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COUNSEL ON PUBLIC RELATIONS

-- A Definition

What is a counsel on public relations
and what are his relations to the press
of this country?

These two questions are asked so often that we desire
to answer them in Editor and Publisher

A counsel on public relations directs, advises upon
and supervises those activities of his client which affect
or interest the public. He interprets the client to the
public and the public to his client.

He concerns himself with every contact with the
public wherever and whenever it may arise. He creates
circumstances and events in advising a client upon his
public activities. And he disseminates information about
circumstances in helping his client to make his case known
to his public.

Essentially he is a special pleader before the court
of public opinion.
He uses every method of approach to the public mind — the printed word, the spoken word, the photograph, the motion-picture. In respect to the advertising agency, the counsel on public relations works with it in the solution of the client's problems. He is often called upon by the agency itself to supplement its direct selling effort by a broader and more general moulding of public opinion in favor of the individual product. Often through his efforts, a new field for advertising is created.

As a creator of events and a bureau of information for his client, he frequently supplies the press with information or expressions of opinion, labeled as to point of origin. His news is naturally given its place in any fair competition for news space at that particular moment.

In his capacity as a crystallizer of public opinion, he is building public acceptance for an idea or product. This usually leads to exploitation through advertising and all the other modern methods used to advance a cause.
His work is comparable to that of any special counsel in the highly organized society of today, the lawyer, the engineer, the accountant.

High ethical standards are imposed upon him by his work. He owes the maintenance of these standards to his client, to the public, to the medium he deals through and to himself.

The value and importance of a favorable public opinion toward a basically sound product or idea is universally recognized at the present time by the heads of large enterprises of all kinds. To supervise this branch of any enterprise an expert in public opinion is retained. Organizations as varied as nations, governmental institutions, educational institutions, scientific foundations, insurance companies, real estate developments, art galleries, food corporations, silk manufacturers, soap companies recognize the value of regular, continuous service of this kind.