arena, even when organizations think they are making proper decisions. The hope is to offer instruction so that this and other organizations can perform more suitably when facing similar circumstances in the future.

The Problem

Nu Skin International, Inc., is a rapidly growing multinational corporation that sells personal care and nutritional products through a network-marketing concept. Founded in 1984, in the small college community of Provo, Utah, Nu Skin in less than two decades has grown from a small operation of family and friends into a venture that by the end of 1997 far exceeded \$1 billion in annual sales. The organization has more than 1,200 employees and half a million active distributors. Based on current sales, it is estimated that Nu Skin is the second largest network marketing company in the world, behind only Amway.

Network marketing, also called multi-level marketing, is a form of direct selling. Poe (1995) defined it as “any method of marketing that allows independent sales representatives to recruit other sales representatives and to draw commissions from the sales of those recruits” (p.8). Thus, in network marketing, independent business agents create their own hierarchical organizations (referred to as “downlines”) to sell products and promote business activity. Everyone who sells through network marketing gains commissions from their own sales, and the leaders of the sales teams also get commissions from sales of those whom they have recruited.

Sometimes networking marketing has been mistaken for pyramid schemes, but it is legally and ethically much different. According to the Council of Better Business Bureaus (1993), pyramids are set up for the sole purpose of gaining money from nothing. They offer no worthwhile product. Perpetrators prey off innocent or gullible people -- often so quickly that they have disappeared before the fraud can be discovered. Network marketing, by contrast, is a legitimate business that requires the selling of a product of value. Recruiting of other salespeople is a legitimate part of the process, but money cannot be made from the recruiting itself; rather, it

comes from commissions after the products are sold.

Despite the growth of network marketing and its enormous appeal to a certain segment of society, the industry has its down side -- mostly with reputation. In 1979, in the United States, Amway was charged with being a pyramid scheme by distributors who felt they had been frauded. After a thorough investigation, the Federal Trade Commission ruled that whatever fraudulent actions occurred were instigated by individual distributors acting independently, rather than by the company. Amway was declared a legitimate business, not a pyramid scheme (Poe, 1995). That judgment created the necessary legal distinctions between network marketing and pyramiding, and thus set the stage for the rise of network marketing into respectability.

Reputation problems have persisted in the U.S., however -- largely because of the overly aggressive nature in which some distributors approach candidates and the unrealistic promises they often attach to their sales pitch. The nature of network marketing dictates that the more people a distributor can recruit, the more products will be sold and the more success everyone in the organization will have. This requires a persistent personality highly dedicated to the cause. Persistence has tended to turn off some potential recruits and lead to negative perceptions about the industry that are difficult to overcome. There are signs, though, that the reputation is improving; in the past five years, the industry has been covered more frequently by mainstream media. University business courses are beginning to include the topic of network marketing, and more and more people are leaving reputable positions to pursue network marketing full-time.

In many countries, the reputation is worse than in the U.S. Those countries have similar histories where the industry was challenged at one time and finally judged as legitimate. However, not wanting to be pestered seems to be a global trait; public relations agencies from more than 20 countries have confided to this author that network marketing is perceived as bordering on the fringe of respectable business. Most media around the world which cover network marketing still do so with suspicion, perhaps more from misunderstandings of the industry than from documented problems or experiences.

U.S.-based network marketing firms also must acknowledge cultural differences that may contribute to global reputation problems. Americans often are uncomfortable with people of different cultures and convey superiority when they interact with them (Harris & Moran, 1991). In other countries, Americans may be seen as overly aggressive, boastful, and overconfident. This raises skepticism among people of other cultures when dealing with Americans. As Hall and Hall (1990) explained, "Overseas Americans feel confident that their ways are the best ways and often demonstrate messianic zeal about imposing them on other cultures and then fail to understand why they encounter resistance and resentment." (p.149)

With network marketing this intercultural problem is often exacerbated. The concept

epitomizes the “missionary zeal” mentioned by Hall and Hall (1990). An example of this is the name adopted by Amway, a pioneer in the network marketing industry. Amway is a shortened version of the term, “American way.” Unfortunately, “American way” often feeds into all of the negative stereotypes people of other countries carry about Americans. This makes them doubly skeptical of representatives coming from United States-based network marketing companies with promises of fortune and freedom. The purpose of this case, which was precipitated by overzealous distributors who wanted to push opportunity in a new market before the company was ready is to examine how the stereotypical American business style comes across with peoples of other cultures. In jumping into the market, these distributors caused cultural clashes that then were exaggerated when the crisis reached the corporation. To understand the problems that can arise in such a situation, it is important to know how market development fosters this zealously.

Background

Nu Skin’s international expansion has perhaps been more impressive than its overall growth. Although the company entered its first international market, Canada, as recently as 1990, it now operates in more than 25 countries in North America, Europe, Asia, and the Pacific. By the end of 1996, Nu Skin had affiliate operations in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau that together had accounted for nearly \$700 million in annual revenues. Late in 1996, the company established a holding company for the Asian markets, Nu Skin Asia Pacific (NSAP), and offered shares publicly on the New York Stock Exchange. NSAP is now the exclusive distribution vehicle for Nu Skin in Asia, while Nu Skin International operates in the rest of the world.

Why has Nu Skin been so successful? It is important to include some indications of that here not to showcase this unusual company, but to explain why this type of organization attracts such interest among people on a global scale.

The 1996 annual report for NSAP suggested that Nu Skin has been successful for three main reasons: (a) a philosophy that encourages innovation in the development of its products; (b) a commitment to long-term success, service, and “integrity” by Nu Skin’s management and work force; and (c) “enthusiastic and dedicated professionals” who serve as the independent distributor force throughout the world.

There is substantial documentation for the first two reasons listed. In fact, Richard Poe (1995), a reporter and one-time critic of network marketing who examined Nu Skin’s practices in the early 1990’s, said, “one of the first things I discovered was that the company’s phenomenal rise was driven almost entirely by the strength of its products” (p.52). Nu Skin also has dedicated staff members around the world, and has invested millions, if not billions, of dollars over the past 15 years to provide long-term services to its distributors. Distributors can capitalize on the

reputation, product lines, and structural resources of a larger corporation to build their own entities. Thus, contrary to popular perceptions, it usually is easier and cheaper to build an independent business through network marketing than, for example, through a franchise. Network marketing also provides much greater leverage than starting a business without the backing of any larger organization.

Perhaps the most significant reason for Nu Skin's ultimate success, however, is the social phenomenon. The 1996 NSAP annual report acknowledged one of the company's greatest long-term assets is "our network of independent distributors. These highly successful entrepreneurs have helped build [the] company by committing their time, talents, resources and reputations to Nu Skin." The company reciprocates to its distributors by committing "to give them the best business opportunity possible" (p.4).

What is it about a company like Nu Skin that motivates entrepreneurs to such commitment? And, why is that commitment such an asset to the corporation? By understanding the answers to these questions, it is possible to see why distributors can be the engine for network marketing as well as its "Achilles heel" -- at least from a public relations standpoint.

Numerous social and economic trends foster the growth of network marketing, only a couple of which will be discussed here. First, the enormous "baby boomer" generation is aging in many countries. They are searching for ways to look and feel young for as long as possible. This creates a huge global market for personal care and nutritional products. Network marketing coincides well with this demand because distributors provide highly "consumable" products that will be used quickly and needed again and again. This, of course, generates greater sales volumes and higher incomes.

A second major trend is related to employment and personal economics. In the last two decades, corporations have had massive layoffs of employees. The increasing reliance on the stock markets has placed considerable pressure on corporations to show profitability on a quarterly basis. Profit margins expand either by generating more revenues or by lowering costs. Because it is difficult to increase revenues over the short-term, corporations have "downsized" to reduce costs.

The losers are employees. Many suddenly have found themselves looking for work, and those who remain employed wonder when the next round of downsizing will come. Often, they assume increased responsibilities from the eliminated positions and must then work longer hours to fulfill their expanded roles. However, as Dychtwald (1989) explained, the glut of aging "boomers" means there are not enough management positions available for those who are qualified. Thus, even when people work longer, they are not promoted. And, ironically, even those who do reach the highest positions may feel unfulfilled as their job commitments

increasingly take them away from family, friends, and fun.

Many find the answer in network marketing. Network marketing offers the opportunity to start a business at relatively low cost. It provides the freedom to work with companions out of the home. Nu Skin, for example, estimates that more than 30 percent of their distributor force worldwide works as couples. Through network marketing, these couples can set their own work hours and their own expectations for success.

The trends just discussed are not exclusive to any one country, but take place in many parts of the world. As a result, network marketing is growing at a pace unmatched by most industries. Network marketing has approached or achieved double-digit growth around the world for the past decade. Some 22.3 million people now are involved worldwide. According to the World Federation of Direct Selling Associations, direct selling companies, of which network marketers are a major part, generated more than \$72 billion in global sales in 1996.

Goals and Objectives

Network marketing firms maintain momentum through anticipation and confidence. There is a symbiotic, yet delicate, balance between distributor and company. When a company is growing rapidly and has innovated products and services, it fosters confidence in distributors. With that confidence, they will work hard, recruit new people, and sell lots of products. But, if distributors start to perceive that the company is going downhill, they become nervous and start looking for new opportunities. Then, distributor downlines disintegrate and it becomes harder to recruit and sell products. The important thing to note here is that the underlying factor for this delicate balance, at least in the beginning, is not so much reality as it is perception.

Knowing this, stable network marketing firms constantly provide new business opportunities for their distributors through two means: the constant creation of new product lines and the opening of new markets or countries in order to increase the base of consumers. When distributors can promise their downlines and potential recruits that their affiliated company is coming out with a new product line, they can foster a market before the products are even developed. A new geographic market provides the same anticipation, except it offers the exciting potential of operating a business in a new country -- particularly if one has contacts there or knows the language.

Nu Skin has been successful at maintaining distributor anticipation. Starting with a few basic personal care products in the 1980s, the company now offers more than 150 products in several major lines. In addition to relying on the face-to-face marketing of distributors, the company generates interest in its products through increasingly visible marketing tactics. For example, fashion model Christie Brinkley is retained to promote Nu Skin's personal care products, and several former Olympians help promote a line of nutritional products.

To open each market, Nu Skin undergoes an extensive development process. Recognizing the need for in-country knowledge, the company works closely with local law firms to guide it through the various government agencies. This gives the corporation confidence that its products are appropriately registered, its marketing plans adhere to the regulations on network marketing, and its taxation issues and other legal considerations are satisfied. The company identifies local translation resources to assure that its communication vehicles and marketing tools are culturally sound and appropriately translated. While these processes are underway, property is leased in a suitable location for a distribution center (with a few exceptions, such as Ireland and Portugal, which are operated as satellites to larger distribution centers nearby).

Public relations also is an aspect of market development, but until recently its role was typically downplayed. For example, a local agency often was selected to assist with the market opening, but its activities were restricted to media outreach, promotions, and receptions. The corporation relied heavily on the legal firms to give cultural insight as well as handle legal issues. Public relations agencies usually were not retained until five or six months before the market was officially opened. By then, translation processes had been fanned out to a translation firm with strict instructions to translate virtually verbatim. Public relations agencies rarely had an opportunity to insert their cultural understanding of communication into that process. When the country was opened, the agency services were dropped or scaled back, and an in-house staff person sometimes was hired to handle both marketing promotions and public relations. Typically, this staff person had little experience in either public relations or marketing. Exceptions were the few larger markets like Japan and Taiwan, which had dedicated public relations staff.

Nu Skin's philosophy is to staff local distribution centers with natives, including a general manager, who have solid business experience in that country. Nu Skin has a small cadre of expatriates it utilizes for training purposes, but for the most part it relies solely on local talent and expertise. This is instrumental in establishing close relationships between local staff members and native distributors who, although they report to "upline" distributors often from another country, are ultimately responsible for the success of that market.

All of this infrastructure is driven by a distributor reward system that is unique in the network marketing industry. The system is referred to as a "global, seamless compensation plan." This means that any Nu Skin distributor who is registered as an "international sponsor" can sell products and build organizations in any market in which Nu Skin is officially licensed. It is common, for instance, for a distributor in Japan to sponsor another distributor in Canada, who recruits distributors in Australia and the United Kingdom, who then sponsor distributors in Hong Kong or Spain. The word "seamless," therefore means to operate without borders. When products are sold by any of these distributors, commission checks are paid out to all of the

“upline” distributors in their own currencies.

This global compensation system provides incentives for distributors and is one of the main attractions Nu Skin offers to entrepreneurs. Through it, a person in any small town in the world can operate a global business, aided by the resources of a large and stable multinational corporation. However, while this is a great advantage for Nu Skin, such a system can be difficult to control when more than half a million independent business people are operating throughout the world. This difficulty in controlling distributors, coupled with certain naiveté about the Malaysian culture, ultimately caused Nu Skin tremendous problems as it began to develop a market in that country.

Strategic Tactics and Techniques

Nu Skin originally had planned to enter Malaysia in 1995. It would have been the fifth market in Asia and the first in Southeast Asia for Nu Skin. Malaysia is the second largest market for direct selling in Southeast Asia (after Thailand), and ranks 16th in the world in annual direct sales at \$640 million, according to the World Federation of Direct Selling Associations. The country is rapidly expanding its economy, and Kuala Lumpur is gaining a substantial middle class (an important stipulation for network marketing). Although not as common as the main language, Bahasa Malay, English generally is used in government communication. Thus translation problems do not have to be a major issue (Munan, 1991). Singapore does not allow network marketing, so Malaysia could serve as the next best natural springboard into the rest of Southeast Asia. Because of these factors, Malaysia was seen as a strategic market for Nu Skin.

In 1994, corporate development officials began their preliminary activities for entering the Malaysian market. Early activities were supposed to be kept confidential so that distributors would not start to conduct business in the country before Malaysian officials allowed it. In fact, early activity was prohibited by the Direct Sales Act of 1993, which stipulated that no sales or recruiting activity could be undertaken in Malaysia before a company's marketing plan is officially approved by the government.

To facilitate the process of market development, Nu Skin transferred one of its expatriates to Kuala Lumpur. In his early thirties, he had lived and worked in Taiwan for four years and spoke Mandarin fluently. Five million Chinese live in Malaysia and speak their own dialects of Chinese, one of which is Mandarin. Because of this, and because the expatriate also spoke English, corporate officials determined that he could perform well in Malaysia.

However, this decision later proved problematic, as pointed out by some observers of the situation. The expatriate had virtually no experience with the Malaysian culture, and, as Munan (1991) stated, just because five million Chinese are in Malaysia, “doesn't mean they understand each other! [Exclamation the original author's.] It never fails to amaze foreigners that Chinese

may use English or Malay among each other” (p.68). Also, in a culture where age is highly respected, he was seen as too young to be accepting full responsibility for the corporation in Malaysia. This was perceived as a sign that Nu Skin was not all that interested in the market.

For several months, the development activity seemed to be proceeding normally. In addition to the expatriate’s daily work with the in-country service vendors, corporate officials would periodically travel to the country for meetings and assignments related to their specific functions. A distribution center was located in the heart of Kuala Lumpur, product registration seemed to be proceeding, and translations of materials in Mandarin and Malay were underway. The company also applied for a license to begin operations, a process that can take several months. However, as is so often the case in Asian cultures, what was happening beneath the “surface” events was more important, and was leading to trouble.

As stated earlier, the Malaysian Direct Selling Act of 1993 prohibits activity in the country before the company’s network marketing plan is officially approved. Despite corporate attempts to keep specific market development confidential, once word leaks out that the company is looking at a specific market, the distributors then begin to develop their network of contacts for that country, and some even travel to ascertain its potential for success.

Nu Skin policy is not unlike the Malaysian direct sales act and similar laws in other countries. While the company does condone informal contacts to ascertain interest of potential recruits, its policies expressly prohibit any individual distributor from sending or selling products into a country, conducting group meetings, or signing contracts with anyone before the market is opened.

Results

Despite Nu Skin policies and Malaysian laws, distributors began to conduct formal business in the country several months before the intended opening date. Thus, the company was hurt by a strength of network marketing: distributor independence. Even though distributors are bound by policies, violations cannot be punished unless the distributor is caught.

The actual number of distributors involved in the violations was impossible to know, but one local newspaper estimated it to be in the hundreds. Nu Skin officials started to hear reports of the activity and even hired a private investigator to find violators, but to little avail. Since it also was against the law for Malaysians who buy products from a foreign distributor to resell them again, the company attempted to protect anyone who had bought Nu Skin products and wished to return them. Using a financial agency, the company set up a program to refund money. It was also hoped information could be gathered on who sold the products, how much was sold, and where, thus helping to find the violators.

On Monday, June 5, 1995, an article appeared in *The Malay Mail*, one of the major newspapers in Kuala Lumpur. It was negative of Nu Skin's attempts to control its distributors and quoted an official in the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry as saying, "It [is] an offence (sic.) to sell the products here as the principal [i.e., Nu Skin] did not have a license to do so." The official said the ministry had never heard of Nu Skin's attempts to offer refunds, announced that its enforcement division was investigating the situation, and "urged all distributors involved in the scheme to help."

Perhaps more threatening than the article itself was its possible origin. The Mail is owned by the New Straits Times Group, a media conglomerate that was known to have close ties with the government. The article showed that the government and media were cooperating closely to place pressure on Nu Skin. Local practitioners told the author that what was in the newspaper was just a small indicator of the government's discontent with Nu Skin.

Despite numerous attempts at negotiating with the government, and a series of interventions with the ministries by local advisors on Nu Skin's behalf, the government denied Nu Skin a license to operate in the country. The company ended up paying off the lease on the distribution center in Kuala Lumpur and shut down its operations before they even began.

Conclusions

In Asia, individuals are reticent to show displeasure with other individuals. When displeasure surfaces, it usually has been fermenting for a considerable time. As Munan (1991) said, this is to maintain "face," or respect and self-esteem. Therefore, "on the personal level, being directly scolded or made a fool of in public involves serious loss of 'face'" (p.80).

Governments often reflect the local culture, so it should not be surprising that this concept of "face" is exhibited by the Malaysian government, as well. Officials in Malaysia would not publicly criticize a multinational unless there was a strong reason. This is particularly true since Malaysia is a developing country that needs an infusion of money from multinationals.

After Nu Skin distributors were found in violation of country regulations, this delicate relationship between government and multinational was imperiled. Although Nu Skin, at least in the minds of its executives, had been operating in good faith and according to due process with the Malaysian ministries, the company was seen by the government as failing to control its distributors. Rather than criticizing Nu Skin officials in personal meetings, the government ministers did not act on their knowledge until the article appeared in *The Malay Mail*. Not sensing a problem, Nu Skin failed to discipline its distributors until it was evident that there was a major issue. By then, the article had appeared and Nu Skin had a crisis on its hands

Were there local advisors who could give Nu Skin early warning signals that trouble was ahead? The company was using a local legal firm, and representatives of this firm accompanied Nu Skin executives to meetings with government ministries. A public relations consultant also gave periodic advice on working with the ministries to the expatriate in Kuala Lumpur, as well as assisting with other technical details.

Another public relations practitioner in Kuala Lumpur later suggested that using a legal firm for negotiations in Malaysia is a cultural problem in itself. Like people in many Asian cultures, Malaysians rely on unwritten -- sometimes even unspoken -- agreements based on growing relationships of trust. To build that trust, it is important that multinationals move slowly, understand the culture, and work on long-term relationship building from the beginning. When lawyers become involved in the early stages of the relationship, this is perceived as a sign that the organization does not trust the government. This is a problem typical of many American organizations who conduct business in Asia.

This is not to say that attorneys should be eliminated from market development. On the contrary, organizations can commit business suicide without their guidance through the maze of regulations and paperwork. It is typical, and advisable, for foreign firms to work closely with the local entity to accomplish these tasks.

Robert Maddox, a scholar in international business, acknowledges the increasingly complex factors as “countries are added to an organization’s domain,” and argues that some of these factors “are more easily dealt with than others. For example, the legal environment is relatively tangible and specific. It is easily viewed and evaluated. And the appropriate corporate response to it is generally relatively clear,” he said (p.10). What is not easily dealt with, or tangible, or as measurable, he added are “the cultural aspects of the environment” (p.10). And it is these complex cultural aspects that will create the cracks in the sidewalk on which multinational organizations can stumble.

Perhaps, then, Nu Skin should have received local advice on governmental dealings from a greater variety of local sources. More likely, the company officials did not sufficiently realize the “missionary zeal” of their own culture, noted earlier by Hall and Hall (1990), to properly heed that advice. Nu Skin officials had the experience of opening 20 other countries where they had adequately heeded local counsel and been successful. However, Nu Skin had not entered a country as complex as Malaysia, where at least three distinct cultures and several major religious groupings have found a way to coexist in harmony.

But the chapter is not finished. Nu Skin is still a highly successful multinational organization. It successfully has negotiated market openings in more than 25 countries, and it is an active member of the Direct Selling Association, a stamp of legitimacy and respect in the

network marketing industry, in most of those countries. The company's public relations department is staffed with respected professionals who are slowly making inroads into senior management and into daily decision making processes. And Nu Skin is still attempting to improve relations with the Malaysian government in the hopes of being granted a license someday.

So what lessons can be learned for future reference from the Nu Skin case? There could be numerous lessons discussed. A few are summarized below.

1. Do not always assume that what is learned in one culture can translate to other cultures. Nu Skin had been successful in many country openings, and had a template from which to work with other cultures. While it is good to have these guidelines, corporations must be extremely cautious about assuming that every aspect of those guidelines will automatically transfer. Constant scrutiny and modification is the key, as well as the scholarly "systematic doubt."
2. In many cultures, what happens below the surface activities is more important than the seemingly transparent signs of communication. Organizations need to constantly be on the alert for the more subtle signs, and utilize local advice completely in this regard.
3. Do not assume that all local advice is good, so make sure that advice comes from several sources. The local advice in this case may indeed have been sound. However, in no country does one source usually represent the whole range of advice or opinions that are available. The adage, "two heads are better than one" should be used here. A good combination is to rely equally on the advice from both legal and public relations firms. This can happen only if public relations is fully integrated into the decision making process of the organization, both domestically and internationally.
4. Be aware of potential intercultural problems, and head them off before they occur. Network marketing companies rely on their distributors to carry their products and their marketing concepts from one country to another; however, the "missionary zeal" of one culture may be offensive to another. It is best to use the natives of the given country to introduce the organization and its philosophies to the consumers and potential consumers.
5. Make sure that representatives from the organization are appropriate for the given country. Although there may have been good internal reasons for sending an inexperienced expatriate into a complex country, the decision in this case was not a good one. It is more important that the representative be perceived as credible by individuals in the culture than by the organization's management.

In summary, this is a case that could have happened -- and probably has happened in one

form or another-- to a multitude of multinational entities. While the problem dealt with Nu Skin, its management has made several good decisions in the international scene and has reaped the rewards associated with those decisions. The point of this case was to show some of the unforeseen pitfalls that can occur, so that those who read it may be able to avoid similar problems in the future.

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**A Museum in Search of Identity:
Finding and Redefining the Image of a Man
and the Museum Named for Him**

**Valeria Shadrova
St. Petersburg Electrotechnical University
Russia**

**Igor Zakharov
St. Petersburg Electrotechnical University
Russia**

**Larisa Zolotinkina
Popov Museum, St. Petersburg
Russia**

Executive Summary

Alexander Popov, Russian scientist and inventor, was one of pioneers of wireless communication. His Memorial Museum at the St. Petersburg Electrotechnical University opened in 1948. It was established to convey to the public Russia's preeminence in inventing the radio. Among the museum's advantages was its location in the apartment that had belonged to Popov and featuring equipment that he built while working on radiotelegraphy. In the 1970's and 1980's the controversial nature of the "invention of the radio" claims led to the museum's gradual decline. In recent years the Museum's Board of Directors realized the necessity of changing the Museum's image and reconsidering the strategies that could help the Museum fulfill its role as a bridge between the past and the present.

