

# CONTACT

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## "Publicity a Safeguard"

PRESIDENT Coolidge discussed publicity as an instrument for truth, in an address delivered at the dedication of the National Press Club Building in Washington. *The New York Times* printed his speech, and we quote a few cogent paragraphs:

"Although I have not done much on your staff as a reporter, I have acquired a fairly good record as a contributing editor, and though I have not written many stories, I have nevertheless had some success in the making of news. Even with all the ingenuity that characterizes the press of the present day, most writers are dependent upon some real news as a source of inspiration for their reporting."

"Whenever any of the press of our country undertake to exert their influence in behalf of foreign interests, the candor of the situation would be greatly increased if the foreign connections were publicly disclosed. All public business ought to be publicly conducted.

### "PUBLICITY A SAFEGUARD"

"One of the strongest safeguards of the integrity of official action is publicity. This does not mean an espionage of all personal and private action of Government officials, but it does mean publicity concerning the discharge of the duties which they have chosen to perform. All those who have interests which may be affected by governmental action should have the privilege of employing representatives to present their cause and defend their rights.

"Nobody questions this on the judicial side, but those who are so engaged are required to be licensed and their appearance before such tribunals is a matter of court record. As in the case of the Federal Government those who are analogously employed in legislative and departmental matters are not required to make a like disclosure of the interests which they undertake to serve, it is necessary to depend on the press for such information."

"The spirit of mankind is more and more asserting itself, more and more demanding that the affairs of government and society be conducted in accordance with the laws of truth. The people who neglect that precept are bound for a moral explosion. Publicity is not only the main agency of reform, it is likewise the main agency of prevention. In its true function it is not the voice of the individual reporter or editor, but the voice of public expression. It represents the

thought, the hope, the aspirations and the faith of the people.

"It is a great opportunity that comes to the members of the National Press Club of Washington. This city is not only the seat of our Federal Government and the political centre of our country, but it is bound to become more and more the centre of science, of art, and of literature. Because of the position which the United States holds in the world, it will assume increasing importance in international affairs. Because you have places here of great power, you are likewise charged with great responsibilities.

"In no small degree you are the keepers of the public conscience. By being servants of the truth you can help to create and support that confidence in our institutions, and in each other, which is the foundation of national progress and prosperity. You can give to the nations a better understanding of each other and increase the harmonious relationship, the spirit of good-will and friendship, which will bring to all peoples more of the blessings of contentment and of peace."

## Women and Tariff

WOMEN buy the majority of the articles that are sold at the counter in the United States. Therefore Mr. Barbour, as quoted in the *New York Herald-Tribune* places great emphasis on the results that come from efforts made to educate women, and influence their political opinions.

"W. Warren Barbour, president of the Linen Thread Company, addressing the annual meeting of the American Tariff League at the Union League Club yesterday, said the protective tariff is threatened by six factors—indifference on the part of American producers, farm opposition, international bankers and industrialists, women, foreign opposition and a new political alignment in Congress.

"The year 1928," said Mr. Barbour, "will be the first big tariff year in which the American woman has had a vote, and I sometimes think we are ignoring too much the part she is likely to play. I am convinced that at least two out of every three women have a grudge against the tariff, and a grudge which is all too frequently increased to an indignation by the subtle suggestion, on the part of importers and retailers, that the tariff adds to the prices of the things that women buy."

## Lobbyists

WHO rules America? Is it a mythical president in an ivory tower? Is it an elected group of legislators? Is it the democratic citizenry? Is it party or political leaders? Or is it the articulate groups which enforce their will on all the combined forces of democratic government? We consider the following listing from *The New York Evening World* to be a first class historical document, since these lobbyists represent groups, many of which will impose their will on the vast majority, and will actually sway public opinion and make laws.

