

of an article without wading through a mass of technical information.

Such methods of increasing the velocity of communications are crucial because today's businessmen have more and more information competing for their attention. If business papers failed to get to the point, the men who rely on them to help shape decisions would find themselves always reading, with little time left for doing. But if the problem is difficult for the top executive, it is doubly acute for operational personnel whose task, to a large extent, is to do what the thinkers think of. For unless supervisory personnel at all levels have some idea of the information that bears on high-level directives, they are unable to carry them out.

Some companies insist that staff and line employees subscribe to and read the basic business publications in their fields. Many allow or even expect this reading to be done on the job. This is particularly true where new processes and products are constantly being evolved. The engineer who six months ago did a particular thing one way finds today that his methods have been outmoded by a new development announced at a seminar of metallurgists in West Germany. Unless he can attend every such meeting, he must depend on the publications bearing on his field of endeavor to keep him informed.

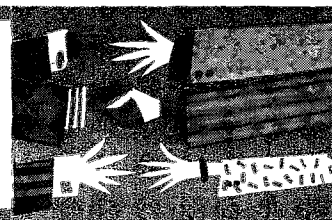
AT the same time that on-the-job reading is increasing, so is that done at home. For many individuals this is a self-protective activity. Stalked by the specter of automation, millions of men are finding their jobs disappearing or drastically changing. They must keep up with the new technology in order to move forward with the tide of change.

Moreover, business publications have risen to the challenge by providing a steady stream of innovations in communications to facilitate such study. In some magazines, for example, the text is accompanied by thin plastic phonograph records that let the reader hear as well as read essential information.

Some business publishers believe that the demands of their readership will require the medium to pull ahead of consumer publications in shaping a more imaginative approach. It is my own feeling that the demands of the coming decade, with its greater pressure on business publications, will put them to a real test of editorial enterprise and ingenuity. The ability of the business press to meet this challenge will have a greater effect on our daily lives than most people realize. We have at our command an almost inconceivable mass of technology and practical information that must be gathered, transmitted, and stored if we are to make full use of our advances.

SR/January 9, 1965

Public Relations



Ending Another Cold War

AT LONG LAST, it is beginning to look as if the clamorous hostility between business and government is near its end. For almost thirty years a government voice in favor of industry was rare. And even rarer was the leader in industry favorable to government. He often spoke as if the government in Washington were some alien thing out to destroy the economic system.

There are many signs of a change of attitude on the part of both business and government. No President of the United States in this era has courted business more ardently than President Johnson. Major business leaders have been asking their fellows to try to understand that a continuing war between business and government can bring great harm to the economic progress of the country.

It is interesting to look back on the last national campaign and realize that for the first time since 1932 there were no attacks on business by political leaders. And on the other side there have been speeches by some of the topmost business executives asking other businessmen to try to understand that politicians have their problems and that it is about time that the business community tried to understand them.

This changed attitude is bound to affect public relations practitioners. Many of them have heated their clients' anti-government feelings in response to government actions that they did not like or felt were antagonistic to business. In fact, much of the upsurge of the public relations business came as a result of the growth of governmental regulation

of business and the attacks on it in the New Deal days.

For some time however, the wiser public relations men have been advising their employers that the war between government and business was a help to neither and a detriment to the nation as a whole. These public relations men understand that in any direct confrontation, business is bound to lose.

Just how long it will take before the cold war between business and government ends, no one knows, but the opportunity for a rapprochement has never been better. The doors at Washington are wide open to business today and the sooner business walks across the welcome mat the quicker all the needless struggles will end.

It will take a goodly measure of statesmanship on the part of American business to follow some of its leaders who have spoken clearly for better relations with government, but a start has been made.

Frederick R. Kappel, chairman of the board of American Telephone and Telegraph Company, in his book *Business Purpose and Performance*, says, "Let us once and for all get over the habit of going to people in government when we need something, and ignoring them when we have nothing to ask for. Let's never ignore them. And I mean never. Let us rather, as their constituents, invite them on all suitable occasions to tell us what they have been doing. Let us invite them also to see what we have been doing. Let us tell them our plans and take a sincere interest in theirs. Let us by all means increase our understanding of

To Calypso: Five-Week-Old German Shepherd

By Dan Jaffe

CALYPSO sleeps. Momentarily we joke;
Operation Puddle has been cancelled.
Later, we'll stand omniscient,
Waiting for the pause and hover,
The tell-tale crouch. We play god;
But she seems not to understand.
Last night, sometime between her yappings,
I dreamed we all were sniffing,
Aimlessly and innocent. The world
Was scattered with our droppings.
We frisked and chattered, when
Suddenly a Voice said, "No."
A Whirlwind pushed our noses into our mess.

their problems, as we hope they will gain insight into ours."

M. J. Rathbone, chairman of the board, of the Standard Oil Company (New Jersey), speaking before the New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce in 1961, said: "In Jersey Standard we have had the occasion many times to oppose governmental policies and deplore what appeared to us as a lack of understanding of our business. Again and again the same issues arise and our store of patience becomes sorely depleted. But in justice we must admit there are usually two sides to every question. Government, too, has its problems; politicians have theirs. What is needed is a real effort of each party to understand the problems of the other. So business and government must make that effort and then, patiently, firmly, and thoughtfully, work out joint solutions. This cooperative approach to solving our nation's problems is, however, no one-way street. Government must cooperate as much as business. Distrust and suspicion, petty political harassment, unwarranted attacks, and the belief that bigness is badness can have no place in our government's share of the cooperative approach."