The Problem

In 1948 the Memorial Museum of Alexander Popov was inaugurated at the St. Petersburg (then Leningrad) Electrotechnical University. Alexander Popov (1859 –1906), an outstanding Russian physicist, was one of pioneers of wireless communication. In 1945, Soviet authorities formally declared that he was the "inventor of radio" basing this claim on his radiotelegraphic experiments and the account of his "Apparatus for the Detection and Recording of Electrical Oscillations" published in 1896.

By the middle of the 1980's the Popov Museum had fallen on hard times. The University's younger generation showed little or no interest in the history of science and the glorious names of a bygone era. Models of radio devices built in the early twentieth century looked drab and dull in comparison to modern audio systems. Undergraduate students of electronics regarded them as archaic and useless hardware. Some educators, too, were skeptical about the Museum's value. They tended to associate the time when the museum was established with the beginning of the "Iron Curtain" era that began soon after the end of World War II. It was the time when state propaganda was heavily indoctrinating with the view that radio, aviation, in short, all technical innovations, were invented by Russians. Those who held a different point of view were ostracized. Historians, especially those who were persecuted during "the Iron Curtain" period, emphasized the role of foreign scientists and experimenters like Branly, Lodge and Marconi in inventing the radio. At the same time, they tended to regard Alexander Popov as some cult figure created by the Stalinist "workers of the ideological front". Government officials also thought that the Popov Museum was only a symbol of the old-time propaganda that separated peoples and nations.

All these stereotypes resulted in the decline of public interest in the Museum and, there was hostile reaction to its continued support – despite the fact that the Museum’s archives contained unique documents and materials which depicted the scientific life of the second half of the nineteenth century. The museum displayed many rare exhibits. It was included into the International Catalogue of Museums and many tourist guidebooks. And, it was one of only two memorial museums connected with institutions of higher learning in St. Petersburg.

Background

When a nation is revising and re-evaluating its past, it parts with old stereotypes and also may discard many good things. During such periods it is important to remember that the past need not all be discredited and that there were many talented people worthy of respect. The man behind the stereotype created of Alexander Popov had to be found. The creation by “Iron Curtain” era propaganda prevented the University’s students and even educators from developing an unbiased perspective of his distinguished life and career.

Popov was what could be called a “self-made man.” He was the son of an Orthodox priest, who was born in a small provincial town in the Urals and later became a Professor and then Rector of the first Russian electrotechnical university. He was an ingenious experimenter and an enthusiastic teacher who devised 42 original study works in physics for undergraduate students. He was a highly educated man who corresponded with physicists in England, France, the United States and Germany. He was also a businessman, holding shares in the Siemens-Halske Company that produced radio sets using his designs. His teacher was Khvolson, a well-known physicist of that time, who coached many young talents, among them S.Lifshits, in collaboration with whom he developed a device for transmitting human speech.

The contribution that Alexander Popov made to the theory and practice of wireless communication was recognized in Germany, France, the USA and Italy. “Iron Curtain” propaganda was responsible for creating the image of Popov as an isolated scientist working on his ideas totally independent from the rest of the world. This was a distorted presentation, far from the facts of his life.

Goals and Objectives

A PR program was developed by the Museum Board with the purpose of re-considering the original concept of the Memorial Museum and reviving public interest in the history of science. The head of the Board was the Director of the Museum, Ekaterina Kyandskaya-Popova, and Popov’s granddaughter, who held a PhD degree in radio engineering. After her death in 1994 she was succeeded by Larisa Zolotinkina, also a PhD in radio engineering. The goal of the project was not to convert people who “did not love” nineteenth century physics, but to correct the old false stereotypes produced by the totalitarian propaganda. To achieve these goals, the following objectives were set:

1. To change the stereotypes among educators, undergraduates and students of the history of science about the physicist and inventor Alexander Popov .

2. To separate the figure of Alexander Popov from the former propaganda.
3. To show to young people what was done by past scientists and researchers and the value of their work for the present.
4. To raise awareness among the university administrators about the useful role that the unique relics of the past can play for promoting the image of a modern institution.
5. To change the general public's attitude towards the Museum.

Strategic Tactics and Techniques

The major constraint of the proposed PR project was a very tight budget, which did not permit any paid advertising or an expensive PR campaign. Therefore, methods of free or very low cost communications and personal contacts of those involved with the Museum had to be used. Several factors combined to make the museum and the story of its revitalization appealing to the mass media.

During "Perestroika" and after, strict supervision of the press by the political establishment first weakened and then was lifted. Newspapers were no longer told what to write about and new ones emerged every week. Competition for news and events was stiff. Museums, even in St. Petersburg, did not know how to publicize themselves. They had little or no idea of what public relations was or how to deal with the media, so there was (and to some extent still is) a deficit of information from them. Therefore, cultural life, with the exception of theaters and show business, was inadequately covered and hence newspapers welcomed such information. The museum's former director and granddaughter of Popov, Ekaterina Popova-Kiandskaya, had a gift of persuasion and understood the importance of publicity. Media targeted for the public information campaign were those with audiences that might have a natural interest in scientific or educational topics or for whom some of the little-known stories about Popov might be appealing. They included:

1. The in-house University newsletter, Elektrik
2. The in-house University radio station
3. A high circulation newspaper, Smena, whose target audience is mainly young people.
4. Popular news radio program, "Petersburg Panorama".
5. The television news channel, "Telekurier"
6. A municipal newspaper, Sankt-Peterburgskie Vedomosti
7. A television program dedicated to scientific news review, "Sunday Labyrinth"
8. A documentary film studio in Siberia and a feature film studio in Moscow
9. Art clubs
10. Theaters and concert halls
11. Scientific journals on electrical engineering published in Russia
12. International scientific journals on electrical engineering
13. The St. Petersburg Orthodox Russian Diocese and Seminary
14. Religious organizations abroad

- 1. When information about Popov was released, the following points were stressed to "humanize" his image in the eyes of undergraduates and educators. He was presented**

not as a static symbol and bronze idol, but as an extraordinarily gifted, ingenious, well-rounded personality. Materials and documents about the scientist's interests, accomplishments, hobbies and family were used. The messages and themes used showed him to be a:

Dedicated Photographer: A film showing this aspect of his life, including his photographs, was produced and aired on a popular television program "Sunday Labyrinth". Popov made a number of photos of churches and cathedrals at the end of the nineteenth century. They were unique because of the buildings were destroyed in the twentieth century. This documentary also showed photographs of peasant children, ships moored in the harbor of Kronstadt, views of St. Petersburg, as well as photos Alexander Popov brought home from his trip to the World Exhibition in Chicago, USA. This television program was a success, and not only with the general viewing audience, but also with professional photographers who sent their letters of appreciation to the director of the "Sunday Labyrinth".

Music and Art Connoisseur: Alexander Popov had a large sheet music collection and his son became a composer. The city's most popular radio station devoted one of its programs to the role of music in the life of Popov's family. His son's lyric song was performed on the program. The tradition of musical soirees was revived in Popov's memorial apartment, which is part of the museum. The organizers of these soirees invited not only performers of classical music, but also sculptors, painters, actors and the faculty of the University, many of whom are genuinely interested in art.

These recitals gave a good opportunity for the budding soloists and composers in St. Petersburg to demonstrate their art to public. They were good for the Museum's image, because they enhanced its reputation in the city's artistic circles. Popov's wife was a painter. Among her friends were many famous poets at the turn of the nineteenth century. One of them was the renowned Anna Akhmatova. A Memorial Museum for Anna Akhmatova opened in 1988 and Ekaterina Kyandskaya-Popova, the then director of the Popov Museum, gave a portrait of Akhmatova done by Popov's wife to the museum. Stories of this generous act reflected positively on the Popov Museum's image.

Scientist-Believer: Alexander Popov was a fifth generation priest's son. The Museum established friendly contacts with the St. Petersburg Seminary, where the Museum's workers presented several papers about Popov. In turn, the Seminary and the St. Petersburg diocese sent a letter of congratulations on a Popov anniversary and clergy became regular attendees of recitals. They also gave talks at the Museum. These occasions attracted more faculty and staff to the Museum.

Prolific Inventor: The University's paper, Elektrik, started a series of articles on Popov's contribution to the development of X-ray and high-frequency technologies as well as X-ray measurements. Another series was dedicated to important inventions of Popov in the field of wireless communication in addition to the invention of radio receiver. All together there were 10 articles published. A local youth paper also published an article which emphasized the role of Popov in creating new UHF devices used in medicine, in developing methods of photographing explosions, and research into X-ray technology.

Representative of Russian Cultural Heritage: The memorial status of the Museum allowed it to

preserve a multitude of artifacts that helped to recreate in the museum an atmosphere of a cultured Russian family, the quintessential Russian *intelligentsia*, of the time. The Museum stressed this feature during guided tours. It drew the attention of film and television producers. The Museum became so famous that some tentative plans even evolved to shoot a new version of “Anna Karenina” in the authentic interior of the museum. Careful restoration work gave the nineteenth century professor’s apartment its original look.

Respected associate and outstanding researcher: Due to the Museum director’s efforts, the almost forgotten history of a school of physics that existed in the Electrotechnical Institute (now University), whose director was Alexander Popov, was revived. Elektrik published a series of articles by the Museum’s director about the outstanding electrical engineers who worked, at different times, in the university’s departments. In honor of Professor Voinarovsky, who succeeded Alexander Popov as Rector of the Institute, a memorial plaque was placed in one of the university’s buildings. Several events were devoted to Alexander Popov’s scientific tutors, such as Professor Khvolson, a famous physicist.

Talented Educator: Special attention was paid to Alexander Popov’s teaching activity. He designed 42 new laboratory experiments for students in the most advanced fields of physics of his time, described and published their purposes, and created unique prototypes of special devices. Few university professors equal such activity today. Popov’s contribution in creating the institute’s experimental base was brought into focus in guided tours of the Museum, and stressed in the Elektrik.

Collaborative and practical inventor: When the realistic picture of the scientific basis and the history of St. Petersburg School of Physics was reconstructed, the invention of wireless communication ceased to be, in the eyes of museum visitors, a miracle achieved by a hermit scientist. The invention is shown to be solidly based on the works of a whole constellation of physicists and the result of applied science for the benefit of the Russian Navy.

No enemy of Marconi: An important step towards ending the confrontation of the two camps of historians who could not come to terms about the “invention” of radio communication was the organization of an exhibition “Popov and Marconi – Crossing the Bridge”. Documents were displayed about the work and inventions of both, copies of patents, the book written by Marconi’s daughter, and an invitation from Marconi’s firm sent to Popov.

One of several responsible for invention of radio communication: The Museum Board discarded the thesis that Popov was “father of radio communication” and dedicated several scientific sessions to the works of Hertz, Lodge, and Branly. The Museum’s policy is to make all the documents in its possession available, and let people draw their own conclusions. Those documents indicate that May 7, 1895, Popov demonstrated, for the first time, wireless transmission of short and long signals. He published the description of this experiment and the scheme of the devices (transmitter and receiver) in a Russian scientific journal in January 1896. Marconi’s patent application is dated July 2, 1896; the patent was granted June 4, 1897.

An entrepreneur: Unlike the former propaganda claims of “basic scientist” Popov versus “entrepreneur” Marconi, the PR efforts aimed to show Popov’s entrepreneurial (commercial)

activities. Popov was shareholder of Siemens and Halske Co. and the Ducretet Company. He had drawn French and German investments in his projects. Publicizing this information fit well into the new framework of the emerging market economy in Russia and found response from many undergraduates and professors of the University. Elektrik published two articles about the commercial projects of Popov. The city newspapers did not overlook these facts and an authoritative journal published at St. Petersburg University where Alexander Popov received his degree presented him as a virtually unknown scientist, whose biography is only beginning to unfold and whose real image is much more interesting than the official version.

2. Secondary information dissemination was intended to separate Popov from the old “Iron Curtain” ideology and shows the propaganda’s adverse effects.

Popov’s invention was the outcome of his international contacts: The invention of wireless communication was shown as the result of the open, free-flowing communication among members of the international scientific community. Alexander Popov spoke several European languages (French, German and English). He read Maxwell’s works in the original when conceiving and making the receiver. Popov was well aware of the latest technical achievements by his contemporaries in the USA, Germany and France. He had his paper on the radio receiver published by a British scientific journal. Popov established professional and business contacts with the business circles of the USA, France and Germany. The Elektrik newspaper published three articles about the international links of Alexander Popov and they received many positive comments from faculty and students.

The “Iron Curtain” ideology plagued Popov’s family and relations: The official fight with the “cosmopolites” during the totalitarian Stalinist government and the “Iron Curtain” policy was a tragedy for Popov’s relatives. Popov’s son-in-law, Associate Professor Kyandsky, lost his position in the Electrotechnical institute for mentioning the names of foreign scientists whom he saw as contributors to the theory and practice of wireless communication. Soon after, he went blind and died. Many of Popov’s students and close friends were persecuted and spent their last days in the Gulag. In the 90’s, Elektrik and the city newspaper had published a number of articles stating that the Stalinist propaganda used the name of A. Popov in political intrigues, without giving a thought to the fates of his relatives.

Biographies of persecuted scientists were reconstructed using the Museum’s archival materials: More than twenty articles devoted to the biographies and fates of the scientists who were persecuted under the Stalinist regime were published in Elektrik. The Museum’s Board has established close ties with the public organization “Memorial” that is involved with the history of victims of Stalinist regime. Several brochures have been published. The public now recognizes the name of Alexander Popov in association with the disclaiming of totalitarianism and reconstructing the true picture of the history of science.

The Museum’s dire financial and physical condition was a result of past propaganda: Several issues of the television program Telekurier were devoted to the cash-strapped Museum. This part of the campaign emphasized that the history of science should not be a card in political games where achievements are used and then forgotten. Only with consistent care and attention to its needs can the Museum survive.

The University Museum was a basis for tradition: Through publications and in-house radio service the University's public was acquainted with the status of museums at other universities, devoted to great names in the history of science, such as the Roentgen Museum and the Marconi Museum. The aim was raising awareness of the role of museums as the conveyers of traditions and reflections of a civilized society.

3. To change popular attitudes towards engineering, the PR tactics were based on the following assumptions:

Throughout the world there is a growing interest in the history of engineering and inventions. There are automobile museums, clock museums, etc.

The "new" is actually a long forgotten "old". The communication technologies of the turn of the century were using substances that were prototypes of modern synergetic systems built on the principles of Prigozhin-Haken theory.

Results Achieved

1. Changed University faculty attitudes toward the Museum. A new "History of Science" course based on many of the Museum's materials was developed and included in the curriculum.
2. Financial support from the University administration. The University's Bursary, though cash-strapped, allotted some money for Museum restoration works.
3. Expansion of the Museum. The University gave additional rooms to the Museum to be used as archives and offices. An exhibition complex that included displays of old and modern technical devices was created.
4. Support from public associations. A short-wave operators association was started at the Museum and an UHW-station given by sponsors was installed there. On a UNESCO initiative, 100 years of Popov's invention was commemorated in 1994.
5. Support from professional organizations. In 1994, the Popov Radio, Electronics and Communication Association conducted a memorial conference in the Museum. Among the participants were leading scientists and historians who presented papers on scientists and inventors in England, France and Italy.
6. State government support. The celebration of the centennial anniversary of Popov's invention was, in part, sponsored by the Russian government, which also sent congratulatory telegrams to the participants of the memorial session. The agenda of any government delegation includes visiting the University Museum.
7. Enhanced humanistic value of the museum. The humanistic aspects of Popov's family and its

tradition of cultivating arts and humanities was one of the arguments used in favor of opening the University's Humanities Department. This department has in turn developed the first full-time PR degree program in Russia. The variety of academic programs offered now has helped to develop an engineering institute into a university. The public relations undergraduate students help the Museum to organize events, translate papers and articles. Some of the students did research on the history of radio and its key figures, and presented their papers at an intercollegiate conference.

8. Visibility of the Museum on the Internet. The University's Web site contains information about the Museum.
9. Emphasized the uniqueness of the Museum. Today, A.Popov's Museum is notable as one of the few memorial museums at institutions of higher education in St. Petersburg. It represents the historical traditions of one of the first electrotechnical schools of higher education in Europe and demonstrates the high scientific level of the university.

Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC)

**Muhammad I. Ayish
Department of Mass Communication
United Arab Emirates University
Al Ain, United Arab Emirates**

and

**Dean Kruckeberg
Department of Communication Studies
University of Northern Iowa
United States**

Executive Summary

In this case study, the authors show how a public relations campaign was used by Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates) National Oil Company (ADNOC) to develop its corporate image as a world player in the oil industry. The campaign, which involved participation in the “International Petroleum and Petrochemical Exhibition” (IPPE ‘97) held in conjunction with the World Petroleum Congress in Beijing, China, to attract the interest of oil and gas company representatives who attended the World Petroleum Congress Nov. 11 through 15, 1997. IPPE ‘97 provided an opportunity for ADNOC to build a solid corporate image among potential international publics, particularly in Asia. However, more systematic efforts should be carried out to document the implications of the event for the company’s corporate image. Quantitative data should have been gathered on visitor characteristics, media distribution and visitor feedback.

The Problem

North Americans commonly associate the Middle East with political instability, frequent warfare and ancient enmities. Further, the Arab/Muslim cultural milieu is considered to be unfathomable by many in Western society.

Such stereotypes of the Middle East are frequently misleading, however, for a geographic region that is larger and more diverse than many Westerners imagine. Nevertheless, the Arab/Muslim “worldview” is different from that which is predominant in the United States, not only ideologically but also socially and economically. Starck and Kruckeberg warn that we can never fully escape our own culture in understanding other cultures (1991, Fall, p. 25). Sriramesh and White argue that cultural differences among societies must affect how public relations is practiced by people within different societies (1992, p. 597). They argue for a culture-specific approach to public relations (1992, p. 609). Certainly, it would be reasonable to question whether public relations, as it is practiced in the United States, would be acceptable and effective in the Middle East.

The complexity of this question is compounded when a Middle East country practices “international” public relations with other “Third-World” as well as with “First-World” countries. El-Enad argues that public relations’ role in the “Third World” is not between an institution and its publics, as in the West, but between the material and nonmaterial aspects of the culture (1990, Spring, pp. 24-26). A predominant consideration when applying public relations theory and its corresponding strategies, tactics and techniques, especially in the “Third World,” must be such regions’ indigenous cultures. Such consideration begs the ultimate question of “universality” versus “relativism” of public relations theory and its corresponding strategies, tactics and techniques in different societies, all of which are invariably culture-bound.

This case study describes how a Middle East oil company used an international special event to communicate its story to a global audience.

Background

Public relations in Arab culture could be said to extend as far back as 1,200 years, and its contemporary practice must be considered in the context of Islamic ethical theory and Arabic laws. Grunig observes that philosophers of science today realize that theories are not value-free and that they cannot exist independently of the basic “worldview” of the people who develop and hold them (1992, p. 7). The term public relations is often misappropriated in the United Arab Emirates, just as it is in the United States, i.e., it is sometimes used to describe those individuals and departments whose duties may be restricted to procuring visas, arranging transportation and performing hospitality functions rather than practicing “professional” public relations responsibilities. Nevertheless, it would be a grave error to underestimate “professional” public relations practice in the United Arab Emirates.

UAE public relations agencies are virtually identical to their counterpart firms in the United States in their organizational structure as well as in their technological resources. UAE public relations agencies are primarily focused upon product publicity and marketing public relations, while offering a full-range of other public relations services. This is consistent with Harris’ estimate that 70 percent of the work performed by public relations agencies worldwide is marketing-related, with the remaining 30 percent distributed among corporate, governmental, environmental and financial public relations (1991, p. 9).

Qualitative research reported by Kruckeberg (1994) suggests that UAE agencies primarily use one-way asymmetrical press-agentry and public information models of public relations, while internal departments of government organizations fall within--or more readily approach--a two-way symmetrical model, or at least a symmetrical model having “mixed-motives.” Kruckeberg (1994) judged the company profiled in this case study as practicing a “community-building” model as espoused by Kruckeberg and Starck (1988), one that is primarily symmetrical.

Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) is the largest oil company in the United Arab Emirates. The company’s Public Relations Division used an international event to enhance its positive corporate image among an important segment of its external publics: Chinese and Asian oil importers and business communities.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) was established in 1971 as a federation of seven emirates, the largest and most affluent of which is Abu Dhabi. During the past three decades, the

UAE's oil-based economy has grown at a remarkable pace, despite recent sluggish performance.

The United Arab Emirates contains proven crude oil reserves of 97.8 billion barrels, or almost 10 percent of the world total. Abu Dhabi holds 94 percent of this amount, or about 92 billion barrels. Through the first half of 1997, the United Arab Emirates produced an estimated 2.48 million barrels per day (bbl/d), of which 2.23 million barrels per day were crude oil.

The overwhelming majority of oil operations in the United Arab Emirates are carried out by the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) Group of Companies that was established in Abu Dhabi in 1971 to represent the UAE Government's interests in the oil sector. Through its majority share-holdings in the Abu Dhabi Company for Onshore Oil Operations (ADCO), the Abu Dhabi Marine Operating Company (ADMA-OPCO), the ZaKum Development Company (ZADCO) and the Umm al-Dalkh Development Company (UDECO), ADNOC controls over 90 percent of the United Arab Emirates' daily output. The balance of shares in these companies is owned by foreign firms including British Petroleum, Shell, Exxon, Mobil, Total, Japanese Oil Development Company (JODCO) and London-based Partex (ADNOC, 1997).

Since its establishment more than a quarter of a century ago, ADNOC has come a long way in the development of its communication-support services to meet growing internal and external public relations needs. Although public relations existed at ADNOC since its incorporation, the functions of this sector were carried out in close conjunction with marketing activities. Growing awareness among ADNOC Companies' CEOs and communication/marketing staff of the benefits of public relations for an organization of ADNOC's caliber led to the establishment of the Public Relations Division that would be independent from the Marketing Directorate in undertaking all internal communications inside ADNOC's Groups of Companies as well as communications with external publics inside and outside the United Arab Emirates. Employing nearly 30 staff by the end of 1997, ADNOC's Public Relations Division consists of three departments: Media and Publications, Library and Audiovisual Center, and Local Relations. The Media and Publications Department is responsible for the these activities: 1) supervising the production of several Arabic-English publications such as *ADNOC News*, *Oil News*, *ADNOC Sports*, *ADNOC People*, *Non-Stop* and others; 2) building and maintaining a web site (URL: [http://www.adnoc.com /environmentlpolicies/index.htm](http://www.adnoc.com/environmentlpolicies/index.htm)) with up-to-date information on ADNOC's oil drilling operations, marketing activities and human resources; 3) producing a comprehensive CD-based database covering all aspects of ADNOC's activities for distribution at oil exhibitions and international conferences, and 4) coordinating relations with media organizations in the United Arab Emirates and supplying UAE media with a constant flow of information.

The Library and Audiovisual Centre was established in 1975 to provide ADNOC employees with all information services related to their jobs. The library contains on-line

services (Dialog and Lexis-Nexis), Internet access, Intranet links and 13,000 volumes of technical references. In 1997, a new state-of-the-art system with back-screen projection was installed at the Centre's presentation room.