"The list of lobbyists who are registered, as given out today upon request to the Secretary of State (of New York), is as follows:

- "Orville S. Poland, Anti-Saloon League.
- Wallace Marsh, Anti-Saloon League.
- Arthur J. Davis, Anti-Saloon League.
- O. R. Miller, New York Civic League.
- Elsie M. Barnes, State Charities Aid Association.
- James E. Towner, Third Avenue Railroad.
- William H. Brady, Otis Elevator Company.
- Edward L. Stanton, General Contractor Association.
- Edward P. Doyle, Real Estate Board of New York.
- Mark A. Daly, Associated Industries.
- Kenneth McEwan, Y. W. C. A.
- W. H. Van Zandt, Western Union Telegraph Company.
- Mrs. D. Leigh Colvin, W. C. T. U.
- Eidlitz and Hulse, Building Trades Employers' Association and the New York Association of Builders.
- William N. Thomas, New York State Employers' Association and the New York State Shorthand Reporters' Association.
- John M. O'Hanlon, New York State Federation of Labor.
- N. J. Walker, S. P. C. C. and S. P. C. A.
- Ross M. Lovell, the New Haven, Erie, Lehigh Valley, 'Lackawanna' and five other railroads.
- H. Eliot Kaplan, Civil Service Reform Association.
- Gordon H. Payne, Order of Good Templars.
- Thomas E. Ryan, Locomotive Engineers.
- D. Boyd Davendorf, Rural School Improvement Society.
- Cronk S. Rogers, Fish, Game and Forest League.
- John Ferguson, Lord's Day Alliance.
- John Fitzgibbons, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen.
- Walter S. McNab, Osteopathic Society.
- John T. O'Brien, State Council of Carpenters.
- Farrington Smith, American Surety Company.
- Lewis G. Stapley, Automobile Merchants' Association.
- Eleanor Von Ertz, American Birth Control League.
- George A. Hall, Child Labor Committee.
- Vincent G. Peppe, Real Estate Board of New York.
- Bess A. Moorhouse, League of Women Voters.
- Howard Henderson, New York Telephone Company.

Irving H. Griswold, New York Telephone Company.  
 Leonard L. Saunders, Insurance Federation.  
 Melvin T. Bender, New York State Automobile Association.  
 Joseph S. Laurence, State Medical Society.  
 Frank A. McNamee, New York Central Railroad."

## Create Public Opinion

THERE can be no public leader without a public following. A leader has the alternative of going where the public wants, or of influencing public opinion to want the things he desires. Usually the leader and his public compromise, and follow one another. *The American City Magazine* quotes Leonard D. White on public opinion and the city manager plan:

"If the public opinion of a community will not support intelligent, competent government, no manager and no form of government will be able permanently to produce satisfactory results. But in the development of an intelligent public opinion determined to secure honest, competent municipal government, the city manager plan is playing a leading role. The friends of good government can only wish for its rapid extension throughout city and into county and state governments."

## Interpretation

THERE is little doubt of the truth of the assertion made in *The Christian Science Monitor* as to the source of information on current events. It is possible, however, that in the near future many announcements of great importance and significance will be made over the radio, just as many are made in speeches delivered at official functions.

It is evident, therefore, that the man who wishes to be understood by millions of listeners simultaneously, and to convince them, must alter his technic of presentation considerably. Statesmanship, as applied to speeches delivered in mimeographed flimsies to the press, and statesmanship confronted with the task of bringing down airy words to the comprehension and appreciation of the varyingly attentive ears of the radio audiences, are vastly different.

The *Monitor* discusses the interpretive power of the press—a power that the radio will lack, presumably:

"It is true that occasionally the radio brings fragments of a story that has not yet appeared in print, but as a general rule the press is the sole source of popular information.

"Not only do the many millions of Americans depend upon the press for a record of passing events, but they are also to a very large extent influenced in the opinions they form concerning them by the editorial pages that profess to interpret the more important happenings. This is particularly true of the political field, where an utterance by

Some party leader, or action by a political organization, is hailed as momentous, or condemned as puerile, according to the politics of the particular paper referring to it. Probably a large majority of Americans read but one paper daily, or if more than one, only those agreeing with their political predilections. The result is that the reader accepts the interpretation given by the journal reflecting his own opinions."