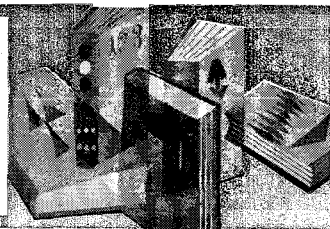
Lammot du Pont Copeland, president of E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Company, speaking before the New York Chamber of Commerce last February, said, "It would be in the national interest, as well as our own interest, to put an end to what at times has seemed like a cold war between government and business. . . . Someone will have to take the initiative. There may be times when we will be rebuffed, and I am sure there will be many times when we are told that our interest in conflict with the national interest. We should not be discouraged, for I am convinced that there will be many times when these efforts will be richly rewarded."

And one of the most recent such statements was made during the election campaign by Roger M. Blough, chairman of the board of the United States Steel Corporation. He told two trade associations, in joint meeting in Chicago, that "No one expects the millennium to arrive tomorrow; and until it does, business will certainly continue to have its problems, some of which, to be sure, will result from its own mistakes. But on balance it seems to me that there is a new and developing attitude of cooperation between government and business—a new understanding of each others' problems and a new willingness on both sides to work out realistic solutions that are truly in the long-range public interest."

President Johnson is willing. Messrs. Kappel, Rathbone, Copeland, and Blough say yes. Can others be far behind?

—L. L. L. GOLDEN.

Books in Communications



Strategy for a Counterattack

ANY AMERICAN with a good short-wave radio can easily sample for himself some of the Soviet Union's propaganda techniques. Pick a night when reception is good, fiddle with the dial until you find Radio Moscow, and then listen as cultured British and American accents tell you what the Kremlin wants you to believe. Perhaps you'll tune in to a Soviet official's two-hour speech on agriculture, every last droning word of it faithfully retold, or you may get a newscast giving labored emphasis to the achievements of socialism and the failures of democracy, or, if you're particularly lucky, you may hear an unwitting comedy called *Moscow Mailbag*, a program that purports to answer questions from listeners in the U.S. A typical portion is likely to go something like this:

QUESTION: Mrs. A. B. See of Salt Lake City, Utah, writes to ask: "Where is the world's largest fish cannery?"

ANSWER: The world's largest fish cannery is in the Soviet Union. . . .

QUESTION: Mr. X. Y. Zee of New York City asks us: "What country is the largest producer of prickly pears?"

ANSWER: The largest producer of prickly pears is the Soviet Union. . . .

After several minutes of this sort of thing, the U.S. listener finds himself overcome with incredulity. Is this what the Soviet Union is paying its hard-earned rubles for? Is the broadcast intended as genuine propaganda or as some curious parody? For surely it is more comical than persuasive. Yet there is one significant fact about all Radio Moscow's programing, no matter how innocent it may sound: Every last word of it is intended to exalt the Soviet Union and convince the listener that Communism is the most productive, most efficient, and most desirable system. If for no other reason than its scattershot effect, it is bound to hit the target occasionally.

Some such thought must have occurred to Arthur E. Meyerhoff, author of *The Strategy of Persuasion* (Coward-McCann, \$4.50), for he is profoundly concerned about the effectiveness of the U.S. propaganda effort when compared with that of the Soviets. Soviet propaganda, he argues, is efficient, persuasive, and is in effect running rings around its naïve and ineffectual U.S. rival. The

reason for the one-sidedness of the race, says Meyerhoff, is that Americans, unlike the Soviets, are committed to the idea that the simple truth, favorable or unfavorable, will do the job. He quotes former USIA director Edward R. Murrow as saying that the Voice of America covers "all the news, even when it hurts. . . . To be persuasive we must be believable; to be believable we must be credible; to be credible we must be truthful. It is as simple as that."

But, counters Meyerhoff, "It is not that simple. While it is true that believability is vital to persuasiveness, it is a mistake to equate news with truth." The author, who since 1929 has headed his own Chicago advertising agency, contends that the solution lies in applying advertising know-how to the propaganda war. The advertising man, he points out, does not emphasize a product's weaknesses but dwells exclusively on its strengths. The USIA should therefore "get out of the news business completely and leave it to the free press." The heart of Meyerhoff's thesis is this:

Obviously the Communists do not rely on the merits of Communism to sell their product. They use lies and half-truths with a complete lack of ethics. I am not suggesting that we counter lies with lies, or misrepresent what our way of life can offer to the rest of the world; I suggest rather that we adopt a persuasive program of truth which would—at the very least—offset the Communists' unscrupulous exploitation of the techniques of manipulating men's minds.

The Strategy of Persuasion offers an argument worth considering. Perhaps American propaganda could use some souping up. But Meyerhoff's presentation of the case for more energetic proselytizing is far from the last word. For one thing, his book frequently meanders off into discussions of Soviet propaganda techniques and defenses of American advertising, thereby obscuring its central recommendation: that the USIA should be remolded into a kind of national ad agency to sell America to the world. Had he stuck more closely to that message, he would have had a considerably better chance of touching off a debate on the scale the question deserves.

—JAMES F. FIXX.

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