The Local Relations Department is responsible for government relations, employee relations, security, visitor arrangements, hotel receptions/banquets and airport reception. This department organizes a range of social activities for employees and their families such as picnics, sporting events and cultural activities.

The central position of public relations in ADNOC's tactical day-to-day as well as long-term strategic programs is evident in the close relationship of the Public Relations Division to the company's top management. A former manager of ADNOC's Public Relations Division once noted that public relations is so important to ADNOC that it is not unusual for the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to attend a meeting accompanied by both his legal and public relations advisors. The current public relations manager, Mr. Hulaiman Al-Hamly, completely agrees with this perception of public relations' vital role, especially when it comes to managing communications with a wide range of clients, such as partner companies, oil importers and the public-at-large consumers of ADNOC's products.

ADNOC's public relations functions include advising management on the company's corporate image; coordinating with the ADMA-OPCO and ADNOC Directorates in the implementation of public relations-related policies; enhancing ADNOC's corporate identity locally, regionally and internationally; providing an efficient delivery of information services through the Library and Audiovisual Centre; establishing favorable relations with government agencies and local government departments as well as foreign embassies in the United Arab Emirates; and providing travel services, banquets, reception, local transportation and escort services for VIPs. ADNOC defines its publics as including the United Arab Emirates government, media, employees, customers and shareholders/industrial partners.

In seeking to reinforce a solid corporate image, ADNOC's Public Relations Division draws on a range of themes. These include: a bright performance record; ambitions for the future; professionalism in the context of a rewarding working environment; acquisition of state-of-the-art technologies; commitment to quality; systematic nationalization; commitment to high safety and health standards, and environmental protection; and fair treatment of all customers and suppliers. These image components are manifested in ADNOC's public relations outputs including well-written media releases; high-quality publications; standardized business cards and employee uniforms; sleek Internet sites workshops on issues of significance to the oil company; and participation in national and international events.

Although ADNOC's logo has traditionally consisted of a black-and-white falcon

superimposed on a blue rectangular background, the logo's simplicity and sky-color component reflect the company's significant environmental awareness. ADNOC has developed a "Group Policy" on environmental issues that requires industrial activities to be carried out in a manner designed to minimize health, safety and environmental risks and to protect the health and safety of employees, contractors, customers and the community-at-large as well as the environment in which the Group activities are conducted. The company maintains a Crisis Management Team (CMT) to deal with crisis situations, using an internationally recognized standard for crisis response called the Incident Command System (ICS). The system clearly designates the roles and responsibilities for crisis response by key management groups. In late 1997, ADNOC's Public Relations Division organized a workshop on crisis management to help the company staff to prepare for the effective handling of potential risk situations. It also assisted in organizing the "ADNOC Health, Safety and Environment Award" for employees and contractors who have good records in enhancing health-and-safety standards as well as in preserving the environment.

Goals and Objectives

Southeast Asian countries are becoming increasingly important UAE trading partners. For example, Japan imports over 63 percent of its oil from the United Arab Emirates, which, in turn, imports more than \$600 million in goods and services from Asian countries each year. As part of a strategy to diversify its oil-based economy, the United Arab Emirates has sought to attract Asian investors into its lucrative non-oil market sectors and, at the same time, to create external demands for its products in Asian countries. A recent conference on Asian perspectives on Arabian Gulf countries noted that the two regions are likely to maintain long-term relationships of mutual economic dependence (Conference on Asian Perspectives Towards the Arab Gulf, 1997, Nov.15-16).

ADNOC's involvement in international oil-related activities, such as conferences and exhibitions, has been a major strategy underlying the development of its corporate image as a world player in the oil sector. Inspired by Asia's booming economies and promising markets, the ADNOC Group of Companies participated in the "International Petroleum and Petrochemical Exhibition (IPPE '97)" held in conjunction with the World Petroleum Congress (WPC) in Beijing, China, Nov. 11-15, 1997.

The initial idea for participation was originated by staff in the Marketing Directorate who called on the Public Relations Division to produce some publications for distribution at the event. Yet, as the Public Relations Division manager noted, it was felt that Public Relations Division staff should participate fully through involvement, establishing contacts with IPPE '97 organizers, setting up ADNOC's exhibit and making themselves available to visitors at the exhibition.

Nearly 4,300 people from 88 countries attended the World Petroleum Congress that was organized under the theme “Technology and Leadership in Oil Industry.” Sixty-eight of the participants were international and Chinese oil company chief executive officers as well as representatives from internationally known energy and oil organizations. The exhibition was an opportunity for companies in the oil industry (such as ADNOC) to display their drilling-and-refining equipment, petrochemical products, natural gas transport systems, production-and-processing machinery and pollution control systems.

ADNOC had two objectives for participating in the IPPE ‘97: 1) to highlight the company’s role as a leading organization with an international reputation in the oil-and-gas industry, and 2) to familiarize the Chinese business community with ADNOC’s products and services, especially in the petrochemical industries sector (ADNOC Group Takes Part in Beijing Exhibition, 1997, Oct., pp. 14-15).

Strategic Tactics and Techniques

ADNOC Group of Companies’ delegation to the IPPE ‘97 was headed by Mr. Hulaiman Al Hamly, ADNOC’s Public Relations Division manager. The Group sponsored an extensive exhibit that featured logos of subsidiary companies such as Abu Dhabi Gas Liquefaction Ltd. (ADGAS), Abu Dhabi Gas Industries, Ltd. (GASCO) and ADCO, in addition to ADNOC’s main logo. Processing and Marketing Directorates staff participated in the event, together with representatives from ADGAS, ADCO, Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC-FOD) and Ruwais Teitilyeu Industries (FERTIL).

ADNOC Group staff promoted the company’s high-quality, award-winning products. These staff members briefed visitors on the UAE’s business environment and on opportunities that are available for international investors. The display contained printed materials on the ADNOC Group of Companies and their petrochemical products, compact disc-based databases and data-show presentations. The United Arab Emirates ambassador to China as well as the UAE delegation to the World Petroleum Congress were present at the exhibition.

Results Achieved

Company sources said the ADNOC Group exhibit attracted a large number of visitors. They included dignitaries such as: the ambassadors of the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman and Belgium; the Chinese Vice Premier; official delegates who were participating in the World Petroleum Congress; and members of the Chinese and Asian business communities. Upon his visit to the ADNOC exhibit, the Chinese Vice Premier was honored with a symbolic gift that was presented to him by the UAE ambassador to China.

“The China exhibition was one of the most important events to be staged in East Asia,” said Shukri Al-Haddad of ADNOC-FOD. “The ADNOC Group’s participation in that fair proved to be successful and attracted interest from various representatives of oil and gas companies” (Staff Talk About Their Experiences in China, 1997, November, pp. 1, 3).

Jamal Al Awartani, another member of the UAE team who participated in the fair, said, “All visitors had shown great interest in our products and services, and this reflects the important role the ADNOC Group plays in world oil and gas markets” (Ibid.). Nasser Al Jassmi of ADGAS noted that his company’s participation in the event had given it an extra incentive to closely observe the Chinese market. He added that the exhibition had proven to be a success, considering the large number of companies that had participated in it (Ibid.).

Conclusion

ADNOC’s participation in IPPE ‘97 underscores the centrality of reinforcing the company’s international visibility as a major world player in the oil sector. Realizing that the World Petroleum Conference would attract thousands of people who represented the growing world oil industry, ADNOC’s top management--upon advice from the Public Relations Division--saw IPPE ‘97 as a golden opportunity to build a solid corporate image for the company among potential international publics and particularly in Asia. The centrality of ADNOC’s participation in the event was highlighted by the large ADNOC marketing and public relations delegation, headed by the manager of ADNOC’s Public Relations Division, himself.

The large number of visitors at the ADNOC exhibit, as reported by ADNOC participants, suggests remarkable public relations gains by this UAE oil company. Hundreds of pamphlets and compact discs were distributed at the event to interested visitors. In the meantime, staff representing the company’s subsidiaries were active at the interpersonal level in communicating ADNOC’s goals, philosophies and prospects for cooperation.

Public relations at ADNOC, as with its counterparts in other UAE organizations, continues to be practiced in association with marketing activities, despite the structural independence of both sectors. Much effort was exerted during the IPPE ‘97 event to develop good customer relations. Thus, one might see more emphasis on finding business clients (importers of crude oil or petrochemical products) based on immediate mutual economic benefits than on strategic relationships. The dual public relations-marketing approach to IPPE ‘97 might be justified by noting that ADNOC already has a worldwide reputation and that the event should be utilized to build on that reputation by “getting down to business with customers.” Yet, the large number of participants in the World Petroleum Congress and visitors to the exhibit should be a catalyst to increase public relations among new publics.

More systematic efforts must be carried out to document the implications of the event for

the company's corporate image. Views expressed by participating ADNOC staff provide a good insight into the degree of interaction between ADNOC's activities and the surrounding environment, but these views should be systematized at future events by providing quantitative data on visitor characteristics, media distribution and visitor feedback. Such data could then be evaluated in relation to further developments pertaining to ADNOC's corporate image and marketing performance in the long run.

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Giving Two Hundred Million Kids A Childhood

**Hugh M. Culbertson
Ohio University
United States**

Executive Summary

Throughout the developing world, an estimated 200 million school-age children work full-time rather than attend school. Millions of them work very long hours in unhealthy environments for just a few cents per hour. And many slave away for firms that contract with U. S. owned companies. Thus activists often refer to child laborers as the “dark side” of the modern global economy.

A leading crusader against such abuse is Charles Kernaghan, sometimes called the Ralph Nader of the garment industry. He is executive director of the National Labor Committee, a New York-based organization supported by many labor and human rights organizations.

Kernaghan has had some success -- along with frustrations -- in getting U. S. corporations to insure humane treatment and pay for workers in Central America and elsewhere. In a high-profile 1996 case, he called attention to abuses at a Honduran plant which produced a line of apparel items associated with U. S. television talk-show hostess Kathie Lee Gifford. After expressing initial outrage at Kernghan’s accusations, Gifford became a vocal ally in the crusade against child labor.

The National Labor Committee has pursued at least two broad strategies. First, it has sought to stimulate alliances among government, labor, human rights, religious, and even corporate groups. And second, it has dramatized child-labor abuses around the **world to convince consumers their purchases and** messages can make a difference.

Kernaghan has demonstrated the utility of careful research and a flare for gaining media attention. This report outlines many of his basic tactics.

The Problem

In Thailand, children in leather-handbag factories are forced to take amphetamines so they can gain energy and work overtime.¹

In Brazil’s charcoal industry, tens of thousands of children work in soot-drenched plants producing ingredients for steel alloys used in making U. S. cars.²

In Central America, teenage girls at a textile plant reportedly had only two five-minute bathroom breaks during a 14-hour workday. These girls had to show tickets to take such breaks.³

Throughout the developing world, an estimated 200 million children of school age go to work rather than school. They make a variety of products: clothing, shoes, soccer balls, carpets and so on. They are often called the “dark side” of the new global economy.

Third-world children frequently work 12 or more hours each day, six or seven days a week. They lean over worktables and looms, damaging their posture forever. They inhale toxic chemicals in poorly ventilated workshops, creating lifelong respiratory problems. And malnutrition often stunts their growth.⁴

In 1980, Rev. David Dyson, pastor of the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, founded an organization called the National Labor Committee (NLC) to combat such worker abuses in Central America. Ten years later, leadership of this small but dedicated group went to Charles Kernaghan, who had become interested in Central American human rights in 1985 while protesting against El Salvador's civil war.⁵

Headquartered in New York City, the NLC is supported by about 50 labor and human rights organizations. It organizes fact-finding delegations to Central America. It publishes and circulates reports based on these tours. And it seeks to protect endangered trade unionists and human rights activists.⁶

According to a 1996 article in *Women's Wear Daily*, the organization had a budget that year of only \$254,000.~ Another article says 30 percent of the group's support during that year came from UNITE, the Union of Needletrade, Industrial, and Textile Employees.⁸

In recent years, according to its site on the World Wide Web, the NLC has expanded its focus to address economic issues such as trade policy, job exports and international labor standards.⁹

According to *Women's Wear Daily*, Kernaghan has said he learns of suspected problems in factories through contacts with churches, human rights groups and unions. He then meets with workers and asks them to keep apparel labels as evidence that they produce for U.S. customers.¹⁰

He is quoted as saying that, after interviewing other workers for corroboration, he then notifies U. S. manufacturers or retailers that have contracted for the work and tells them about substandard conditions.¹¹ For example, he sent a 13-page letter to Disney CEO Michael Eisner detailing problems at Disney's Haitian plants.¹² If he doesn't get a timely response -- or he gets one he regards as inadequate -- he goes public with the case.¹³

Critics allege, however, that he has sometimes mentioned names of companies connected with allegations without first notifying those firms. It's suggested that such confrontational tactics may encourage companies to pull out of Central America, thereby damaging the local economy.¹⁴

However, Kernaghan has been conciliatory at times. For example, he apologized to TV talk-show hostess Kathie Lee Gifford after publicly condemning her lack of knowledge about conditions in plants which produced clothing that bore her name.¹⁵

Furthermore, other organizations with more moderate reputations may build bridges to companies with which the NLC's relationship is strained. One such group is the International Labor and Education Rights Fund. Its executive director, Pharis Harvey, sees Kernaghan as an instigator with good research and media skills who complements ILERF efforts.¹⁶

Also, other critics, pointing to his union ties, accuse Kernaghan of a hidden agenda -- discouraging manufacturers from setting up or contracting with foreign plants. In this way, some claim, he seeks to save jobs for American workers. However, the crusader denies this. His real concern, he says, is to protect workers' rights.¹⁷

Kernaghan also is a frequent target for criticism from corporations and governments for his efforts. For example, Honduran businessmen recently sought to expel him for harming the country's reputation.¹⁸ And government leaders in that country claimed he acted unfairly by presenting a few isolated cases of abuse as representative of the nation's overall practice.¹⁹

A caveat seems in order here. The National Labor Committee works closely with many government, non-profit, and corporate groups. Activities listed below are not clearly attributable solely or primarily to the NLC.

We now provide a quick overview of child labor's complex context.

Background

Social, economic and political factors relate to each other closely. And situations in the third world interact in complex ways with those in the developed world. However, these three categories provide some focus for discussion.

Economic Factors

Through much of Asia, Africa and Latin America, poverty is grinding and widespread. Nations with a colonial heritage often have small, wealthy elites along with millions and millions of dirt-poor peasants and workers. Elites tend to run major institutions, with a very small middle class providing few checks and balances.²⁰

The poor worker often has no effective voice, according to Kernaghan. Having little education, leadership or advice, she (and the poor worker is most often female) seldom knows her rights under the law. Also, when she speaks up to defend herself, she is often fired. Outside her sweatshop, 1,000 other desperately poor people stand ready to take her job.²¹

At the same time, western business interests see vast foreign markets and a chance to exploit cheap labor. Why pay \$5.25 an hour -- the U. S. minimum wage -- when you can hire Burmese, Haitian or Honduran kids for 10-30 cents an hour? Free competition between strong and weak usually works to the advantage of the strong. Thus developed countries have championed free-trade initiatives such as the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement and the Caribbean Basin Initiatives. Partly as a result of this, jobs have moved quickly to the third world.

In the United States and other western countries, corporate mergers, expansion of mutual funds, and other factors allegedly have contributed to intense drive for short-term profits. That, in turn, appears often to leave little time for concern about 10-year-olds chained to looms halfway around the world.

Political factors

In the third world, totalitarian regimes often worry more about stability --remaining in power -- than about meeting the humanitarian and economic needs of their people.

Also, governments of newly independent nations resent -- and seek to resist -- influence from other nations and non-governmental organizations. They need investments and know it. But they regard external protests against their culture and methods as a threat to their own cherished sovereignty.

At the same time, the U. S. government is influenced strongly by the business interests mentioned above. And these interests fear losing free-trade opportunities if they focus heavily on human-rights concerns such as child labor.²²

Western corporate leaders often fall back on the following arguments when criticized for contributing to inhumane use of children and adult workers: **They cannot control what foreign subcontractors do**, so it's **not their fault**. A firm such as The Gap or Disney, Inc. lacks the expertise and staff to hire foreign workers on its own. It must rely on firms and recruiters in the third world who speak the language and understand customs there. In 1996, for example, a Disney spokesman argued that a subcontracting firm which made his company's products in Burma was "three steps removed" from Disney.²³

Things **are terrible in the third world to begin with**, so low wages don't **really hurt living standards**. A wage of 10-20 cents an hour is terrible, but it's better than nothing.

These latter arguments lead one into the complex social context of child labor.

Social Context

Robert Weissman has described what he calls a myth of inevitability about development. This myth holds that child labor is an unavoidable consequence of poverty -- and that it may be necessary to help countries develop economically.²⁴ After all, the United States was a developing country which exploited some of its children not too long ago!

Particularly on peasant farms, according to this argument, many workers are needed to hoe the rice, pick fruit and so on. Without that labor, whole families may starve. And the vast majority of the world's exploited children work on farms.²⁵

This is false reasoning, according to activist Pharis Harvey of the International Labor and Education Rights Fund. In fact, he says, child labor perpetuates poverty. Sick children who work long hours with poor nutrition and no health care are destined to become sick, non-productive adults. And lack of education prevents young people from preparing for an economy that requires increasing sophistication in technology, economics and other fields.²⁶

Ironically, this myth stands in marked contrast to a basic idea held by many Americans. That's the notion of **inevitable progress** and expansion in a technological age -- and in a young country which recently felt that it had a vast frontier in which to expand.²⁷

In the United States, people do have generous instincts. They give many millions of dollars each year to worthy causes.²⁸ Thus they are quite open to television appeals that show third-world children with bloated bellies, sad faces, dirty playgrounds, and very little to wear.

However, the concept of unlimited expansion blinds these good-hearted Americans to a truth spelled out forcibly by Chairman Mao Zedong in China almost 50 years ago. **If everyone is to lead an even marginally acceptable** life, the rich must sacrifice some of their luxuries.²⁹ Such blinding, in turn, doubtless helps make U. S. citizens question the need to dig deeply in their wallets and souls for the benefit of third-world urchins.

Another contrast between western and many third-world cultures deals with the differing views of slavery and servitude.

In some places, women and children simply do not enjoy the respect and rights -- admittedly still incomplete -- that their western counterparts have gained. For example, in Thailand, young girls, and sometimes boys, are sold into sweatshop labor and prostitution by desperately poor parents.

Women account for a vast majority of abused laborers around the world because employers tend to assume they are docile and compliant.

In Pakistan, in an arrangement called peshgi, a recruiter gives advance payment to a

child's parents and places her in a carpet factory -- usually in the capital city of Lahore. The child must then work for that employer until she pays off her family's debt incurred in the transaction.

Often, partly due to fraudulent accounting, the debt grows larger because of fines and penalties assessed by the employer. A young person may remain in bondage for years, sometimes never escaping.³⁰

Social **stratification** contributes to such outrageous practices. At a very basic level, society's leaders do not respect those of lower classes as true humans worthy of compassion and opportunity.

In the United States, Kernaghan and other leaders have focused on peshgi and other forms of child bondage in gaining support and stirring outrage.³¹ After all, what could be more opposed to the famous statement, in the preamble to the U. S. constitution, that all humans are created equal ... with a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?

Of course, Americans have been imperfect at best in living up to ideals of equality and freedom. A nation which bought, sold and abused slaves for decades continues to struggle with the tragic consequences of its past.³² Perhaps that struggle should make U. S. citizens especially sensitive to bondage-related issues. Unfortunately, psychological avoidance may often lead them to turn a blind eye.

The author of this case learned in 1986 that westerners can't be too generous in a stratified society without running into problems.

He and his wife became very fond of their Filipina maid, Nora, while teaching in Manila. Before our arrival, Nora had earned two dollars per day while working very hard. We increased that to six dollars -- less than one-fourth of the U. S. minimum wage then!

Pretty soon, the lady in charge of our apartment complex complained. "You're giving Nora too much," she said. "Other maids working in the complex will hear about this and be jealous. Further, Nora hasn't learned to manage her money well. She'll spend it unwisely and not use it to help her five-year-old nephew."

We compromised, paying Nora about \$4 per day outright and buying schoolbooks, crayons and pencils for her nephew. We remain close to Nora, even today. But the whole episode was surprisingly difficult.

One other strand of history poses a problem for crusaders like Kernaghan. Until quite

recently, Americans tended toward isolation. Surrounded by two great oceans, they developed a kind of parochialism that some still promote today.

However, economic interdependence and modern travel have made the world seem smaller. Surely Pakistani kids seem less remote today than they did 50 years ago.

Goals and Objectives

The NLC's basic goal is to improve the working conditions and pay of laborers around the world. Toward that end, Kernaghan and his colleagues have focused on several specific objectives.

The author could not find a concise statement of organizational objectives. However, analysis of press coverage -- and of organizational activities as presented on the NLC web site -- suggests at least seven.

First, the NLC seeks to raise awareness of the problem of child labor through widely publicized tours and events, some of which are described below.

Second, the committee hopes corporations will formulate **codes of** conduct, along with forthright statements of their moral values undergirding these codes, which will govern working conditions at home and abroad.³³

Of course, codes of conduct work only if effectively enforced -- and if implemented in good faith by factory supervisors and owners. *New York Times* columnist Bob Hebert has noted that codes often are superficial tools designed to enhance corporate reputations but do little else.³⁴

Third, the NLC persuades and pressures firms to implement monitoring of working conditions. Corporations tend to resist such monitoring, claiming the monitors may impose radical demands and violate reasonable labor-management relations. However, firms such as California Safety Compliance now do monitoring, which has become fairly widespread.

Monitoring advocates must address such questions as the following. In each case, the NLC and its allies usually crusade for the second alternative listed while corporations tend to argue for the first.

1. Should monitors be viewed as consultants -- or as having power to publicize abuses and participate in corporate decision-making?

2. Should monitors be **internal or external**? The latter involves participation by both western and third world human rights groups. Internal monitoring invites cover-ups and abuses, according to the NLC.³⁵ For one thing, workers may remain silent to avoid possible retaliation for speaking up where inspectors are hired by the company which pays them.³⁶

3. Should monitoring be closed or open to public scrutiny? Those who distrust corporate intentions favor the latter, while some (not all) corporations are hesitant at best.³⁷

4. Should companies view contract hiring of foreign labor as a source of **profit** rather than an operating expense? This really deals with basic corporate premises and attitudes. And Susan Cowell, vice-president of UNITE, contends that the latter is the only responsible option.³⁸

Fourth, many feel discerning consumers need to **ask where a product comes from, who made it, and what values are shown** by the manufacturer. Given their humane instincts noted earlier, Americans should be inclined to ask such questions.³⁹

Fifth, in rare instances, human-rights advocates encourage corporations to avoid -- or stop hiring **firms and workers in other countries**.

In most cases, Kernaghan opposes this course. He was incensed recently when a huge clothing firm, The Gap, pulled out of El Salvador following accusations of sexual harassment and repression of union-organizing efforts. He claimed the pullout really punished the almost all-female work force at the factory involved. The implication was that, if workers speak up, they lose their livelihood.⁴⁰

Pulling out does not really help the economy, according to many observers. Ten or fifteen cents an hour is terrible, they note. However, it's better than nothing -- and perhaps better than such alternatives as death by starvation or slave labor on a government chain gang.

In some cases such as that of Burma, human rights advocates do call for a complete pullout. In that country, corporate investment is said to prop up the dictatorial military regime known as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC).⁴¹

It doesn't matter if the investment is large or small, says Hle-Tint, a Burmese activist now in exile in the United States. It gives legitimacy to the military.⁴² Unfortunately, the SLORC's grip on power seems so strong that some observers see no point in resisting.

All of this suggests a sixth goal: getting corporate leaders and the American public to

understand that their protests and refusals do make a difference. Third-world leaders need their investments and jobs to maintain armies and the often-reluctant support of their people. Thus officials often are open to negotiation.

Looking at these six goals, goals 1 and 4 focus on change among U. S. citizens as a whole. Goals 2, 3, and 5 define **corporate leaders** as a key public. And goal 6 deals with both citizens and leaders.

A seventh goal introduces two other key publics: U. S. legislators and the executive branch of government in Washington, D. C. This goal: seek **legislation limiting and steering child labor here and abroad**, especially as it relates to free-trade agreements such as NAFTA.

Unfortunately, U. S. manufacturers often fear retaliation by trading partners if they take such steps. Respected legislators such as Sen. Nancy Kassebaum, Kansas Republican, have urged extensive use of rhetoric and threats before actually imposing trade sanctions. Activists, of course, tend to regard such calls as hypocritical attempts to look good while really sidestepping the issue.⁴³

Strategic Tactics and Techniques

What do the National Labor Committee and allied organizations do to achieve these goals? First, the NLC has worked hard to form coalitions among corporations, unions, government agencies and non-governmental religious and human rights organizations.

Kernaghan remains skeptical of corporate intentions, often facing down leaders in public fora and presuming they'll do the right thing only when it serves their self-interest and bottom lines. At the same time, he seeks to give credit where it's due, sometimes generating publicity about good as well as poor human-rights performance.⁴⁴ He has had some success in convincing business, government and NGO leaders that united they stand, but divided they all fall.

Second, Kernaghan has tried in several ways to stir public **concern** — as well as action -- about exploitation of laborers.

In pursuing this strategy, the crusader shows awareness of a conclusion long emphasized by mass-communication researchers. The media often have little impact partly because coverage of issues doesn't show people how they can affect huge institutions and distant events.⁴⁵

In fact, "little guys" can have impact. Bottom-line oriented companies fear the loss of revenue and are prone to look carefully for clues about discontent in the provinces.

“For every letter you send to a company, it (the company) assumes 500 other people feel the same,” according to Kernaghan as quoted in *The Washington Post*. “For every phone call, the company assumes 250 people feel the same.”⁴⁶

Specific tactics used in carrying out these strategies include:

1. **Coalition Formation.** In 1996, partly as a result of campaigns by the NLC and others, the White House brought together several major companies to form the Apparel Industry Partnership. Included were Nike, Reebok, Liz Claiborne, and Nicole Miller.⁴⁷

In April 1997, the partnership agreed voluntarily, after months of negotiation, to bar the use of prison and other forced labor. Also, it would prohibit employment of children under 15 in most nations, or under 14 where the country’s law allows.

The partnership’s agreement recognizes workers’ rights for “freedom of association and collective bargaining.” It stipulates that workers must be paid “at least the minimum wage ... or the prevailing industry wage, whichever is higher.” And it generally limits the workweek to 60 hours except in “extraordinary business circumstances.”⁴⁸

While it got off to a good start, the Partnership soon encountered resistance. In fact, two firms -- Kane Kane, Inc. and The Wamaco Group --resigned early on, claiming their own monitoring was ample.⁴⁹

Compromise soon occurred partly to avoid further defections. The Task Force proposed that, while firms hired by the company involved may serve as principal monitors, garment firms would be obliged only to consult with human rights groups.

Writing in *The Nation*, Eyal Press commented, “Some good may come of this, but it’s not at all clear what the nature of such consultation will be.”⁵⁰

The Apparel Industry Partnership also has considered creating a “no-sweatshop” label that would assure consumers they are buying products made under acceptable conditions.⁵¹

In 1997, the NLC brought together more than 100 religious groups, unions, students, women and grassroots organizations. Leaders called the campaign the “Holiday Season of Conscience.” Workers collected one million signatures to send to President Clinton and the U. S. Congress. The petition urged the government to insure that companies operating assembly plants abroad abide by international labor standards.⁵²

2. **Special Events.** On October 4, 1997, the “Holiday Season of Conscience” campaign

kicked off with a “National Day of Conscience to End Sweatshops” held in 35 cities nationwide. Participants in New York included nuns, children from Harlem, retired doctors, college students, clergy, a dragon from Chinatown, and a Mexican dance troupe.

Corporations take note when they see such people, says Kernaghan. They cannot easily dismiss the Sisters of Saint Dominic or kids from Central America as well organized but small interest groups.⁵³

3. Arranged Tours. In 1995, Kernaghan arranged a tour of the United States featuring two appealing young ladies, Judith Viera, 18, and Claudia Molina, 17, former employees of sweat shops in El Salvador and Honduras.⁵⁴ Both explained the horrible conditions under which they had worked. Also, speaking in Washington, D. C., Viera produced tickets which she had to present for the twice-a-day trips to the bathroom noted at the beginning of this case.⁵⁵

A California firm named The Global Exchange brought to the United States a worker fired at an Indonesian factory which made Nike Shoes for the U. S. The woman was escorted to Nike’s Oregon headquarters where she was forcibly barred from entering in an episode that gained press attention. Resulting publicity allegedly led Nike to improve workplace monitoring of its Indonesian subcontractors.⁵⁶

Also, Kernaghan has encouraged corporate officials to visit third-world countries for two reasons. First, they learn for themselves what working conditions are like. And second, they demonstrate corporate resolve to local contractors.⁵⁷

4. Working with Congressional Allies to Arrange Hearings. In September 1994, Kernaghan arranged for a Senate hearing chaired by now-retired Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, Ohio Democrat, to discuss ways of making companies accountable for treatment of foreign workers. At the hearing, a 15-year-old Honduran girl explained her suffering in a garment factory. She held up a Liz Claiborne sweater identical to those she had made in a sweatshop two years earlier.⁵⁸

Such hearings gain considerable media attention, especially in the current era of C-SPAN and C-SPAN2.

5. Taking Advantage of Newsworthy People and Events. In late April 1996, Kernaghan told the Democratic Policy Committee, a House of Representatives policy guidance group, that illegal child labor was being used in Choloma, Honduras to make the Kathie Lee Gifford Collection of apparel. He immediately asked the Wal-Mart retail chain, which exclusively sold this line, to consent to independent monitoring of contractors.⁵⁹

According to Kathie Lee's attorney, she called Wal-Mart when informed of this charge and was advised that the firm's relationship with the Choloma plant had been severed.⁶⁰

A well-known talk-show hostess with a family-oriented image, Kathie Lee Gifford began talking a great deal on TV about the child-labor issue. She said she had no idea her jeans were produced by children in such squalid conditions, and apparently few doubted her. Her husband, Frank Gifford, a famous ex-football star and TV sportscaster, also began speaking against such injustices.

Furthermore, at a meeting which Kernaghan attended, Kathie Lee signed off on independent monitoring of Global Fashions, Wal-Mart's Honduran contractor. In effect, she became a high-profile ally of the NLC.⁶¹

History shows that events often help drive consumer receptivity to boycotts. The 1976 Soweto Massacre in South Africa and the 1995 killing of activist and author Ken Saro-Wiwa in Nigeria were turning points in getting U. S. consumers to question the role of companies working in those countries, according to Richard Knight, a research associate for The Africa Fund.⁶²

Also, the poor human rights record of Burma's government and the high profile of pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi have added impetus to campaigns against Pepsi Cola and Unocal, which had major investments in that country.⁶³

Martyrs often symbolize causes. And the NLC, along with other groups, took advantage of one such martyr, a boy named Iqbal Mashi who began working in a Pakistani carpet factory at age 4.⁶⁴

Held under peshgi, the bondage arrangement described earlier, Iqbal somehow escaped from his loom and came to the United States at age 12. He was honored by the Reebok Corporation and guaranteed a scholarship by Brandies University.

However, after returning home, he was shot and killed in his home village. Many suspected the killers were opponents of workers' rights in Pakistan. In any case, his death helped galvanize the worldwide movement against abuse of child laborers.⁶⁵

In another case, the National Labor Committee leveraged publicity by arranging protests at labor-management negotiations involving Disney, Inc. In May 1997, about 20 people sat on the sidewalk in front of a building where negotiations were taking place in New York City. Some were in costume as Mickey or Minnie Mouse and characters from the Disney movie, *101 Dalmatians*. *Newsday* covered the event.⁶⁶

In 1995, a raid by the U. S. Labor Department in El Monte, California brought labor abuse in garment factories closer to home -- and to the top of U. S. media agendas. Raiders found about 75 Thai women locked in slave-like quarters, assembling clothes for huge retail firms.⁶⁷

U. S. Secretary of Labor Robert Reich initiated a campaign called “No Sweat” partly because he observed the Thai women living and working behind barbed wire. Factory supervisors allegedly threatened the women with physical harm if they left the premises.⁶⁸

Kernaghan and Reich also emphasized the fact that undocumented or illegal aliens in U. S. sweatshops are vulnerable. They’d be deported if they complained to authorities about their pay, working conditions, and treatment. Thus thousands of garment sweatshops have sprung up in major cities, according to the U. S. General Accounting Office.⁶⁹

6. Developing Dramatic Statistics and Arguments. For example, the following quote from Kernaghan appeared in a letter to the editor of the Palm Beach (FL) *Post* on September 8, 1997: The workers in Haiti are paid just 6 cents for every \$199.99 Disney 101 Dalmatians outfit they sew, which means their wages amount to 3/10 of 1 percent of the sale price.... If the Disney company were to redirect the \$181 million in stock options it gave to its CEO, Michael Eisner, in 1996 -- the largest corporate grant in the history of the world -- it could double the wages of all 19,000 assembly workers in Haiti for the next 14 years.⁷⁰

In the same vein, Kernaghan alleged that Burmese workers making Ralph Lauren garments were paid a mere six cents an hour during the last half of 1996.⁷¹

Also, the NLC reported that teenaged girls in Vietnam were forced to work 70 hours a week, earning just 6 cents an hour and breathing dangerous poisons. The girls were making toys that served as prizes for “Happy Meals,” sold at McDonald’s, something many U. S. families could relate to.⁷² Sometimes not-so-subtle wording adds to the drama. During nation-wide picketing of The Gap retail clothing chain, NLC representatives handed out leaflets, one of which said: Do you have what it takes to be a real Gap kid. Are you a young girl between the ages of 12 and 15? Can you work 18-hour days for 56 cents without bathroom breaks? Can you shrug off sexual assault? If you answer yes to these questions, we need you. Come and make Gap clothes at the Mandarin, Inc. factory in El Salvador.⁷³

7. Published Lists. Kernaghan and his colleagues have created two very different types of lists.

First, based on NLC inspection trips, they developed plans to publish a list of U. S. firms

with the worst record in labor and human rights.⁷⁴ Press reports in November 1997 listed an address and Web site which one could use in obtaining the list.⁷⁵ Also, in a related effort, the NLC led a “Mickey is a Rat” campaign against companies paying workers just 33 cents an hour to manufacture Disney clothing in Haiti.⁷⁶

Second, he encouraged U. S. Labor Secretary Robert Reich to produce a list of “Fashion Trendsetters,” exemplary firms pledged to no-sweatshop operations.⁷⁷ And he publicized a landmark agreement between the NLC and The Gap to allow independent human-rights monitoring at plants affiliated with The Gap in that country.⁷⁸

Many tactics were carried out to dramatize the child-labor issue and mobilize public opinion and action. We now summarize some of these.

1. Targeting of Specific Firms. The Gap agreement referred to earlier did not occur by chance. Kernaghan and his colleagues went to 59 cities throughout the country, educating people about poor conditions at the firm’s offshore apparel factories. In each city, a local campaign committee was formed to keep activities going.⁷⁹

2. Focus on Corporate and Consumer Self-Interests. Kernaghan apparently recognizes that Americans are rather self-centered. They’ll support a project primarily when they feel they’ll gain from it. For example: *Kernaghan publicized the claim that companies which continue investing in Burma may be out of luck there when and if democracy is restored under popular leader and Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi. Contracts with the current illegitimate regime may not be honored by a future government.⁸⁰

*He also told Americans that improving working conditions and pay around the world will eventually help workers in the United States.⁸¹ Presumably that’s because as wages go up in developing nations, those in western countries will not look so high, by comparison, to employers. Thus jobs may “stay home” in the States.

3. Telling Consumers How to Make a Difference. Simply letting a company know the issue does concern you as a consumer helps, according to Linda Golodoner, director of the National Consumer’s League. If enough people ask, she believes, word that consumers care is bound to “trickle up” to management.⁸²

he also encourages consumers to ask sales clerks and store managers about company labor practices. In addition, most companies have Web sites with e-mail address to which one can send quick messages.⁸³

Results Achieved

Solid research seldom is available to document clearly the effects of cause-oriented groups such as the National Labor Committee. "Effects" obviously stem in part from many factors not under the group's control. Also, such organizations have shoestring budgets that do not allow for much formal audience research or content analysis.

However, a review of press coverage and the NLC Web site document several effects. For example, as noted earlier The Gap, Liz Claiborne, and other firms have agreed to monitoring and established codes of conduct involving foreign labor.⁸⁴

And campaigns affecting these companies have brought in many messages via telephone, regular mail, and e-mail, suggesting widespread public awareness and concern.⁸⁵

During the Gap campaign, as noted earlier, NLC personnel went to 59 cities to educate people about offshore conditions. In most of these cities, according to Kernaghan, citizen groups formed during the campaign remained active for at least some time afterward.⁸⁶

The NLC and allied labor groups generally opposed President Clinton's 1997 request for authority to expand trade arrangements without congressional approval -- on a so-called "fast track." Such opposition was based partly on claims that a fast track could bypass provisions protecting workers' rights.⁸⁷

And it seems reasonable to speculate that such opposition, especially within the president's own party, contributed to Congress's failure to pass fast-track legislation in 1997.

A U. S. Labor Department survey released in October 1996 reported that, of 45 U. S. companies responding, 36 had adopted policies prohibiting children from producing goods they support. Also, these firms have distributed related codes of conduct to their suppliers.⁸⁸

At five factories in Haiti, manufacturers with whom Disney had contracted were paying workers about 12 cents an hour to make memorabilia relating to such films as "Pocahontas," according to Kernaghan. However, after an NLC report on this was released, Disney improved wages to about 30 cents an hour.⁸⁹

Kernaghan's activities have generated considerable press coverage. A search of the "News" library in the *Lexis-Nexis* database with the key words "Charles Kernaghan and the National Labor Committee" yielded 303 articles in leading magazines and metropolitan

newspapers between early 1994 and Thanksgiving 1997. Much of this case study draws on these articles.

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**The Ogoni Inferno and Fire Fighters: Has the Government's
Public Relations Campaign Extinguished the Flame?**

**Chris W. Ogbondah
University of Northern Iowa
United States**

Executive Summary

This case study critically analyzes the Nigerian Military Government's public relations campaign to change the negative international image it got after the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, leader of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) in November 1995.

The Nigerian government carried out the execution despite an outpouring of international appeals for clemency for the lives of Saro-Wiwa and eight other relatively unknown MOSOP members. The government said Saro-Wiwa and the MOSOP members were found guilty of murder and were subsequently executed in accordance with Nigerian law. The executions met with enormous negative international reactions against the Nigerian government.

What public relations actions did the Nigerian government embark upon in attempts to win international understanding and acceptance for its action? Did the government achieve its intended public relations objectives? If it did not achieve those objectives, what are the explanations for the failure of its public relations campaign? These are the major questions addressed in the case study.

The Problem

On Nov. 10, 1995, the Nigerian Military Government executed Ken Saro-Wiwa, leader of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP). Saro-Wiwa, a novelist and environmental activist, was hanged along with eight other members of the MOSOP for the alleged murder of four prominent Ogoni chiefs: Albert Badey, Edward Kobani, Samuel Orage and Theophilus Orage (*New York Times*, Nov. 11, 1995, p. A1; *The Times* of London, Nov. 11, 1995, p. 1). Saro-Wiwa and the other eight were among 15 MOSOP members prosecuted by a government Civil Disturbances Special Tribunal for the May 21, 1994 murder of the four Ogoni chiefs.

The tribunal on Oct. 31, 1995, acquitted six of the accused¹ but found Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others² guilty of the charge (The Rivers Foundation, 1996; *New York Times*, Nov. 1, 1995, p. A6). An international outpouring of appeals for clemency notwithstanding, the Nigerian government swiftly upheld the tribunal's ruling. Subsequently, it executed Saro-Wiwa and the eight other MOSOP members.

The execution of Saro-Wiwa brought the Nigerian government a barrage of unfavorable international publicity. The Internet became saturated with negative publicity about the Nigerian government. Governments, media, and environmental and human rights groups as well as individuals in Western Europe and North America vehemently condemned the Nigerian government action: *The New York Times* (Nov. 11, 1995, p. A22) described the Nigerian government action as a "self-inflicted tragedy." It argued in the editorial that the world must respond with tough and targeted economic sanctions against Nigeria. In another editorial, *The*

New York Times (Dec. 3, 1995) urged Shell Petroleum, which drills about 44 per cent of Nigeria's oil, to get tough with the Nigerian government for what it described as "summary executions, fraudulent trials and brutal suppression of dissent" (p. 14). The paper also published an article written by a contributor, Rob Nixon, which not only condemned the execution but urged that Western countries use their economic leverage to punish the Nigerian military regime for its action (*New York Times*, Nov. 17, 1995, p. A31).

The Times of London (Nov. 13, 1995, p. 21) condemned the executions in an editorial titled "Well-Oiled Tyranny." The paper argued for economic sanctions against the Nigerian government. In another editorial, the British paper persuaded the Commonwealth summit being held at that time in Auckland, New Zealand, to condemn the execution (*Times of London*, Nov. 2, 1995, p. 21).

The *Washington Post* (Nov. 30, 1995) in an editorial titled "Africa's cruelest Regime," described the Nigerian Military Government as a "poisonous" and "murderous" regime. It said: "A regime as poisonous as Gen. Abacha's deserves isolation. The only Nigeria to be granted access to international markets and forums should be one that is moving swiftly toward civilian rule and that shows respect for human rights norms. That disqualifies the murderous Abacha regime on all accounts."

A *Christian Science Monitor* editorial called for an embargo and a freezing of foreign assets of Nigerian Military Government officials. It said: "Meanwhile, Washington should take the lead in planning economic sanctions that escalate towards an oil embargo. This could destabilize Nigeria, but nothing will hurt the country more than allowing Abacha to go unchallenged" (*Christian Science Monitor*, Nov. 15, 1995). Grossman (1996) provides other accounts of American newspapers' negative reactions to the execution.

The United States, Britain and other Western countries withdrew their ambassadors from Nigeria as a symbol of their condemnation of the executions. America's ambassador to the United Nations at the time, Madeleine Albright, expressing the American outrage, urged the UN Security Council to condemn the Nigerian government action. A White House statement deplored the Nigerian government's "flouting of even the most basic international norms and universal standards of human rights" (*New York Times*, Nov. 11, 1995, p. A1). The U.S. Senate introduced a bill (S. 149) calling for an embargo on the sale or distribution of petroleum products from Nigeria, the prohibition of new investment in Nigeria, the freezing of Nigerian assets and a ban on Nigerian participation in the 1996 summer Olympic games in Atlanta. A sanctions bill in the House (H.R. 2697), also called for a ban on new investments in Nigeria.

On Nov. 20, 1995, the European Union placed an embargo on arms sales and aid to Nigeria as a way to punish it for the executions. The sanctions included tighter restrictions on

visas for Nigeria's military leaders and their families. The Europeans also reaffirmed their 1993 suspension of military cooperation with the Nigerian government (*New York Times*, Nov. 21, 1995, P. A8; *New York Times*, Nov. 13, 1995, p. A6). Britain, for example, imposed arms embargo on Nigeria on Nov. 12, 1995 (*The Times* of London, Nov. 13, 1995, p. 1; *The Times* of London, Nov. 12, 1995, p. 1). The World Bank's private-sector arm, the International Finance Corporation, condemned the Nigerian government action by canceling its \$100 million-involvement in Nigeria's liquefied natural gas project.

The Commonwealth heads of government, meeting in Auckland, New Zealand at about the time of the execution, suspended Nigeria's membership in the group to protest the hanging of the MOSOP leader (*The Times* of London, Nov. 13, 1995, p. 12). The Commonwealth took the action because it had earlier, through its Secretary-General, appealed to the Nigerian government for clemency on the life of Saro-Wiwa (*The Times* of London, Nov. 2, 1995, p. 16). In its meeting in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1997, the organization reaffirmed its suspension of Nigeria. The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative later compiled a report titled "Nigeria: Stolen by General," which castigated the military government for its execution of Saro-Wiwa. South Africa protested the executions by withdrawing an invitation to the Nigerian soccer team to participate in a four-nation tournament in November 1995.

President Nelson Mandela called for economic actions against the Nigerian government (*The Times* of London, Nov. 14, 1995, p. 13). Of President Mandela's condemnation of the executions, the *Los Angeles Times* (Nov. 11, 1995) reported that: "Mandela, who is attending the [Commonwealth] summit, angrily demanded that Nigeria be expelled from the Commonwealth for committing what he called 'this heinous act' and said he will urge other international bodies to suspend Nigeria...." South Africa's Anglican Archbishop and Nobel Laureate, Desmond Tutu, called for "stringent economic, sporting, and diplomatic sanctions" against Nigeria for what he described as a "diabolical act" (Ibid). Other prominent Africans who called for sanctions against Nigeria included Nobel Laureate, Wole Soyinka of Nigeria and F.W. De Klerk, former president of South Africa.

In addition to these, a United Kingdom-based record company, Indie-Go Records in Bannbury Oxen, issued a contemporary dance track titled "Saro-Wiwa," to both celebrate the life of the MOSOP leader and to raise money for the Ogoni Foundation, a pro-MOSOP organization. Saro-Wiwa also was awarded the 1995 Goldman Environmental prize, the world's largest prize program honoring grassroots environmentalists. Its \$75,000 prize is awarded annually by a San Francisco-based foundation to each of six environmental heroes representing each continental region. Giving the award to Saro-Wiwa was intended to spite the military government by making the Ogoni leader look like a hero and the government, the villain.

Any organization, institution or government confronted with unfavorable publicity and a

negative image of this magnitude may embark on a public relations campaign aimed at damage control, image management or public understanding for its action. That is why a study that critically analyzes the Nigerian Military Government's public relations campaign within the context of the Ogoni crisis and in particular, the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa is significant. A number of studies, such as Osaghae (1995), have been published on the Ogoni crisis. But no known published study has analyzed the Ogoni crisis from the perspective of the Nigerian Military Government's public relations campaign.

This study critically analyzes the Nigerian Military Government's use of public relations to change a negative international image it got for executing Saro-Wiwa. What public relations tactics and techniques did the government utilize in its campaign? Did it succeed in its public relations campaign? If not, what are the explanations for the failure of the campaign to secure a more favorable international image in the aftermath of the execution of Saro-Wiwa? These are the main research questions this case study attempts to address.

Background

Central to the Ogoni crisis is oil and the sharing of the \$46 million in revenue earned daily from it. The mainstay of Nigeria's economy, oil accounts for 90 percent of Nigeria's revenue. Oil was first discovered in Oloibiri in 1956 but it was the discovery and subsequent commercial production of oil in Bomu, Ogoni from 1958 that catapulted into prosperity the Ogoni land in the Rivers State, Nigeria's breadbasket. Today, with about 56 oil wells, Ogoni land accounts for 25, 890 barrels of Nigeria's daily crude production estimated at about 2.04 million barrels (Ogoni Study Group, 1995). This Ogoni production, estimated at about 1.27 per cent of Nigeria's total oil output, may seem small compared to some other oil-producing areas. However, the fact that oil has been drilled in Ogoni land longer than anywhere in the country underscores the importance of Ogoni contribution: Ogoni has produced more than 900 million barrels of crude oil vital to the Nigeria's economy, and MOSOP claims that oil from Ogoni land has fetched a total of \$30 billion for the state (Civil Liberties Organization, 1996).

The Ogonis, however, believe that they have not benefited from the huge sum of money generated from oil drilling on their land. Hence, in 1990, they formed the MO SOP as a platform through which they could peacefully petition the federal government about the inequities in the distribution of oil revenues and environmental concerns stemming from oil production in Ogoni. In this way, the Ogoni strategy of addressing the inequities in revenue allocation was antithetical to that utilized by a handful of Ijaws in 1967 (Tebekaemi, 1982) or other oil-producing communities in the 1970s and 1980s (Lolomari, 1995).

Through MOSOP, the Ogonis confronted Shell Oil Company and the Nigerian government, demanding the right to use a fair share of oil revenues derived from oil wells on their land for the benefit of all Ogonis. In order to win international understanding and

sympathy for their struggle, the Ogonis posited their argument on environmental protection. In 1990, they issued a document, the *Ogoni Bill of Rights*, enumerating their demands upon the federal government (Saro-Wiwa, 1992).

In the document, the Ogonis demanded the right to control economic resources accruing from oil drilled on their land, a view stated by MOSOP's first president, Dr. Garrick Leton: "If the land is ours, irrespective of the law put in place by the major ethnic groups, anything that comes out of the land should be ours" (*The Guardian*, Dec. 28, 1992, p. 7). This belief by the Ogonis of ethnic rights over natural resources clashes with the Nigerian government's contention that oil and all other natural resources in the country belong to the state.

The *Ogoni Bill of Rights* also highlights the environmental effects of oil production in Ogoni land such as gas flare ups that emit more than 34 million tons of carbon dioxide annually (*World Press Review*, Feb. 1996; The Nigerian Environmental Study/Action Team, 1991). Other environmental hazards listed in the document include atmospheric pollution by combustion contaminants; thermal pollution; destruction of farmland, crops, fish, and crustaceans, and oil spillage. A total of 1,581 cases of oil spills involving approximately two million barrels of crude oil was reported in Nigeria between 1970 and 1982 (Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, 1995; *West Africa*, Nov. 27-Dec. 3, 1995).

When the government did not grant the Ogonis their demands, MOSOP shifted from its stated non-violent strategy to confronting Shell and the state. In November 1992, it gave a 30-day quit notice to Shell Petroleum Development Company. It organized a demonstration on Jan. 4, 1994, and shell workers were forced to stay away, halting oil-drilling activities (Ogoni Study Group, 1995).

However, a faction of MOSOP did not support these activities. On May 21, 1994, four prominent Ogoni chiefs, members of that faction who had been dubbed "saboteurs" by MOSOP, were slain by its irate members. Ken Saro-Wiwa, leader of MOSOP, was among those arrested and tried by a Civil Disturbances Tribunal for the slayings. On Oct. 31, 1995, the tribunal acquitted six of the accused but found Saro-Wiwa and eight others guilty. In delivering the tribunal's decision, Justice Ibrahim Auta said: "Although Mr. Saro-Wiwa was not directly involved in the killings, it was established beyond all doubt that he set up the machinery" (*The New York Times*, Nov. 1, 1995, p. A6; The Rivers Foundation, 1996).

The Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) approved the tribunal's verdict on Nov. 8, 1995. It said it "accepted in totality the pronouncement and the verdict of the tribunal, and that is, that those who were convicted should die by hanging" (*The New York Times*, Nov. 9, 1995, p. A9). On Nov. 10, 1995, Ken Saro-Wiwa and the eight other convicted MOSOP members were executed. Critics of the military regime said the MOSOP leader was executed because of

his opposition to the military government. But the government said Saro-Wiwa was executed because he was found guilty of murder by a tribunal constituted under the Nigerian legal system.

The publics affected by the Nigerian Military Government's public relations campaign were: (1) Western governments; (2) Western media, and (3) International organizations such as Greenpeace and the Commonwealth.

The goals of the Nigerian Military Government's campaign were: (1) to secure international understanding and acceptance of its rationale for executing Saro-Wiwa and the eight other MOSOP members, and (2) to change its negative international image to a positive image. The government's objectives were: (1) to change unfavorable international media reportage of the regime to favorable; (2) to persuade Western nations not to impose oil sanctions on Nigeria, and (3) to persuade Western countries to lift already imposed sanctions such as restriction of visas to officials of the military regime and their families and the suspension of Nigeria from the Commonwealth.

Strategic Tactics and Techniques

Grunig and Hunt(1984) define public relations as the management of communication between an organization and its publics. The concept is defined in this paper as the managed communication activity aimed to achieve and sustain favorable understanding between an institution and its strategic publics.

Before outlining the public relations tactics and techniques utilized by the Nigerian government, a theoretical conceptualization of public relations practice will be presented briefly in order to make an analysis of those campaign tactics more effective.

At least two theoretical formulations have been proposed to analyze the practice and roles of public relations, and Culbertson (1996) notes that both formulations seem relevant to understanding the field's growth and character around the world. In the first formulation, some scholars, including Cutlip, Center and Broom (1985) and Dozier (1992), identified at least four major roles played by public relations practitioners: expert prescriber, communication facilitator, problem-solving process facilitator and communication technician. Culbertson (1996) notes that the first three roles really collapse into one, and practitioners involved in those roles, according to Culbertson (1996) and Dozier (1992), are often referred to as "communication managers," distinct from communication technicians.

In the second formulation, Grunig and Hunt (1984) identified four models or ways in which public relations has been and is practiced. The models are based on two independent dimensions: one-way versus two-way flow of information between an organization and its

publics, and asymmetrical versus symmetrical goal of organizational communication (to manipulate or to cooperate with publics). The models are: (1) press agency (one-way model) which aims at getting favorable publicity for an organization in the mass media; (2) public information (one-way model) with the main objective to make an organization or institution look good either through propaganda (press agency) or by disseminating only favorable information without volunteering negative information (Grunig and Grunig, 1989); (3) two-way asymmetrical model which uses research to develop messages that are likely to persuade an organization's strategic public. (Hunt and Grunig (1994) have criticized the model as selfish since it presupposes that the organization that uses the model is right and the public wrong) (4) two-way symmetrical model which uses research and dialogue to manage conflict, improve understanding and build relationships with publics.

This two-way symmetrical model has been defended by Grunig (1989), Ehling (1984), Grunig and White (1992), Grunig et al. (1995) and others because it allows conflict to be settled through communication and negotiation and not manipulation.

However, the model has been criticized by Rakaw (1989) and Pavlik (1989) as impractical. They argue that it can work better in egalitarian cultures and in situations where an organization and its publics have equal powers. Murphy (1991) also observes that instances of pure two-way symmetrical public relations are rare among business organizations. Murphy seems to suggest that a mixed motive version of two-way practice might better describe the "real" public relations because it incorporates both asymmetrical and symmetrical models. Dozier, Grunig and Grunig (1995) identified a mix of short-term asymmetrical public relations tactics within a larger symmetrical context as the "two-way model," and contend that it is both realistic and ethical. Grunig and White (1992) explicated the "mixed motives" aspects of the model and noted that it is similar to the well-known universal moral code, the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. They argued: "Public relations people should think of how they would like to be treated by others and then treat others in the same way" (p. 46).

The Nigerian government's public relations campaign began in December 1995, soon after the executions. It is scheduled to run through October 1998 when the military regime hands over political power to an elected government. According to a report in *The Guardian* (Dec. 5, 1997), the military regime is seeking new public relations consultants in the United Kingdom. The campaign tactics and techniques include the following:

Advertisements: The Nigerian Military Government sought to reach the governments, media, international organizations and the public in Western Europe and North America through newspaper advertisements. The advertisements had two main objectives: to explain that (a) Saro-Wiwa's execution was not politically motivated, and (b) Saro-Wiwa's execution was

carried out under the provisions of the Nigerian Constitution which provides for the execution of anyone found guilty of murder.

Two full-page advertisements were placed in *The New York Times*. The first titled “An open letter to all interested in the Ogoni situation,” explained that Saro-Wiwa was executed because he was implicated in the killings of four Ogoni chiefs (*The New York Times*, Dec. 6, 1995, p. A 16). The second systematically chronicled the formation of MOSOP, and its activities under Saro-Wiwa’s leadership. It described how MOSOP grew into a violent movement, turning away from its founding fathers’ objective of non-violence. The advertisement further said it was MOSOP’s attitude of mob action, gangsterism and violence under its youth wing, NYCOP, that led its members to murder four of the organization’s founding fathers who cautioned MOSOP against violence (Ibid. p. A17). A similar advertisement was placed in a United Kingdom newspaper, *The Independent* (Dec. 6, 1995).

Lobbying: In 1996, the Nigerian government dispatched a 12-member U.S.-Nigerian delegation to Washington, D.C. to lobby and persuade the United States’ Congress that the execution of Saro-Wiwa was justified under Nigerian law. The delegation was led by two African-Americans, Roy Innis of the Congress on Racial Equality and Askia Muhamimed of the *Washington Observer* (*Fourth World Bulletin*, Spring/Summer, 1996, p. 1). The objectives of the lobbying tactic were: (1) to defame Saro-Wiwa as a “cannibal” and to adulate Abacha as “a man of honor,” while justifying the judicial process in the execution of the Ogoni leader; and (2) to persuade the U.S. Congress to exercise patience with the Abacha regime to complete its transition to democracy (Ibid).

A public relations objective like this one to adulate a military dictator as “a man of honor” will be hard to sell in the United States. However, in one respect at least, it seems this public relations effort paid off: at least the Clinton Administration did not take any major step to enforce the same policies in Nigeria that it had applied to such so-called “rogue countries” as Iraq, Libya and Cuba which are still under U.S. embargo.

Press Conferences: The Nigerian government utilized press conferences and media interviews as channels for achieving its campaign objectives. Press interviews were sometimes initiated by the government and press conferences were held to justify the executions. At other times, the press interviews were initiated by the media seeking to achieve balance, objectivity and fairness in the reportage of the Ogoni crisis.

The charge d’ affairs in the Embassy of Nigeria in Washington, D.C., Adoga Onah, in one press interview, told the National Public Radio (NPR) that Saro-Wiwa’s trial was a murder trial without ulterior political motives. Onah told the NPR that: “Mr. Saro-Wiwa and his group were not brought before the Tribunal because of their human rights activities, neither were they

arraigned for anti-government activities, nor their stance on environmental issues as is being systematically echoed by the world press system” (*Nigerian News*, Nov. 19, 1996, p. 7). Onab also explained that the MOSOP leader was tried under the Civil Disturbances Act of 1987 which was enacted to deal with cases of civil unrest in the country.

The widows of the four murdered Ogoni chiefs also spoke at press conferences sanctioned by the government. News reports of their press conferences were broadcast on Cable Network News (CNN). During the press conferences the widows explained that Saro-Wiwa and the eight other MOSOP members were executed because they were found guilty in the killings of their spouses. In 1996, the Nigerian government sponsored a visit by the families of the murdered chiefs to some European countries, including Switzerland where they held press conferences. Those press conferences, justifying Saro-Wiwa’s execution, were reported in the media. In May and June 1997, the government sponsored a trip of the widows to the United States where they also held press conferences in several U.S. cities including Los Angeles and Atlanta.

Publications: One of the government’s campaign tactics was the publication of its own reports on the Ogoni crisis. One of such publication is titled *Crisis in Ogoni land: The true story*. It was published by Ogoni Study Group, a pro-government advocacy organization. Another publication is titled *The report of the special indigenous delegation to Ogoni and other oil and gas producing communities of Rivers State of Nigeria on a fact-finding mission*. It was issued in June 1996 by the Rivers State Foundation Inc., a U.S.-based organization of some indigenes of Rivers State, Nigeria. A delegation from this organization which visited Ogoni on a government-sponsored fact-finding mission concluded that:

The delegation found no concrete evidence directly linking Ken Saro-Wiwa to the murder of the four Ogoni leaders. However, the delegation uncovered a widespread belief among Ogonis and Non-Ogonis that Ken Saro-Wiwa’s comments, utterances, war of words, and actions against the deceased directly fueled the anger of the militant and extremist forces within MOSOP’s network to commit the barbaric murder of the four prominent Ogoni Chiefs(The Rivers Foundation, 1996, pp. 58-59).

The government also produced a video documentary of the Ogoni crisis. It included segments filmed on the site in Ogoni where the four chiefs were murdered, ruins left by MOSOP’s activities on Shell property and interviews with the widows of the murdered chiefs. But mass circulation of those publications and videotapes has not been successful in Western Europe or North America.

Results Achieved

The Nigerian Military Government has not succeeded in achieving all the goals and

objectives of its public relations campaign. It seems to have achieved one objective: the government was able to prevent the imposition of an oil and economic embargo on Nigeria. But even at that, it can be logically argued that the non-imposition of an oil embargo is not so much a function of the effectiveness and excellence of the Nigerian government's public relations campaign as the sheer unwillingness on the part of Western countries to impose such an embargo because of their own economic needs and their interest in the quality of Nigeria's oil. Nigeria's crude oil is about the purest in the world. Generally known as "Nigeria light" or "sweet crude," Nigeria's oil has very low sulfur content, only 0.2 percent sulfur. From fraction distillation 33 percent of the end product gasoline, 20 percent is kerosene, 16 percent light gas oil, 30 percent heavy gas oils and only 1 percent bitumen residue. The lightness of Nigeria's oil also makes for cheaper distillation. The quality of Nigerian oil is the reason the United States is Nigeria's biggest oil customer, consuming 44 percent (almost half) of Nigeria's exports.

If the United States imposed an oil embargo on Nigeria or led such a campaign, it probably could have turned for additional oil to Saudi Arabia or Venezuela, the other major countries from which the U.S. imports its oil. But oil from those countries has high sulfur content. For example, the Boscan Venezuelan crude has 6.4 percent sulfur, with only 3 percent gasoline, 6 percent kerosene, 7 percent light gas oil, 26 percent heavy gas oils and 58 percent bitumen residue. The other country whose oil has low sulfur content is Libya, but Libya is under a U.S.-led economic sanction. The non-imposition of an oil embargo on Nigeria following the execution of Saro-Wiwa thus may have been due less to the effectiveness of Nigerian Military Government's public relations campaign than to the economic fact that no Western country wanted to "shoot itself in the foot."

The Nigerian government is still perceived as the villain and Saro-Wiwa, the hero of the Ogoni crisis. Negative opinion of the Nigerian government's action has not abated. For example, the Interment is still flooded with unfavorable views and opinions about the Nigerian government action. MOSOP members, not Nigerian government officials, are sought after by organizations in Western Europe and North America as keynote speakers on the Ogoni crisis.

Owen Wiwa, a physician and brother of Saro-Wiwa, who is not known for his great speaking ability, received invitations to be keynote speaker at more than two dozen conferences held by various organizations in Canada and the U.S. between March and October 1996. For example, he delivered keynote addresses on the Ogoni crisis at conferences held at Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y., and at the Peter Kewit Conference Center of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, respectively. The point being made here is that the popular view on the Ogoni crisis in Western Europe and North America is still that of MOSOP, not the Nigerian government's, despite the government's public relations campaign.

Evidence that the campaign has not succeeded can further be seen from the fact that

restrictions imposed on Nigeria immediately after Saro-Wiwa's execution have not been lifted. For example, the Commonwealth, which suspended Nigeria from its membership during its 1995 meeting, reiterated its continued suspension of Nigeria from the organization during its meeting in Scotland in November 1997.

Other evidence that the campaign has not achieved its objectives can be seen from the fact that a European Union arms embargo imposed in 1995 following the execution of Saro-Wiwa has not been lifted. Neither have Western countries lifted their restrictions on travel visas to officials of the Nigerian military junta and their families. But officials of MOSOP and their families are given visas and other privileges to travel to Western Europe and North America where they even are given asylum status.

Even among neighboring African countries, the Nigerian government's public relations campaign has not produced its intended results. For example, Zambia, which in the 1970s received millions of dollars in economic aid from Nigeria, has continued to endorse the Commonwealth's suspension of Nigeria from its fold. In December 1997, for instance, Zambia canceled two friendly international soccer matches with Nigeria because of the Commonwealth's sanctions against Nigeria. The *Times* of Zambia (Dec. 9, 1997) reported that the cancellation of the matches slated for Dec. 13 and 17, 1997 was ordered by the permanent secretary for the ministry of sports, Gerald Nyirenda. The paper reported Nyirenda as saying that "Zambia has to respect the ban and the tour is off until the sanctions are lifted" (The **Times** of Zambia, Dec. 9, 1997).

Many organizations, institutions and individuals in Western Europe and North America have continued to provide financial, material and moral support to MOSOP, while the Nigerian government action continues to be criticized. For example, in November 1996 and 1997, members of MOSOP in Britain, Canada and U.S.A. were successful in commemorating the anniversary of Saro-Wiwa's execution. They received financial assistance from European, Canadian and American organizations. On Nov. 8, 1996, a MOSOP office known as the Ogoni Room was set up in New York City with financial assistance from a prominent cosmetics businesswoman from England. All these actions indicate that the government's public relations campaign has not achieved its goals and objectives

Conclusion

The Nigerian government's public relations campaign did not achieve its goals and objectives for a number of reasons. For one, the military government did not have a crisis communications plan to guide it after the execution of the MOSOP members. There was lack of foresight that prevented the government from anticipating the public relations nightmare that followed the executions. When the military government knew it would execute Saro-Wiwa, it should have anticipated negative international reactions. That would have led to the

development of a well designed crisis communications plan to deal with any public relations problem that might follow. Instead, the government believed that nothing had gone wrong or would go wrong with Saro-Wiwa's execution. It subsequently embarked on spontaneous "fire-fighting" actions, using press agency and public information tactics.

Martin Cooper of Cooper Combinations in Encino, California, notes that any institution which does not have a crisis management plan is derelict in its duties (*Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 29, 1989, p. D3). Two other public relations practitioners also point out that: "When people believe that because nothing has gone wrong, nothing will go wrong, they court disaster. There is noise in every system and in every design. If this fact is ignored, nature soon reminds us of our folly" (*Los Angeles Times*, April 18, 1989, pp. 11-17).

The government's public relations campaign consisted of one-way press agency and public information communication activities. Although public information activity can be utilized to disseminate truthful and accurate information about an institution, Hunt and Grunig (1994), Culbertson (1996), Dozier (1992) Grunig and Grunig (1992) argue that it does not incorporate dialogue. Yet, dialogue is an essential element in conflict resolution and relationship building with publics.

In Western democracies, military dictatorships are regarded as "rogue-states." Therefore, a military dictatorship's public relations campaign, especially one touching on human rights, will be hard to sell in Western democratic societies. This is another reason the Nigerian Military Government's international public relations campaign was not effective.

Further, the military government's international image had been damaged seriously two years earlier by its record on human rights, and by its annulment of the results of the June 12, 1993 presidential elections. By 1995 when it executed Saro-Wiwa, the Nigerian Military Government's international public relations problem thus was not only Saro-Wiwa. It was a mountain of other self-inflicted problems as well. They include human rights abuses, detention of political critics and journalists, cancellation of the results of the June 12, 1993 presidential elections, contradictions in its democratization process and continued military rule. Its inability to deal with the country's social problems--corruption, day-light armed robbery, car jacking, rising unemployment, educational crisis, spiral inflation--further damaged its image.

In addition, the government's use as spokespersons such individuals as Roy Innis of the Congress on Racial Equality, who are not very popular well known in the circles of U.S. policymakers, was another factor in the ineffectiveness of the campaign. Such persons are not public relations practitioners, and lack the skills needed to serve as spokespersons.

However, as reported in *The Guardian* of England (Dec. 5, 1997), the military

government is now beginning to approach public relations professionals in the United Kingdom to take over the campaign. With more experienced professionals on board, the Nigerian public relations campaign may be more successful in 1998, especially if the country moves forward with its democratic reforms at the same time.

Notes

1 The six MOSOP members acquitted were: Ledum Mitte, Vice President of MOSOP; Pogbara Afa, Monday Dowin, Joseph Kpante, Michael Vizor and Albert Kagbara.

2 The other eight members of MOSOP executed along with Ken Saro Wiwa were: Barmnem Kiobel, John Puinen, Baribor Bera, Saturday Dobe, Felix Nwate, Nordu Eawo, Paul Levura and Daniel Gbokoo.

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**Sewing Up a Torn Image: Hill & Knowlton Responds
to a Crisis in the Garment Industry**

**Emma L. Daugherty
California State University, Long Beach
United States**

Executive Summary

Responding to allegations made on “Hard Copy,” a tabloid news show on U.S. television, a Taiwanese garment manufacturer turned to Hill & Knowlton’s international division to help solve a big problem--false accusations and the possible loss of key accounts. The television show claimed that companies in Nicaragua’s free trade zone were abusing and harming workers. Major U.S. clothing buyers responded quickly by asking the garment maker to provide volumes of information about its own treatment of workers. The company’s owner wanted and needed public relations help to ensure social responsibility and the retention of clients. Otherwise, jobs would be lost and the company might suffer unrecoverable losses.

Hill & Knowlton needed to explore the situation to ensure that the Taiwanese garment manufacturer was indeed conducting business in a socially responsible way. Not only did Hill & Knowlton determine that the company did not abuse or harm employees, but it learned that the garment manufacturer was dealing with political forces in a volatile environment.

The agency in a five-day period reacted quickly by assessing the situation, establishing goals and objectives, defining key publics and making recommendations that were implemented. All its objectives were achieved.

The Problem

“Hard Copy,” a tabloid television show with wide viewership in the United States, aired a story that ran for three days from Nov. 11 to Nov. 13, 1997. The investigative team from “Hard Copy,” working with an activist group called the National Labor Committee, made a series of damaging allegations against the companies in Nicaragua’s state-owned Las Mercedes Free Trade Zone. Some of the charges included underpaying workers, employing children and forcing employees to work up to 13 hours a day, seven days a week. The broadcast also claimed that workers were not paid for overtime; were verbally, physically, and sexually abused by supervisors and managers; were exposed to dangerous chemicals; and were housed in deplorable conditions.

The report also said that solvents, dyes and bleach were allowed to drain freely into open areas and containment barrels were allowed to rust. “Hard Copy” depicted the free trade zone as an area resembling a prison with electrical fences and armed guards. The broadcast recommended that viewers avoid purchasing goods or products manufactured in Nicaragua and urged them to write their elected representatives to oppose department stores that might buy goods from Nicaragua.

The “Hard Copy” reports generated immediate media coverage by other U.S. news organizations, particularly in the Hispanic community. Two of the largest television stations in

the Los Angeles market that target Latinos, KMEX and KVEA, ran stories about the alleged working conditions in the Nicaraguan free trade zone.

This issue had first surfaced about a year earlier when Witness for Peace, a religious group based in Washington, D.C., sponsored an eight-city U.S. tour of six Nicaraguan apparel workers to publicize their working conditions. In an Oct. 7, 1996 article in *Women's Wear Daily*, Cesar Zamora, a commercial counselor with the Nicaraguan Embassy in Washington, is quoted as saying, "We have had problems with the Taiwanese."

In 1997, the apparel industry came under a much-publicized attack when Charles Kernaghan, president of the National Labor Committee, accused WalMart Stores, Inc. of using low-paid Honduran workers to produce the Kathie Lee Gifford clothing line. (The National Labor Committee appears to be an advocacy group promoting the interests of labor in the United States. Its board of directors is comprised mostly of clergy, academics and U.S. labor representatives, including individuals from the AFL-CIO and the Union of Needletrades, Industrial & Textile Employees.

Background

After more than a decade of civil conflict and state control of its economy, Nicaragua now is free from Communist rule. The country is no longer under the influence of Cuba, the U.S.S.R. and former President Daniel Ortega. In 1990, the first democratic president, Violetta Chamorro, was elected. Her administration was business driven and realized Nicaragua's limited production capabilities. As leader of one of the most impoverished countries in the world, she developed economic policies to revitalize the country by calling for foreign investors. Hence, the government re-designated a region south of the capital, Managua, as a free trade zone where companies could produce and export goods. Other countries, such as Korea and Mexico, have done the same in an effort to stimulate their own economies.

Back in 1976, the Las Mercedes Free Trade Zone in Nicaragua was first opened with eight companies and 3,000 employees. The Sandiistas shut down the free trade zone in 1979, converting it into a prison where inmates produced boots under the Pronto brand name until 1989. In 1991, President Chamorro reopened the free trade zone in an attempt to stimulate the stagnant economy. The government invited investors to establish businesses in the free trade zone. Investors were given special considerations, including tax breaks and 100 percent foreign ownership of plants in Nicaragua. NicaNews, a Nicaraguan newspaper, quoted Gilberto Wong, manager of the free trade zone, as saying, "the move attracted foreign investment and created employment opportunities for work-starved Nicaraguans" (Nov. 17-30, 1997; p. 6). Seventeen entrepreneurs from Taiwan, Canada, Italy and the United States set up their companies in the free trade zone, totaling over \$50 million in investments. Most represented the garment industry and generated about 18,000 jobs. The firms supply clothing to many major U.S.

retailers, including Montgomery Ward and Polo Ralph Lauren. Women's Wear Daily reported that the U.S. Customs Service valued the country's apparel imports at \$10.7 million in 1993 and that Nicaragua exported \$67 million worth of apparel in 1995.

One of the companies in the free trade zone targeted by the National Labor Committee was a Taiwanese manufacturer that produces denim and denim products. The company has three facilities in Nicaragua and employs 3,600 workers, mostly women from Nicaragua. About 130 of the women are from Taiwan. Most managers are Taiwanese men and the supervisors are mainly Taiwanese women. As one of the largest producers of denim in the world, the company was contacted immediately following the "Hard Copy" broadcast by some of its largest clients: Wal-Mart, JCPenney and Kinart. These and other U.S. businesses generate about \$150 million in sales for the Taiwanese garment manufacturer. Buyers from the U.S. retailers pulled their orders until the garment maker responded to the allegations made by "Hard Copy."

Understandably, apparel buyers, continuously under scrutiny to address sweatshop allegations, want to be assured that suppliers do not exploit workers. With more than 6,000 suppliers, JCPenney Co. outlines its policies in a legal compliance program booklet for suppliers. JCPenney suppliers and their contractors are required to maintain the same level of legal compliance and ethical business practices in all activities as JC Penney. Excerpts from the booklet are as follows:

"JCPenney's purchase contracts explicitly require our suppliers to comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including those of the United States and those of any foreign country in which the merchandise is manufactured or from which it is exported. Our contracts also require all suppliers to impose the same obligation on their contractors....

Based on these expectations, if we receive notice from the U.S. Department of Labor or any state or foreign government labor authority that a factory being used by a JCPenney supplier has violated applicable labor laws, we will direct the immediate suspensions of all shipments of merchandise to JCPenney from the factory....

As soon as JCPenney discovers or learns of a potential or alleged legal violation by a supplier or its contractors, we will notify the supplier, fully investigate the situation, and, if we determine that the allegations are supported by credible evidence, take corrective action. If the supplier does not cooperate in the investigation, the result will be the termination of our relationship with the supplier."

Therefore, the garment manufacturer received detailed requests from its concerned clients. Buyers wanted the names of the factories and their general managers; descriptions of the legal compliance policies, programs, and procedures; roster of the workers for each factory,

including birth dates of workers, wages, hours worked, and overtime payment; and the results of inspections or investigations by Nicaraguan labor authorities, U.S. Embassy officials, free trade zone officials or any outside mandatory enforcement agency. One such request came from JC Penney on Nov. 14. The garment manufacturer had one week to respond with satisfactory answers or ties could be forever severed with the company.

The owner of the company immediately contacted Hill & Knowlton to help resolve this problem. Hill & Knowlton is the second largest public relations agency in the world, with 48 offices in 28 countries. The Hispanic group in the international division of Hill & Knowlton in Los Angeles was given the assignment. Alan Elias, senior managing director, and Miguel Medina, senior consultant, headed the account team.

Goals and Objectives

Hill & Knowlton set goals to ensure the success of the program. They were the following:

- * To determine if the company was conducting its business according to Nicaraguan law
- * To ensure that employees were treated fairly
- * To ensure that employees were working under safe conditions
- * To ensure that the company is conducting business in a socially responsible way
- * To provide accurate, detailed information in a timely manner to buyers of the company's products
- * To survey the political environment in Nicaragua and enlist the support of Nicaraguan officials

Hill & Knowlton set the following objectives:

- * To retain the garment manufacturer's current clients
- * To provide the company's clients with full disclosure of information
- * To save the jobs of the company's employees
- * To reinforce existing policies to the employees
- * To increase the level of communication between supervisors and workers

Hill & Knowlton targeted three key publics for this effort. They included the following:

1. Employees of the Taiwanese garment manufacturer, including managers, supervisors and factory workers
2. Buyers of the company's products, especially those who were concerned because of the allegations made on "Hard Copy"
3. Officials of the Nicaraguan government

Strategic Tactics and Techniques

The first tactic was research. Hill & Knowlton first needed to explore the situation in order to determine a course of action. The account team gathered information from the “Hard Copy” report and became apprised of the political situation in Nicaragua. They found there were two different political interests there. One group seemed to be comprised of the new government of Nicaragua and the new press, and the other of the Sandinistas, the Sandiista press and the National Labor Committee. Officials with the Nicaraguan government felt that forces were trying to deter the development of Nicaragua because jobs were being lost in the United States and given to Nicaraguans. Mexico was under fire much in the same way when the United States lost 6,000 jobs when Levi Strauss moved to Mexico.

The agency questioned the General Consul of Nicaragua in Los Angeles who provided insight. Hill & Knowlton also phoned the Nicaraguan Secretary of Labor and Manager of the Free Trade Zone for information about the situation.

The Hill & Knowlton team set some research goals for the senior consultant’s trip to Nicaragua: to assess the situation thoroughly by reviewing company records, inspecting the sites, interviewing workers, visiting with inspection officials and meeting with supervisors and managers. After consulting with Elias, Medina would make recommendations and plan a course of action.

On Nov. 15, 1997, Medina traveled to Nicaragua and began his investigation. When he arrived on Sunday, Medina decided to tour the garment manufacturer’s facilities because “Hard Copy” reported employees were working seven days a week. Born and raised in Mexico City, Medina found this “Hard Copy” allegation unusual. Sharing the same heritage, he knew that Sundays were held sacred by most in his culture. Therefore, he was not surprised to find no employees, except for a security guard, working that day.

During his stay in Nicaragua, Medina talked with managers and workers. He found that most employees work a Monday through Friday schedule. Occasionally, they work on Saturday and seldom, if ever, work on a Sunday. Employee time sheets and other records supported the oral reports and also reflected that the company paid overtime to all factory workers.

In Nicaragua, the minimum wage set by the government for the textile industry is 500 cordovas a month. After reviewing the records of hours worked and payment received, he found no worker earning under 550 cordovas. In fact, most earned two to three times that amount--money that can go far in the Nicaraguan economy. Employees were rewarded for producing more than expected and were paid overtime, according to standards set by Nicaraguan law, if they worked more than nine hours and 35 minutes a day or 48 hours per week.

Moreover, he found a 29-page internal guide for all workers, approved by the Nicaraguan government, that outlined the obligations and rights of the workers. All workers received the document. Policies in the document addressed breaks, vacations, overtime, working conditions, health and safety issues, obligations and rights of the employees and of management, and disciplinary actions.

Medina discovered that, indeed, the free trade zone area was fenced as had been described on “Hard Copy.” The location was once used as a jail by the Sandinistas, and later the buildings were converted into factories in an attempt to use existing resources. Unlike prison walls, the fence resembled the kind used around a tennis court.

Medina inspected the hazardous materials area where the denim was dyed and washed. On each machine, he found posted procedures for safety. The instructions outlined how to handle the materials and operate the machine safely.

When inspecting the drum storage area, he found about 25 drums clustered together without any particular order. A few were rusted since they were outside, exposed to the frequent rains in Nicaragua.

Employees in the washing and dying area were questioned about their use of goggles, gloves and protective vests. All used goggles and the protective vest, but a few reported not using the gloves because they did not like doing so.

Hill & Knowlton found that the garment manufacturer had passed all safety inspections by the Nicaraguan government. The last inspection was dated Oct. 20, 1997, by the General Inspector of Labor.

When Medina visited the facilities on Monday when most of the workers were present, he made random selections of employees who looked particularly young. Although he had reviewed all employment sheets and found no workers under 18, he wanted to investigate the matter firsthand in case information was falsified. Each of the workers provided birth certificates. Only two were 19 years old. Of the 3,600 workers, only about 45 were 18 years old. Records showed no one under 18 was ever employed at any of the factories.

He met with women from the three facilities to investigate charges of sexual and behavioral misconduct. None of the women reported any such behavior. A few had been inspected by a women guard during random checks to deter stealing. (Company merchandise was found to be sold illegally in the local markets of Nicaragua; therefore, the company randomly checked employees for smuggling garments out of the factory.)

Hill & Knowlton determined from its research that the garment manufacturer was abiding by Nicaraguan law and was respectful of employees. Primary and secondary research revealed that employees were treated well and policies were followed in almost all cases. Therefore, the company's U.S. buyers had to be informed of these positive facts in a timely manner. If not, the company would lose its major accounts and thus employees would lose their jobs.

Medina held a meeting with the company manager, the three facility managers, factory supervisors and the company's Nicaraguan attorney to discuss recommendations. Hill & Knowlton recommended increased interpersonal communication between supervisors and workers and the use of direct media.

Hill & Knowlton recommended the following actions, which were implemented: The rusted barrels were replaced by new ones and the storage area was moved inside. Drums were organized by date, and when filled, they were deposed immediately according to government regulations.

Employees had to be made to use all protective gear, including gloves. If they did not adhere to the policy, they had to lose their jobs. Therefore, all were instructed by their supervisors to follow health regulations and use the protective gear. The Hill & Knowlton team, supervised by Elias, developed written guidelines that were distributed to all workers, and the agency produced a poster that was prominently placed in the factories. Materials were produced in both Spanish and Chinese. Copy from the "Safety and Health Protection on the Job" poster is as follows:

It Is the Responsibility of the Company to:

- * Provide work and workplaces that are safe for our employees.
- * Follow all laws and company policies governing job safety and health.
- * Have an effective injury prevention program for our employees.
- * Make our employees aware of any hazards they may face on the job and keep records showing that each employee has been trained in the hazards unique to each job assignment.
- * Provide employees working with any hazardous or caustic chemicals proper safety equipment.
- * Work to correct any hazardous condition that we know may result in injury to employees.
- * Display this poster so everyone on the job can be aware of basic rights and responsibilities.

The Company Will Not:

- * Permit an employee to be exposed to harmful substances without providing adequate protection.
- * Allow an untrained employee to perform hazardous work.

Employees Have Certain Rights in Workplace Safety & Health:

- * As an employee you have a right to file a complaint with management to request an inspection of your workplace if conditions there are unsafe or unhealthful.
- * An employee may not be fired or punished in any way for filing a complaint about unsafe or unhealthful working conditions.

Employee Responsibilities:

- * To keep the workplace and your co-workers safe, you should immediately tell your manager about any hazard that could result in an injury or illness to people on the job.

Even though no problems surfaced in these areas, Hill & Knowlton developed employee handouts about sexual harassment, safety and health procedures, wage policies and age requirements. Posters were developed and placed in strategic locations around the factories. In turn, managers met with supervisors to review these policies, and supervisors formally met with their workers. Hill & Knowlton also developed an age verification form to further ensure employee compliance with age requirements.

In addition, Hill & Knowlton advised the client to ensure that all working standards set by the United States be followed, even if they were not required by the Nicaraguan government. Therefore, the company put in place a stringent approach to policy making.

Media also met with Gilberto Wong, manager of the free trade zone. Since the owner of the garment manufacturing company wanted the government to deal with the media, Medina met with Wong and provided him with the Hill & Knowlton findings. He also helped him prepare press statements. On Nov. 18, Wong gave interviews to the press, and the other side of the story was told in the Nicaraguan media.

A two-inch thick report prepared by the Hill & Knowlton account team was forwarded to each of the retail buyers who was a client of the manufacturer. The report included a two-page summary sheet, a question-and-answer allegation response sheet (Exhibit 1) and all supporting data for in-depth analysis.

Results Achieved

Hill & Knowlton analyzed the press coverage. In Nicaragua, coverage in the new press

was favorable. The Sandiista press made little attempt to cover the story. There were few follow-up reports in the U.S. media.

Two companies, Wal-Mart and Kids International Corp., sent representatives to the factories for their own inspections. In fact, Wal-Mart gave the factories ratings of 92 and 80 on its visits. A score of 70 is considered satisfactory.

No orders were lost, and business for the Taiwanese garment manufacturer continued as usual. Moreover, no jobs were lost. In a country with unemployment rates upward of 40 percent and where 100 workers apply for just one job opening, Nicaragua needs employment opportunities for its people.

In five days, Hill & Knowlton was able to assess a volatile situation and make recommendations that strengthened existing policies by reinforcing communication channels. The achievement of the objectives meant that business was not lost and jobs were saved.

Exhibit 1

Response to Hard Copy Allegations

The following are our responses to the allegations made by Hard Copy. While we recognize that their report did not center on any specific company, we want to make it abundantly clear that with regards to our company's operations, all of the allegations are completely without merit.

Allegation: "Workers in these factories are paid a base wage of 15 cents per hour, which is said to be below subsistence level"

Fact: Minimum wage in Nicaragua for textile workers is \$500 pesos/month. The minimum wage paid to newly hired, untrained workers at our company is \$550 pesos, with the average employee of ours earning approximately \$1200 pesos per month.

Allegation: "Workers, in some cases, are as young as 15."

Fact: Our company has a strict minimum age policy, which requires all hires to show proof (most Nicaraguans use birth certificates) that they are at least 18 years of age. In addition, all hires are required to sign an affidavit (enclosed) further verifying their age. If, at any time, an underage worker is discovered, employment is immediately terminated.

Allegation: "Workers are forced to work as many as 13 hours a day, seven days a week"

Fact: The standard workday is nine hours thirty-five minutes/day, Monday through Friday. If, on occasion, the production schedule is heavy, workers are asked to work overtime--for which they are compensated at two times their regular, hourly salary.

Allegation: “Workers are denied overtime pay.”

Fact: This is absolutely false. All employees working more than 9 hours and thirty-five minutes in a single day, or 48 hours in a week, are paid overtime at a rate of two-times their regular, hourly salary. ****Documentation attached****

Allegation: “Workers are verbally, physically and sexually abused by their supervisors.”

Fact: Absolutely false. Our company has a strong anti-harassment policy, which we enforce. The policy -- attached -- informs workers to report such behavior to a manager, without fear of reprisal.

Allegation: “Workers are exposed to dangerous chemicals.”

Fact: All employees, whose job involves working with the chemicals necessary for our factory production, are a) provided safety gear (including gloves, goggles, masks and aprons, and b) are provided training in the safe handling and use of these chemicals.

Allegation: “The Free Trade Zone uses barbed wire fences and armed guards to keep the workers in and visitors out”

Fact: The government of Nicaragua, in working to protect the investments of the Free Trade Zone as well as to protect its workers, set up fences around the zone. Our employees have identification badges and must pass by guards--just as large American and other international companies do in securing their facilities. Our employees are free to leave the Zone during their lunch breaks, if they so choose.

Allegation: “Bleach, solvents and dyes are washed into outdoor, open pits.”

Fact: Our company strictly meets and exceeds all Nicaraguan environmental laws. All chemicals used in our production are disposed of properly, with our employees trained in the use of those chemicals. ****A copy of our workplace safety policy is attached for your review.**

Allegation: “Empty, rusted barrels of chemicals are stored in the open and not in controlled areas.”

Fact: As stated above, our company strictly meets or exceeds all Nicaraguan environmental safety laws. Furthermore, we do not store any dangerous chemicals in non-controlled areas.

Allegation: “The workers’ housing conditions are substandard”

Fact: We pay our employees wages that are, on average, far above the minimum wage for textile workers and other industries in Nicaragua. Just as is the case in the United States and other democratic countries around the world, it is up to the individual employee to make his or her own decisions regarding housing.

Public Relations in Bosnia

**Virginia Sullivan
Arkansas State University
United States**

Executive Summary

In 1995 a U.S.-led team of public relations professionals congregated in Naples, Italy, to create a network of international personnel that would become the public information cadre for Implementation Forces (IFOR) of the Bosnian peacekeeping effort. Although it was an historic time, little did this group of practitioners realize that the policies they developed and the plans they wrote could become a blueprint for future operations, not just military but also for those involved in building international commerce as well. This case study is based on the author's experiences as a U.S. Air Force officer, as an initial member of the IFOR team and as the first chief for the multinational internal information team.

The lessons learned from these experiences have long-range implications for conducting public relations in an international arena. This case explains how the internal information program was conceived, developed and implemented, and identifies the key publics and key participants in the process.

The four-step process of public relations, from research to evaluation, is used to explicate the process that was used to establish the public relations operations for IFOR's internal information program. For each step, examples are provided of how that process was accomplished or how roadblocks affected the process. Finally, the case reflects on the successes and failures of the overall communication process of IFOR and its effectiveness in a multicultural environment.

The Problem

This case study is based on the author's experience as a U.S. Air Force officer, who deployed to the Former Yugoslavia in the winter of 1995 as part of the Implementation Forces' (IFOR) public relations team. As the first chief of IFOR's Internal Information division the author's challenge was to form an international team, to recruit members and to develop strategies and tactics for a new program involving several countries. The resulting internal information program produced the *IFOR Informer*, a newspaper for the 60,000 troops temporarily stationed in Bosnia, Croatia, and Hungary.

Background

With 60,000 troops from more than 40 countries deployed to the Former Yugoslavia as a peacekeeping force, conducting an internal public relations program challenged the newly organized Implementation Forces (IFOR) public information officers (PIOs). The world watched as nations sent team members, who met for the first time in 1995 to develop and plan an internal communication program to reach a diverse internal audience.

For more than 500 years war has ebbed and flowed in the Balkans. Armies from the Ottoman Empire, Germany, England and other countries have occupied or fought, bled and died in battles in what is more known as the Former Yugoslavia. Peace has been intermittent with the longest period being 50 years during the middle 1700s. But in the fall of 1995, representatives of three of the warring factions of Bosnia-Herzegovina met with the United States and other diplomatic peacemakers in Dayton, Ohio, to seek peace once again. The “Dayton Peace Agreement” became the impetus establishing the present peacekeeping efforts and IFOR’s deployment in the Balkans.

Although IFOR relied on the 16 nations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) for the majority of its troops, many non-NATO units volunteered for the peacekeeping mission. Thus the mission of keeping the peace, by deadly force if necessary, juxtaposed troops from more than 40 nations, both NATO and non-NATO, within an area of about 5100 square kilometers.

The IFOR Organization

The U.S. took the primary leadership role for IFOR because of the established hierarchy within NATO. Since World War II, the Supreme Allied Headquarters Europe (SHAPE), the military arm of NATO, has had a U.S. commander. In December of 1995, General George A. Joulwan commanded both SHAPE in Bonns, Belgium, and the U.S. European Command (EUCOM) in Stuttgart, Germany. However, the hands-on oversight of IFOR was delegated to Admiral Leighton “Snuffy” Smith, the commander for Allied Forces Southern Command (AESOUTH) in Naples, Italy. Although Admiral Smith directed his AESOUTH operations from Naples, as commander for IFOR (COMIFOR), he originally planned to have his headquarters in Zagreb, Croatia, but moved them to Sarajevo, Bosnia, for political reasons.

As the Chief of Public Information for AFSOUTH, Navy Captain Mark VanDyke became the director for IFOR public relations. VanDyke managed a multinational staff composed of Italian, Greek, Turkish, British, French, German and U.S. military personnel and directed tasks and operations for the southern region of Europe from his office in Naples. VanDyke’s IFOR office in Sarajevo, where the mission was broader in scope, required more personnel from additional countries. Drawing from NATO public information offices at bases throughout Europe, including those at SHAPE and EUCOM headquarters, VanDyke established a system of Combined Public Information Centers (CPIC) in Bosnia, Hungary and Croatia. As non-NATO countries responded with their own public information officers, they were integrated into CPICs. With more than 40 nations providing troops for this mission, conducting public relations was a multinational, multicultural, multi-faceted challenge.

Publics

As the world watched through television cameras, events unfolded in the Balkans. Much

of VanDyke's time was devoted to responding to the media and providing public relations counsel to Admiral Smith. However, there were thousands of military men and women stationed in remote areas where they did not have access to these events. In these remote areas, the media sought out military personnel for interviews, making them undesignated IFOR spokespersons so keeping them informed about changes in the operation was as essential as updating them on COMIFOR's policies. Part of IFOR training included each member knowing how as an individual he/she contributed to the mission's success. But like most military personnel, they were hungry for information and wanted to keep in touch with the world beyond the Balkans. They wanted to know how their favorite sports team was faring back home. They wanted to know what the other IFOR units were doing and where they were. Relevant and concise information was crucial to keeping these troops efficient.

Reaching an internal audience with diverse identities, cultures, and ideologies produced a challenge that had never before been undertaken. During the Gulf War the coalition forces had established joint information bureaus where they conducted media relations, but internal information programs were left to the individual nations. With more than 40 nationalities involved in Bosnia, communicating in a politically sensitive environment and meeting the diverse needs of the audience would pose a dilemma for any public relations practitioner. This job was delegated to an Air Force major, who was the deputy chief of internal information for the Air Force at the Pentagon.

Goals And Objectives

For most military or international organizations, research, the first step in public relations, normally yields regulations, previous plans or other documents to use as guidelines. However, IFOR's operational plan did not provide goals or guidelines beyond a statement that said, "There will be an internal information program." EUCOM had published a plan in November, but according to it, the public information plan was:

Inform American and international public, and gain their support, for the role and activities of U.S. forces involved.... Support U.S. and international media coverage of U.S. operations.... Support NATO Public Information operations.... Support combined U.S.-non-NATO public affairs operations.... Establish Combined Information Bureau.

There were no specific guidelines that applied to an internal information program. The challenge was to develop a plan for communicating within a multinational, multicultural and newly constructed organization, conforming to and consistent with the political sensitivities inherent in the relationships involved. Included in the plan would be a method of building a team, procuring equipment, determining the location for the operation and creating documents needed to facilitate the process.

When the United Nations' Protection Force transferred the responsibility of the peacekeeping mission to IFOR on Dec. 20, 1995, IFOR solidified its identity and mission. IFOR's "corporate image" was developed into the following themes and messages:

IFOR is here to help, the right tool for the right mission, an example of NATO's new attributes and abilities, impartial and even-handed in treatment of all people, and in favor of cooperation by all involved.

These messages were integrated into the *IFOR Informer*, the newspaper for the troops and the primary communication activity of the Internal Information Program. Initially the goal was for the first issue of the biweekly newspaper to be printed and distributed by the first of February 1995. However, the first printing was delayed until Wednesday, Feb. 14, 1995. Nonetheless, the *Informer* communicated vital information to the IFOR troops and promulgated IFOR's themes and messages until IFOR ceased to exist.

The internal campaign's goals and objectives were based on research. With no documents to provide substantive guidance, the campaign turned to the corporate memory of key personnel for information and recommendations. Two public information officers, one British and one U.S., had been sent to Zagreb, Croatia, to scout out the future location of the proposed IFOR headquarters. The campaign staff realized it, too, needed to be in Zagreb. But first, Zagreb itself had to be researched.

Research in Zagreb revealed:

* For two years, the UN headquarters at Zagreb had produced a biweekly magazine, run a 24-hour radio station and produced a weekly television show. If IFOR absorbed these facilities and their staffs, then IFOR would have a ready-made internal information program. However, the cost of the operation, including the salaries of the UN personnel, far surpassed IFOR's budget.

* Office space at Zagreb would be extremely limited until the UN moved out of its compound in downtown Zagreb. Additionally, telephones, computers and desks belonged to the UN PLO, who graciously shared his meager accommodations with the incoming IFOR contingent.

* Since the mission had not transferred from UNPROFOR to IFOR, there were no funds available to commit to any supplies. This was compounded by the lack of documents allocating money, staff and equipment to an internal program.

* As soon as U.S. military arrived in Tuzla, Bosnia, the Armed Forces Network (AFN), the U.S. military broadcasting network for overseas, established a satellite radio station in Tuzla, and installed repeaters and an antenna system throughout the North-East Sector of Bosnia. Television

sets were later delivered and placed in communal areas of bases, where troops could watch AFN and CNN broadcasts. Radio broadcasts could be picked up via transistor radios by troops anywhere within range of the repeaters, which included one in Sarajevo and others in the British sector in northwest Bosnia.

Although many languages were represented by the troops, English was the most common language. In many cases it was the second language, but was understood well enough to be the conduit of vital information. The French military set up a low-power radio station at Moister, Bosnia, where they broadcast in French. Although the facilities were operated by units from specific nations, each was accommodating in carrying IFOR's messages as well as news from the homefront, wherever that may have been.

* A primary goal for the internal program was creating an internal publication for IFOR troops and for COMIFOR to communicate with them. When the headquarters for IFOR planned to move to Sarajevo, moving the internal program to Sarajevo would have seemed logical. With the entire staff for IFOR located at President Tito's former residence in Sarajevo, space was the greatest concern. Even with temporary trailers placed within the compound, there was no room for producing a newspaper. The Bosnian newspaper office in Sarajevo had been bombed during the war and was producing its daily paper from the building's basement. As the only printing facility operating, it had no excess capacity for producing a newspaper for IFOR.

* Finally, the research focused on the U.S. Navy's Support Facility in Naples. In addition to AFSOUTH headquarters, Naples housed the support facility for the U.S. Navy's Sixth Fleet. An Italian publisher, Stampa Generale, rented facilities at the Navy base and published a weekly newspaper for the U.S. military stationed there; the firm was interested in printing and delivering the newspaper for IFOR. The actual distribution to the bases throughout the Former Yugoslavia would be via IFOR's C-130s that made regular trips throughout the theater of operations.

Naples appeared the best place to publish the newspaper, so the campaign's head recommended that the internal program--which still consisted of only the campaign head--move back to Naples.

Strategic Goals and Objectives

If you don't have a plan, then you plan to fail. The campaign chief had written plans for conducting public relations during war, but now had to develop a plan for conducting a peacekeeping mission with former adversaries serving on the same side. A plan was drafted that took into consideration how broadcast needs would be met, what equipment would be needed to produce a newspaper, the most advantageous place to publish the newspaper and the staffing required for the newspaper.

Once the plan was approved, a contract was written that complied with Italian law for the

Naples publisher. The contract stated:

- * 15,000 copies would be published biweekly for six months with a renewable option.
- * The newspaper would be two colors with an option for four-color separations.
- * Each issue would be printed in English and French, the official languages of NATO.

Additionally, the peacekeeping troops were divided into three sections in Bosnia--one with the U.S. led forces, one with British led forces and one with French led forces--so English and French were the two dominant languages.

* Stampa Generale would deliver the newspapers, separated into bundles for specified destinations, to AESOUTH headquarters the morning of publication.

Since the basic IFOR plan did not include internal information, there were no staffing documents specifying required journalistic skills. Unlike in the corporate world where positions can be created as needed, the bureaucracy of the military prohibited a unit from arbitrarily assigning people without a “manning” document. To build the diverse staff needed to produce a newspaper for troops from 40 countries, the chief had to be creative. The first member of the staff hired was a Norwegian conscript who happened to be a trained journalist. The Norwegian lieutenant had been working in media relations at the Zagreb office. Next, help was enlisted from two U.S. Navy lieutenants concluding their summer reserve training in Naples. To comply with Italian law, any newspaper distributed in Italy must have a registered Italian journalist as the “responsible editor.” The Italian special assistant to AESOUTH’S VanDyke, Franco Veltri, met these requirements and became the next IFOR *Informer* staff member. Another AESOUTH staff member was a British ex-patriot fluent in Italian and had previously edited AFSOUTH’s monthly magazine.

Before even one issue of *Informer* was published, it was obvious that the paper would require bilingual French journalists to report, write and translate for the newspaper. A telephone call to the French military headquarters in Paris produced two military journalists within two weeks. A French Navy Lieutenant and a French Army sergeant arrived about the same time as a German clerk who set up the office.

In addition to the staff in Naples, public information officers and enlisted personnel at CPICs throughout Europe contributed stories, photographs and ideas for the newspaper. A small cadre of public information personnel at Sarajevo assisted with editing and rewriting articles.

Strategic planning documents were modified to reflect the requirements of the new internal information program. Strategic goals established for the IFOR *Informer* were:

- * To provide an avenue for the commanders to communicate with their troops, through articles and editorials
- * For the troops to learn about other units and the countries they represented
- * To entertain the troops
- * To provide valid information of interest to IFOR for the duration of the mission

The tactical plan or the actual execution of the strategic goals hinged on how well internal communication worked, not just through the newspaper. Even when there is a common language, the communication process is convoluted, at best. For the multinational IFOR staff, it was even more difficult.

Although the *IFOR Informer* was a formative tool for communicating the commander's messages and themes, it was not the only method stressed in the internal program. Face to face communication always has been thought to be the most efficient and effective way of communicating. On a regular basis, Admiral Smith, as well as other commanders like British General Sir Michael Walker, visited various bases and remote sites to boost morale. In special instances, heads of state like U.S. President Bill Clinton and Prince Charles of England made special trips to address troops. While the IFOR newspaper covered these historic moments, the real value of the trips was face to face communication between those troops and their leaders. The visits proved to be rewarding for the leadership as well as the thousands of men and women in attendance.

Since the newspaper was the primary tool for communicating with internal audiences, specific tactics for making it most efficient were employed. Those tactics included:

- * Themes were developed into stories. For example, since mine safety was paramount, a series of articles addressed different aspects of mine safety.
- * To ensure equal treatment, a corporate policy stated that photos of heads of state would not be used on the front page, which would instead be reserved for coverage of the troops.
- * Writing stories was the responsibility of all staff members, who would travel to remote sites and chronicle the events.
- * Various staff members as well as the COMIFOR's official photographer and the U.S. military's Joint Combat Camera team took photographs for the newspaper.
- * Meeting the requests of the troops was not always the correct decision for the newspaper. For example, the Scandinavians responded to a survey that a girl should be a regular part of the newspaper. American culture and Department of Defense sexual harassment policy confirmed the decision to not include this item in the publication.
- * A request to The Associated Press in Europe allowed the newspaper to use stories and

photos free of charge. AP became the primary source for sports and international news.

* As a military publication, all copy had to be approved by VanDyke before it could be published. This review ensured that politically sensitive material met the most stringent requirements.

* To keep people informed and to promote even-handedness by IFOR deployed troops who patrolled throughout Bosnia and met with government officials and international media, the newspaper focused on troop activities.

* To ensure policies and procedures for the internal program were followed, all communication would be in English, the common language of the staff.

In most cases the stories were written in English and translated into French. Although many word-processing software programs have the capability to translate into other languages, a compatible computer keyboard is needed. The French journalists had requested a French keyboard, but did not have one when the first issue was published. The lack of the correct keyboard was blatantly obvious in a headline that included the English word "inform." When translated into French it should be written with an accent mark, to mean, "to inform." Without the accent mark, the same French word means "without shape." When the French Ministry of Defense saw the mistake, it ordered the proper keyboard for the staff.

Even though everyone on the staff spoke a form of English, communicating effectively among the staff was a challenge. Presenting abstract ideas to the staff was difficult because Americans often use colloquialisms to illustrate points. These don't translate well, nor are they easily explained to someone who doesn't comprehend the connotation of the words within the context.

Since the newspaper became one of the most widely read publications by those in remote areas as well as at headquarters, there was demand for more copies. After the first issue, story contributions began arriving from many of the public information centers as well as from others who just wanted to write about their experiences. The communication process was no longer one-way, but evolved into Grunig's two-way symmetrical model of public relations.

Results Achieved

The legacy of the *IFOR Informer* continued as long as the IFOR mission. After 1997 the IFOR military forces in Bosnia became the Stabilization Forces (SFOR). With this change, the newspaper no longer had a place except in the history of IFOR.

How were the IFOR goals met? How can the success of IFOR's internal information program be measured? Did the internal program establish the right image for IFOR? Was the newspaper an effective communication tool? Did the newspaper entertain the troops and provide

valid information for them?

Although there are many scientific ways to measure the success of a program or a specific aspect of it, perhaps the hearsay comment of Admiral Smith sums it up best. He is quoted as having said he was so pleased that he insisted on having a successor of the *IFOR Informer* for the SFOR.

IFOR's PLO established a model for multicultural public relations in every definition of the term. From the multicultural staff to the multicultural publics, this operation established the identity of IFOR in the hearts and minds of the troops, the countries where they were stationed and the world.

Although IFOR is not a corporation, it did develop a "corporate image" in the international arena. In the history books, IFOR will be remembered for what it did--maintaining peace in a volatile, war-torn country. This was the image COMIFOR wanted to portray and is indicative of how future successes will be measured.

In addition to building new tools in a multicultural environment, the IFOR internal information team developed policy and procedures for successors to use. Because there were similarities in how varied cultures viewed public relations, the strategic plans could be similar even though the tactics of accomplishing the goals varied. Cultural differences contributed to a more diverse approach to reaching goals, and demanded a broader approach than the tunnel vision approach of the "America knows best" attitude.

The measurement of success can be found in the completion of a task. After a month of research, planning, and communicating, the first newspaper rolled off the presses and was distributed throughout the region. After the first two issues, many of the troops surveyed said they eagerly looked for the *IFOR Informer*. The newspaper was a tool for communicating with the troops, but it became a souvenir for many of those serving their time in Bosnia. It was a way of remembering their part in a special mission and of bringing cohesiveness to a diverse organization.

Conclusion

The success of working in a multicultural environment to conduct public relations activities takes determination, sensitivity, tenacity and savvy. Establishing IFOR's Internal Information Program presented many challenges, even in following the basic principles of public relations. For initiating and conducting the programs in Bosnia, change was the only constant. Plans had to be modified and people rotated in and out while the public relations campaigns continued. Training was a continual requirement to blend cultural differences into a team effort.

Effective public relations meant effective communication, whether communicating face to face at an IFOR staff meeting, or through the *IFOR Informer* to the troops or through the news media to the world.

In Dean Kruckeberg's article in *Public Relations Quarterly*, he forecasts that for public relations practitioners, "... tomorrow's public relations practitioners will all need to be far more culturally astute and cosmopolitan--that is, particularly to the multicultural and international nuances of their organizations' diverse publics.... Professionals will be critically needed who can examine, maintain and modify as necessary indigenous organizational and societal values and belief systems in an age and communication milieu in which values, beliefs and ideologies will be continually challenged." (Kruckeberg, p. 97.)

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**Reaching Out to the Community:
Shell Oil's Response to Crisis in Nigeria**

**Amiso M. George
University of Texas at San Antonio
United States**

Executive Summary

During much of 1995 and 1996, Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria, the nation's largest foreign-owned petroleum company, was pilloried in the international press for alleged environmental pollution of the oil producing delta region of Nigeria. The criticism reached a high point in November 1995 when Shell was accused of tacit support of the execution of noted Nigerian writer Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others for treason. His supporters perceived Saro-Wiwa as a human rights activist who fought on behalf of the Ogoni people, one of the communities damaged by pollution. An articulate and persuasive spokesman, Saro-Wiwa used international human rights organizations and media to appeal directly to the international community for support. The ensuing media coverage portrayed Shell as an exploitative multinational corporation with no concern for the well-being of the communities in which it has operated for more than 40 years. Protests, in some cases violent, were held at Shell headquarters in London. Several Shell facilities in the delta region of Nigeria were destroyed. Shell reacted by closing its operations in Ogoniland in 1993 and taking precautionary measures in other oil producing communities.

The publicity surrounding Saro-Wiwa's execution, combined with the unrelenting attacks on the company's role and abysmal environmental records, caused Shell to embark on a sustained public relations effort to repair its tarnished image. The corporation realized that before it could appeal to a wider international audience, it had to repair its damaged relationship with the communities in which it operated.

The Problem

Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria was accused of environmental wreckage and abuse in Ogoniland by noted Nigerian writer and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa. Prior to Saro-Wiwa's accusations, Shell had experienced community dissent in the oil producing delta region and demands for reparations for environmental damage, but police usually were called to suppress protests. Saro-Wiwa and his associates formed the *Movement* for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP). The group drew up a Bill of Rights for the Ogoni and demanded \$10 billion in damages from Shell and some level of autonomy from the federal government. MOSOP's self-stated primary aims were to call attention to the environmental devastation caused by oil spillage and gas flares from Shell installations and inequity in the distribution of oil resources. Having failed to convince the Nigerian government to act on its behalf, MOSOP went directly to Shell. One of the co-founders of MOSOP, Dr. Garrick Leton, said, "We are asking for the restoration of our environment, we are asking for the basic necessities of life—water and electricity, education; but above all we are asking for the right to self-determination so that we can be responsible for our resources and environment."

MOSOP organized an "Ogoni Day" rally in January 1993 that drew over 300,000 people and became the prelude to subsequent protests against Shell. Reports indicate that protesters vandalized Shell installations in Ogoniland. Shell reacted by asking the Rivers State government for help. Help came in form of a military unit that forcibly ensured the completion of the project. According to Shell spokesman Eric Nickson, "Shell has a legal obligation to notify the

authorities whenever it perceives a threat to the continuity of oil operations. Unavoidably, therefore, the company has on occasion been compelled to ask for assistance.”

As tensions escalated in Ogoniland and nearby communities, Shell closed its Ogoni operations in 1993. A series of deadly inter-ethnic clashes followed. In this tense environment, Saro-Wiwa called for a boycott of the democratic presidential election by all Ogonis. The reaction by some of the MOSOP co-founders was swift. Four resigned, arguing that Saro-Wiwa had deviated from the original objective of the group. This rift became more glaring when Saro-Wiwa formed a youth wing of MOSOP, named the National Youth Council of Ogoni People (NYCOP). The new organization was undeniably loyal to him. The Youth Council was perceived by some moderate members of MOSOP as a vigilante group willing to act at the behest of Saro-Wiwa.

The loyalty of Youth Council members was illuminated in glaring brutality on May 21, 1994, when four Ogoni leaders were murdered at a public meeting in Gokana, Ogoniland. These leaders had been accused of collaborating with the government to further suppress MOSOP’s activities. The government sent the army to crush the perpetrators and arrest the MOSOP and Youth Council ringleaders. Although Saro-Wiwa had not been present at the meeting, he was accused of instigating the murders. He was also accused of treason for demanding autonomy for Ogoniland. Saro-Wiwa and eight other collaborators were tried by a military court and sentenced to death by hanging.

Despite worldwide pleas to the Nigeria government, calls for intervention by Shell, and threats of sanctions from several Western governments and organizations, the government executed Saro-Wiwa and the other eight men in November 1995. Shell and the Nigerian government were severely criticized by the international media, human rights organizations and religious leaders. Shell argued that it had no influence on the government, and so could not have prevented the executions. However, Shell’s perceived apathy illuminated the symbiotic relationship between multinational corporations and governments of third-world nations where they operate.

Still reeling from its poor handling in 1995 of the disposition of Brent Spar, an oil storage platform in the North Sea, Shell embarked on a blitz international public relations campaign. The company’s website served as an effective tool for quickly disseminating information. Shell executives fanned out to Europe and North America and talked willingly to television, radio and newspaper reporters. Shell was forced to admit that it received help from the Nigerian military to protect its operations in communities where it had installations, and also admitted to probably contributing to environmental pollution of the Niger Delta. Meanwhile, Shell announced several measures to improve its operations and most importantly, its relationship with communities where it operated. Shell’s then community relations manager for the Eastern Division, which encompassed the troubled communities, acknowledged that there was a “deep undercurrent of anger” which manifested in “community disturbances.”

Background

Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria has operated in Nigeria for almost 40 years. It is involved in oil and gas exploration, oil production and marketing. Shell is the first and largest of the six major oil-producing companies in Nigeria. It produces about half of the country's entire oil production.

Shell was the exploratory company to gain first access to onshore wells in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. A joint venture agreement with the government-owned Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) gave it tremendous clout over smaller oil companies like the French-owned ELF and Italian-owned AGIP.

Shell also has 25 per interest in the Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) Project, expected to reduce flared gas nearly one-half. The Nigerian government's stake in the project is 49. Shell's stake is equal to all other multi-national companies.

Shell employed 4700 Nigerians full time and had a contract workforce of 20,000. Given its powerful commercial position, its actions and decisions affect the livelihood of ordinary Nigerians at the gas pumps, as well as in the communities in which Shell installations are located.

Chronology

In Umuechem on November 1, 1990, youths attacked a Shell rig and flow station in a tiny community in Rivers State. Armed with machetes and guns, they demanded compensation for destroyed farmlands. Citing his employees' safety, Shell's Eastern Division Manager sought police protection. A mobile unit responded and three officers died in the ensuing confrontation. Police reinforcements, according to Amnesty International, shot and killed about 80 villagers and destroyed over 400 homes. Shell reported that although many people lost their lives, only seven were identified. This massacre reportedly set the stage for creation of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni Peoples (MOSOP).

Armed men attacked Shell's rig camp and flow station at Ahia on March 7, 1992. They held rig workers hostage and destroyed or looted property worth thousands of dollars. They demanded compensation from oil revenues and the building of new roads in the community. Shell again turned to government to quell the disturbances and shut down production for nearly a month.

Led by the charismatic Ken Saro-Wiwa, a rally was organized in Ogoniland in January 1993 where more than 300,000 Ogonis protested against Shell. MOSOP leadership drew up the Ogoni Bill of Rights and became adamant in their quest to get Shell and the government to give the Ogonis a share of the oil revenue extracted from their land. The group also demanded political self-determination and claimed ownership of the crude oil on their land. (Under Nigerian law mineral-producing lands are federally owned.) Escalating tensions erupted in violent attacks on Shell staff and property. Shell recalled its staff.

In August 1993, several died in an ethnic conflict between the Ogonis and the Andonis. MOSOP blamed the government and Shell. Meanwhile, a worldwide campaign against Shell led by organizations such as Green Peace and Amnesty International exploded in the international. Saro-Wiwa's MOSOP and the Ogoni people were honored by the Under-represented People's Organization.

A false fire alarm was called in from Shell's flow station *on* at Korokoro in October 1993. Shell's fire trucks and their drivers were allegedly attacked by armed youths. Shell again turned to the government, which dispatched soldiers to accompany Shell fire-fighting employees. Reports indicate some were injured, but no one was killed.

Crisis erupted in Nembe Creek on December 4, 1993, when a group of armed youths attacked the Nembe production staff, vandalizing and looting Shell property. They demanded Shell provide electricity, build roads, and hire the locals. Shell again turned to the government, which sent in a Mobile Police unit, and shut down production for five days.

In Ogoniland, May 1994, four Ogoni leaders, all former members of MOSOP who allegedly had criticized Saro-Wiwa for losing sight of the original purpose of MOSOP, were murdered during a public meeting.

The aftermath of the 1994 murders was arrest, conviction and hanging of Saro-Wiwa and eight others. The international outcry resulting from the execution was directed at both Shell and the government. Shell was blamed for quietly sanctioning the hangings. It denied both complicity in the executions and a role in environmental pollution. Subsequently, Shell felt compelled to stop its denials and embarked on vigorous campaign to restructure its badly tarnished image.

Goals and Objectives

As the crisis unfolded, the company worked with some of its publics to keep its operations functioning. One of the publics, state and federal governments, provided tactical support to enable Shell to control vandalism at its installations. Another public, Shell employees, was used as goodwill ambassadors to the local communities.

For the purposes of this case study, we will focus on four publics about which Shell was particularly concerned:

1. The Mass Media consisted of the Nigerian and international media, active external publics that published and broadcast reports about the Shell crisis to the world.

The Nigerian media, excepting government-controlled radio and television stations, have always been vocal critics of the government. Investigative reporters went to great lengths to ferret out evidence of Shell's collusion with the government in the crises at its oil installations. The world press was even more vocal. Reporters came to investigate the crisis, many traveling to Ogoniland to view the devastation for themselves. Coverage by the world press focused more on Shell's human rights record than environmental damage. Human rights, environmental, and other

non-governmental pressure groups used the World Wide Web in a relentless attack on Shell's credibility.

2. The Community referring to specific oil producing areas, the larger Nigerian community, and the world community.

The publics in Shell operating zones went from being latent to very active. Community leaders like Saro-Wiwa ignited awareness among members of these publics, especially in Ogoniland forming MOSOP from sub groups emerged and became even more active. As the groups gained more national and international attention, copycat active publics emerged in all oil producing communities.

Nigerian ex-patriots protested at Shell offices worldwide and wrote petitions and editorials calling for the boycott of Shell products. International human rights and environmental groups were highly active. Their actions, including protests at Shell headquarters in London, scathing editorials in the world press and on the Internet, and lobbying activities, drew further attention to the Shell crisis.

Shell's Impact Objectives (Planned Outcomes):

1. To establish/reestablish better dialogue with the local oil producing communities in order to stem further problems
2. Use opinion leaders/community leaders as a bridge for dialogue
 - a. Engage in continuous and open two-way communication
3. To boost spending on both environmental and social or community projects
 - Environmental*
 - a. Replace and bury aging oilflow pipelines to eliminate leaks that pollute and kill marine life
 - b. Reduce the level of greenhouse gases caused by open gas flaring.
 - Social/Community*
 - a. Build community clinics, schools, and youth/job training centers
 - b. Provide scholarships and jobs for indigenes of the oil producing areas
4. To lobby the federal government to introduce economic reform, including privatization, in order to ease the economic despair of the affected communities

Shell's Process Objectives (Information Dissemination):

1. To gain positive international media coverage of its efforts to boost social and environmental spending in the oil producing communities through:
 - a. use of international media, speeches and interviews and press conferences
 - b. use of Shell's website and the company's special reports and bulletins
2. To gain positive national media coverage of its efforts to re-establish dialogue with the community through:
 - a. use of press releases, speeches and interviews
 - b. use of Shell progress reports

Strategic Tactics and Techniques

Shell adopted several effective messages to meet its objectives. It promoted itself as a company that tries to balance business with active citizenship and work in partnership on community activities; whose business activities and decisions do not deliberately infringe on the communities basic human rights or affect their environment; and as a law-abiding, nonpolitical and nonsectarian company that listens to its publics. And finally, Shell told its own story to all its publics focusing on:

1. Balancing business with active citizenship/working in partnership with communities:

Shell actively promoted itself as a socially responsible business interested in the welfare of the communities in which it operates. At the height of the crisis, Shell took journalists to some of the villages that had benefited from its community efforts. Not all of the visits were successful, because the communities believed that Shell's efforts were too little and too late. The company stated that it would consult with community groups before embarking on sensitive projects and renewed interest in the health, safety and environment of the communities in which it operates. It promised to "pursue the goal of no harm to people" and "develop community programs."

2. Positioning Shell as a company that respects human rights and the environment: Shell showed support of human rights in its revised statement of business principles, saying it would strive to promote respect for human rights of all peoples "in line with the legitimate role of business." It mandates strict human rights and environmental protection policies for managers and contractors. It doubled its community assistance budget to approximately \$40 million. It stated its aim "to operate to standards comparable to those in developed countries and appropriate for the Niger Delta in general." Its plans called for regular publication of environmental reports at two sties with external auditing of the reports. In 1996, Shell replaced or buried old flowlines in order to reduce oil spills and began a massive restoration of vegetation in the mangrove swamp destroyed when it cleared paths for seismic exploration.

3. Promoting Shell As A Law-Abiding, Nonpolitical And Nonsectarian Company:

Shell aggressively promoted itself as committed to no political interference in the communities in which it operates. However, the crisis had thrust it, albeit unwillingly, into a political position. Shell had to negotiate carefully among the oil producing communities, the state governments and the federal government of Nigeria, without giving the impression that it supports one faction against the other.

4. Promoting Shell As A Company That Listens To Its Publics: Shell took a more proactive stance in its relationship with its various publics. It devised ways of monitoring the environment in oil producing communities. Its community liaison officers meet regularly with community leaders to ascertain the needs which has increased spending on community projects such as hospitals and clinics, youth job training facilities, schools and the training of personnel to run the Shell sponsored facilities. It launched a website with designated Speaker's Corner and Guest Platform to reach the international press, human rights activities and other critics and admirers.

5. Propagating Shell's Story: The company emphasized its commitment to a cleaner and safer environment, education, health and other community-related issues in the oil producing communities in particular and in Nigeria in general. Shell's website told its own side of the crisis. In the 1996 Annual Report, Shell provided comprehensive and positive information about its operations and activities in Nigeria. With little reference to the crisis, Shell focused instead on its accomplishments since the crisis and plans for continuous but responsible oil exploration in the Niger Delta. Among its major accomplishments, Shell pointed to its role as the first and largest oil exploration and marketing company in Nigeria and its support of education through building schools, awarding scholarships and supporting teaching staff. The company also cited support of health programs by building and or expanding clinics and hospitals, and by supplying medical equipment, staff training and support. Shell integrated social and environmental issues in its management and operations policy, as exemplified by Environmental Impact Assessments to identify environmental effects of development projects at the theoretical stage in order to stop or minimize negative effects.

Results Achieved

March to October 1996

- Shell provided the media with regular press releases on its efforts in the communities. Headlines such as "Shell Rebuilds Hospital," "Shell Joint Venture To Reduce Gas Flaring In Nigeria," "Shell Helps Youth Find Jobs," And "Shell Helps Ogoni Hospital" helped the company to show the public how its relationship with the communities had evolved.
- Shell also used press releases and its website to respond rapidly to its critics even as it worked to improve its image.
- Shell took journalists on tour of some its community projects in the Niger Delta.
- Shell sent its public relations team on a whirlwind tour of major European and North American cities to tell "their own side" of the story. Shell executives were interviewed on Cable News Network (CNN), the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), among others.
- Shell's community relations officers, sometimes accompanied by top officials, had 23000 meetings with opinion leaders in 1996, compared to 1300 meetings in 1995.
- Shell's top executives met with influential Nigerian organizations, such as the Rivers State Foundation (RSF), a U.S.-based non profit organization whose members come from the oil-producing communities.
- Shell's 1996 Community Report provided detailed information on Shell's contribution to the oil producing communities in healthcare, vocational training, education, agriculture and community achievements.

February to July 1997

- Shell initiated a youth training program in Ogoniland, which also received medical benefits. Other communities benefited from scholarships and potable water schemes.
- Shell's Group Managing Director, Phil Watts, spoke at the 4th African-African American Summit in Harare, Zimbabwe, on how multinationals can help in "economic development, human development and environmental sustainability."

Conclusions

Benoit (1994) contends that when our image or reputation is threatened, we are motivated to explain, defend, justify, rationalize, apologize or make excuses for our behavior. The same principles apply to organizations. Shell's attempt to rebuild its image falls into broad categories of image restoration strategies discussed by Benoit: denial, evasion of responsibility, reduction of offensiveness, corrective action, and mortification.

At the onset of the crisis, Shell denied that environmental pollution in the oil producing areas was related to its activities. The company also denied that it had any influence with the military government; therefore, it could not stop Ken Saro-Wiwa's execution. The company argued that out of concern, it used "quiet diplomacy" to try to get the Saro-Wiwa death sentence commuted.

Shell evaded responsibility by "scapegoating." The company argued that charges of environmental devastation are distorted. It blamed local thugs for sabotaging Shell operations to gain attention, and finally indirectly blamed the government for shirking its responsibilities to its oil producing communities. At the same time, Shell claimed that the oil spillage and gas flares, albeit dangerous and destructive, were not intended to deliberately damage the environment and the livelihood of the communities.

Shell's attempt at reducing its offensiveness focused on its pioneer status in the Nigerian oil industry and its enormous contribution to the economy. It contended "we are the largest oil company in Nigeria and we make the largest single contribution to the country... a force for good in Nigeria." Shell contributes more than 90 percent of the net revenues from each barrel of oil shows its impact on Nigeria's economy. So do its use of local subcontractors and the technical training of staff members.

In Shell's use of corrective action, the company promised to rectify the problem and promised to act to prevent a recurrence. Shell went on to identify specific steps to repair its damaged relationship with the communities, including restoration of the environment, increased spending on community and social projects, and open and improved communication with the oil producing communities and other publics.

Although Shell had initially taken a nonpolitical stance, Shell's general manager, Brian Anderson, a British national born in Nigeria who spent the first 24 years of his life there, has used his considerable influence and high profile to lobby Nigeria's military regime to initiate economic reforms. Anderson believes that economic reforms, including privatization, and the government's reduced stake in the joint venture with Shell will lead to an improved standard of living for members of the oil producing communities in particular and the nation at large.

Shell's relationship with the communities continues to evolve. The company's efforts to foster better relationships with the oil producing communities are still evolving. Dialogue and some openness are gradually replacing the mistrust between the two.

Shell's initial response to the crisis was insensitive. Shell claimed that it is merely a company that pays rent to the government and so should not be held responsible for services the

government should provide for its citizens. Shell is right on that claim. However, the communities that feel distanced from the Nigerian government perceive Shell as a de-facto government that should meet their social needs. In the aftermath of the crisis and national and international pressure, Shell was forced to do what it should have done—act on community concerns.

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About the Authors

Dr. Muhammad I. Ayish is an associate professor at the United Arab Emirates University-Al Am. He earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia and his Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. He also has been an associate professor at Yarmouk University, Jordan.

Dr. Ayish's research interests include Arab communication, public relations and new electronic technologies. He has published works in international journals such as *European Journal of Communication*, *Gazette*, *International Affairs*, *Media Development* and *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*. He has also contributed chapters to books such as *Mass Media in the Middle East*, *Communication Ethics and Universal Values* and *Middle East Communications*.

In 1996, Dr. Ayish won the Abdul Hamid Shoman Award for Young Arab Scholars.

Dr. Badran A. R. Badran is an associate professor at the United Arab Emirates University-Al Am. He earned his bachelor's degree in English language and literature from Kuwait University, his master's in journalism from Indiana University-Bloomington and his Ph.D. in communication studies from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Dr. Badran also has a certificate in Travel and Tourism from Oxford University, U.K. He was an assistant professor of Journalism and Mass Communication at Yarmouk University, Jordan, from 1984 through 1989.

His research interests include international communication, communication and the environment, tourism promotion, public relations and journalism-and-mass communication education. He is author or co-author of three books on public relations. Dr. Badran was chair of the Department of Mass Communication at the United Arab Emirates University in 1994 when the public relations education program was developed at that institution, and he is author of several case studies dealing with public relations in the Middle East.

Bob J. Carrell is professor emeritus at the University of Oklahoma, where he taught for 23 years and directed the School of Journalism and Mass Communication for 12 years. With Doug Newsom, he co-authored *Public Relations Writing: Form & Style*, now in its fifth edition. He has written several other books and academic journal articles.

Formerly a Fulbright professor in India, he is a frequent international lecturer and has spoken at workshops and seminars throughout the world. His professional experience includes work in both advertising and public relations, with specialization in research and strategic

communication planning.

He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Illinois and both M.S. and B.A. degrees from East Texas State University.

Anne Cooper-Chen is professor and director of the Center for International Journalism at Ohio University. She is author of *Mass Communication in Japan* and *Games in the Global Village*. She contributed a chapter on “Public relations in Japan” to *International Public Relations: A Comparative Analysis*; a chapter on “Asia and Pacific” to *Global Journalism*; and a chapter on “Gaming, Leisure and Mind Sports” to *Women, Media and Sports*.

Her 10 years of professional experience include work for the Asahi Evening News and John Weatherhill, publishers, both in Tokyo, and Commonwealth magazine in Richmond, Virginia.

She earned a Ph.D. in mass communication research from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, an M.A. in Japanese studies from the University of Michigan, and an A.B. from Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York. She was a Fulbright research scholar in Japan, is listed in Who’s Who of American Woman and has been elected to several offices in the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Hugh M. Culbertson is professor emeritus at the School of Journalism, Ohio University. He has authored or co-authored more than 50 articles in research journals and 10 published monographs and book chapters. His public relations books include *Social, Political and Context in Public Relations: Theories and Cases* and *International Public Relations: A Comparative Analysis*.

The Public Relations Society of America named him Outstanding Educator in 1990 and the Foundation for Public Relations Research and Education presented him with the Pathfinder Award for excellence in research in 1985. For 20 years he advised the Public Relations Student Society of America chapter at Ohio State, which now named in his honor. He has been on editorial review boards for *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Public Relations Review*, *Journal of Public Relations Research* and *Newspaper Research Journal*. He has lectured internationally at universities in the Philippines, Germany, the People’s Republic of China, South Korea and Thailand.

Emma L. Daugherty is an associate professor and head of the public relations option in the journalism department at California State University, Long Beach. Her courses include public relations case studies, principles and advanced writing. She also coordinates public

relations internships.

As a practitioner, she was an account supervisor at Greg Smith & Partners, Santa Ana, California, handling health care and industrial accounts. She also directed public relations and advertising for Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania's Symphony Society and Wharton Center for Performing Arts in East Lansing, Michigan.

She lectured at California State University, Fullerton; was an instructor at Michigan State University; and adjunct faculty at Chapman University; and Carlow College. She has a bachelor's degree in public relations from West Virginia University and a master's degree in advertising from Michigan State University. She is accredited (APR) by the Public Relations Society of America.

Amiso M. George is an assistant professor of communication at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Her research interests and publications focus on public relations and African American publics. She has a special interest in health communication and minority audiences, and minority teenage users of information. She previously worked as a television and radio producer and reporter in Nigeria and the United States, and as a public relations associate. Dr. George completed her Ph.D. in Communication at Ohio State University. She conducts workshops on effective communication with diverse audiences.

Ali Kanso is an associate professor at Emerson College, Boston, Massachusetts, where he teaches public relations, advertising and research methods. He is an active researcher in international public relations, advertising and marketing, as well as cross cultural and mass communication and consumer behavior.

His most recent research project is on public relations and advertising strategies in Scandinavia. Data on Finland was summarized in a chapter in *International Public Relations: A Comparative Analysis*.

He has taught at Tennessee State University; Slippery Rock University, Pennsylvania; and Kansas State University. He has both a Ph.D. in Mass Communication and an M.S. in Journalism from Ohio University and a B.A. in Public Relations/Advertising from the Lebanese University, Beirut. He was a correspondent and assistant editor at the Lebanese daily, An-Nahar (The Day).

Dr. Dean Kruckeberg is a professor of public relations at the University of Northern Iowa. He has a bachelor's degree from Wartburg College; a master's from Northern Illinois University; and a Ph.D. from the University of Iowa.

He was 1995 national "Outstanding Educator" of the Public Relations Society of

America and 1997 recipient of the “Pathfinder Award” presented by the Institute for Public Relations Research & Education. During summer 1994, he helped develop the public relations education program at the United Arab Emirates University.

He is co-author of *Public Relations and Community: A Reconstructed Theory* and of *This is PR: The Realities of Public Relations*.

Dr. Kruckeberg is co-chair of the Commission on Public Relations Education that will recommend guidelines for public relations curricula in the United States.

Maria E. Len-Rios is a temporary instructor in public relations at Georgia Southern University. She earned a master’s degree in public relations from the University of Georgia and a bachelor’s degree in speech communication, Spanish and international studies from Macalester College. She has worked in government public affairs, for public relations and advertising agencies, and in corporate marketing.

Mariechel J. Navarro is an extension assistant professor, National Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (BIOTECH) at the University of the Philippines, Los Banos. She heads the institute’s communication and technology utilization program and teaches an introductory course on public relations and advertising in the Institute’s Department of Humanities.

Her research interests are science communication, development journalism and public relations. She recently studied bioinformatics in Bangkok and Vienna, learning about the interface of information and computers in biotechnology. Her public relations work promoting popular awareness, understanding and appreciation of biotechnology, which was basis of her case in this book, received a first place regional award in the information dissemination category and a second place national best paper award, both in 1997, in the Philippines.

Doug Newsom has co-authored three textbooks, *Media Writing*; *This is PR: The Realities of Public Relations*; and *Public Relations Writing: Form and Style* and co-edits *Silent Voices*, a book of women’s colloquium papers. She is a professor at Texas Christian University and a public relations practitioner.

She is a past president of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications and former chair of the Accrediting Committee of the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. She is accredited by the Public Relations Society of America (APR), a member of its College of Fellows and recipient of its Outstanding Educator Award.

She was a Fulbright lecturer in India in 1988, and has done public relations workshops around the world, including Singapore, South Africa, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Poland and Vanuatu. She holds a B.J., BFA, M.J. and Ph.D., all from the University of Texas-Austin. She serves on the boards of directors of a publicly-held company and two national nonprofit organizations.

Ngu Teck Hua is coordinator of the master's degree program in Mass Communication and a senior lecturer at Mara Institute of Technology, Malaysia. where he started teaching in 1985. His areas of research interests include marketing communications, advertising and international communication.

He is a member of the International Association of Semiotic Studies and several other professional organizations in Malaysia and Singapore. He instructs and trains in numerous communications and marketing courses in the area. He has a Ph.D. in mass communications from Pennsylvania State University and a B.A. in communication from the National University of Malaysia and an MBA from the University of Malaya.

Chris W. Ogbondah is a professor at the University of Northern Iowa, where he coordinates the journalism program. He is author of *Nigerian Press: An Annotated Bibliography* and *Military Regimes and the Press in Nigeria, 1996-1993: Human rights and National Development*. He also wrote "International public relations education: U.S. issues and perspectives," a chapter in *International Public Relations: A Comparative Analysis*. He has published in many scholarly journals and written two forthcoming book chapters on press freedom in Africa.

Formerly a journalist, he was a producer and news director for television stations in Ibadan and Port Harcourt, Nigeria, and assistant editor of Nigerian Tide. He holds a Ph.D. in journalism from Southern Illinois University; a Master's in journalism from the University of Nebraska-Omaha; and a Bachelor's in journalism from the University of Nigeria-Nsukka.

Andreas Rossbach is a Brussels-based public relations freelancer and writer, with clients in both Europe and North America. He has a special interest in how public relations, marketing and advertising can be effectively integrated into one corporate voice. He has a M.S. degree in mass communication from Texas Christian University.

Valeria Shadrova is associate professor and deputy chairperson of the Department of Public Relations at St. Petersburg Electrotechnical University, St. Petersburg, Russia, where she has taught since 1980. She teaches Public Relations campaigns,

Organizational Communication, Speech Communication, Cross-cultural Communication and Interpersonal Communication.

Her more than 50 publications, include a chapter in “Public Relations: from Theory to Practice” (St. Petersburg 1998) and “Them” and “Us,” an analysis of cultural stereotypes in “Problemy cheloveka v. menaiushems’a mire” (St. Petersburg 1997). She collaborated on “Business communication and public relations for ESL students” in English Teaching Forum (1995). Dr. Shadrova received a Ph.D. in linguistics from Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) State University.

Abdul Karim Sinno is professor and chair of the Communications Department, Clarke College, Dubuque, Iowa. His teaching focuses on understanding the social, technological, managerial and public policy role of communications.

He was formerly director of Radio Lebanon, the official broadcast system of Lebanon’s Ministry of Information. He also designed numerous advertising and public relations campaigns for businesses in Lebanon, other Middle Eastern countries, and the U.S. He has written several publications and made presentations on public relations, the Internet, and international communication. He also consults with both U.S. and international businesses.

He has a Ph.D. in journalism and mass communication and a MA. in the same fields with a focus on advertising and persuasion, both from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Virginia Sullivan is a retired U.S. Air Force public affairs officer and now an instructor at Arkansas State University. She teaches courses in public relations, journalism, advertising and speaks frequently on international communications topics.

During her Air Force career she served as chief of public affairs, Ankara, Turkey; chief of the Joint Information Bureau, Frankfurt, Germany, supporting the humanitarian airlift to Bosnia; chief of internal information for the Implementation Forces in Bosnia (the experience from which her case study is drawn); and chief of the Air Force News Bureau, Washington, D.C.

She is accredited (APRP) by the Southern Public Relations Federation, recognized by the Public Relations Society of America, and a member of the Arkansas and Memphis PRSA chapters. She consults with several organizations, including the committee for dedication of the Korean War Memorial and the Arkansas Governor’s Task Force for Women and Children. She has spoken to groups on aspects of crisis communication, including “Israel in Crisis,” and the war in Bosnia.

Abdul Halim Taib is a journalist with the Bernama News Agency, He covers political issues, crime, sports and the economy and was a bureau chief in Kelantan State, Malaysia. He

has also authored several collections of writings on political issues in Malaysia.

He holds a bachelor's degree in mass communication (journalism) from Mara Institute of Technology (ITM) in Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia. Before beginning his career as a journalist, he was a padi farmer, teacher, clerk and supervisor with an electronic firm for seven years.

Dejan Vercic, a partner in Pristop Communication Group, Ljubljana, Slovenia, is responsible for the firm's public relations competencies and directs the PR Institute, its research branch. He has written more than 30 books, monographs, chapters and articles. In 1997 he received the International Association of Business Communicators Research Foundation Award for the best paper co-authored by an academic researcher and professional communicator in collaboration with Dr. Larissa A. Grunig and Dr. James E. Grunig.

He is founding director of the Slovenia news agency (STA) and one of the founders of the Public Relations Society of Slovenia, which he served as the first Secretary General. He also chairs its ethical committee and is drafting its first code of ethics. His international clients include British Aerospace, IBM, Merck, Microsoft, and the World Bank, as well as several Central and Eastern European countries.

He holds bachelor's and master's degrees in political science and communications science, respectively, from the University of Ljubljana and is a doctoral student in social and organizational psychology at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Robert I. Wakefield is an international public relations consultant both independently and with one of Salt Lake City, Utah's larger agencies. He lectures on international media systems at Brigham Young University and is the 1998 chair of the International Section of the Public Relations Society of America.

He has written several articles and book chapters and spoken at many national public relations conferences in the U.S. and at a public relations research symposium in Slovenia. He is currently writing a book on public relations in multinational firms. For six years he directed global public relations for NuSkin International. He also was a public information officer with the Salt Lake City School District.

Accredited (APR) by the Public Relations Society of America, he holds bachelor's and master's degrees in communications and public relations from BYU and a Ph.D. in public relations from the University of Maryland.

Igor Zakharov received a PhD in biomedical electronics in 1996 from St. Petersburg Electrotechnical University where he is now an associate professor. He teaches environmental

control, biophysics, and biomedical control in telecommunications and biotesting. He is a member of the Journalists' Union of St. Petersburg and has authored more than 10 articles on public relations and advertising. He was press secretary, on a volunteer basis, for the A. Popov Museum from 1985 to 1994.

Larisa Zolotinkina has been director of the A. Popov museum at St. Petersburg Electrotechnical University since 1994. Before that she was a senior researcher at the Radio Electronics Research Institute and academic secretary of the electronics, communication and computer science section of the Institute of History of Natural Science and Engineering at the Russian Academy of Sciences. She received a PhD in radio engineering in 1994 from Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) Electrotechnical Institute. She has written more than 40 publications on radioelectronics and history of science. An associate professor at St. Petersburg Electrotechnical, she teaches history of science.

About the Editors

Linda H. Scanlan, retired associate professor and chair of the journalism department at Norfolk State University, Virginia, was a Fulbright professor in Bulgaria, 1993-94; a USIS teaching fellow in Latvia in 1997; and has spoken to journalists and public relations practitioners throughout Eastern and Central Europe.

She has been active in the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, representing it on the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, and on the first Commission on Undergraduate Public Relations Education.

Accredited (APR) by the Public Relations Society of America, she is a past chapter president, a member of its Assembly, and on the executive board of its International Section, for which she edits the newsletter and monograph series. She was national faculty advisor for the Public Relations Student Society of America and a member of the editorial review boards of *Public Relations Review* and *Journal of Public Relations Research*.

She worked as a reporter for several daily newspapers in New York, New Jersey, Florida and Texas. In 1995 she covered the Fourth World Conference on Women as an accredited journalist and was part of a delegation from the (U.S.) National Federation of Press Women. She has a B.A. in government from Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.; a M.S. in journalism from Columbia, New York City; and a M.A. in higher education from George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

Judy VanSlyke Turk, dean of the University of South Carolina College of Journalism and Mass Communications, is co-author of *This is PR: The Realities of Public Relations*. She is past president of the Association for Education in

Journalism and Mass Communications and represented it on the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications.

Her career began with the Associated Press. She also worked in university and corporate public relations. She has consulted and spoken on journalism curriculum development, press freedom and public relations in Eastern Europe, the Newly Independent States of the former Soviet Union and Asia.

Her research has been published in *Journalism Monographs*, *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Newspaper Research Journal*, *Public Relations View* and *Public Relations Journal*. She is a member of the editorial advisory board for *The Strategist*, a PRSA publication, and *Journal of Public Relations Research*. She has taught at the University of Oklahoma, Louisiana State University, and Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York, and director of the journalism and mass communications program at Kent State University in Ohio. She is accredited (APR) by the Public Relations Society of America, was named its Outstanding Educator in 1992 and chaired its College of Fellows in 1997. She also advised the Public Relations Student Society of America. She has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Northwestern University, Chicago; a master's in public relations from Northern Illinois University; and a Ph.D. from the Syracuse University Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, New York.