### Paper and Ink

DR. Tehyi Hsieh analyzed the relation between China and America at the League for Political Education, and stressed the intellectual relationship between the two countries. He said, according to *The New York Times*:

"During the past two years in China more money has been spent on paper from Norway and ink from Boston and New York than on implements of war. Publicity has a stronger arm than that of the law, and China is profiting by it. Newspapers are one of the greatest instruments for good among nations."

### "Success—Herald"

HEYWOOD Broun, in his essay column in *The New York World*, compares the good old college days with the days that frisk through the campus now. As to publicity and the University—"the men we heard in classrooms practically never made the first page of the papers" . . .

"Back at the beginning of the century Presidents and professors failed to appreciate the value of a ballyhoo.

"But when any isolated faction has need of a Moses he will be found. Grudgingly I must admit that he was at last discovered in the blue bullrushes of New Haven. Nor is the word 'discovered' wholly fair. William Lyon Phelps had no need of help from any Pharaoh's daughter. Seizing a stout rush in either hand, he chinned himself till his head showed above the grasses and then he shouted with a voice which carried well beyond the college walls, 'Call me Billy!'

"No, there is no possibility of denying that Billy Phelps of Yale is the leading first-page professor in all the country. Hogan, 'Lefty' Flynn and Caldwell—these are all little names when stacked against Yale's high-powered salesman. His line is literature and his territory embraces the broad acres from here to the Pacific. Pick up any best seller and you will find upon the jacket some word of approbation from Prof. Phelps. 'Magnificent,' 'significant,' 'enthraling.' Indeed it isn't a genuine best seller unless the name of Phelps is blown upon the cover. Even the hardboiled theatrical managers have come to know that Billy Phelps has a Broadway following. 'Success—Herald,' and 'I wept—Alan Dale' are no longer to be found in theatrical advertising. Instead you will see just below the title, star and author, 'Finest achievement of the century—William Lyon Phelps.'"

### Keynote

ANDRÉ Siegfried writes entertainingly of the customs and psychology of America in his flash-light account *America Comes of Age*. He is not entirely accurate, but at times he is astonishingly acute. He says: "As if the natural similarity of the American people were not enough, 'big business' has set to work to accentuate it still further by scientific advertising. Under the direction of remarkably intelligent men, publicity has become an important factor in the United States, and possibly even the keynote of the whole economic system. With the technical help of scientists, economists, and psychologists, they have built up a science of publicity . . . the public lends itself readily."

### The Romance of News

THE *Associated Press* appreciates the importance of personality publicity as an aid in increasing interest in their product—news. According to a short article in *Editor & Publisher*:

"Milton Garges, of the executive staff of the *Associated Press* in New York, has started a campaign to teach the public something about the romance of news-gathering. In the feature service now being issued by the A. P., frequent stories are included which picture activities behind the scenes of news-gathering. It is a continuation of the recently changed A. P. policy whereby its correspondents are now being given more publicity in member papers."

The same journal runs another short paragraph of news concerning P. Stammer which is strongly indicative of the fact that the public desired to know, even long ago, who it was that helped form public opinion.

"P. Stammer runs a second hand book store on Fourth Avenue opposite Wanamakers. For years he has brought to my attention any items that related in any way to American journalism. Recently he turned over to me an old scrapbook containing a collection of those advertising cards that used to be given free with every package of cigarettes. The interesting thing is that these cigarette cards are pictures of the leading editors of the day. To my mind nothing shows more plainly the change that has come over American journalism than this collection of cigarette cards. In the days of personal journalism editors were so well known that a manufacturer of cigarettes thought them of enough importance to print their pictures to promote the sale of coffin tacks. Who even among the readers of *Editor & Publisher* can mention by name the editors of the great dailies of today?"

### This Is News

"IF a Mayor takes a drink, it's all in the day's work—if he signs the pledge, it's a story." —*The New York World*.

### Fair Prices

THE value of public education and of publicity in handling price problems is discussed in *The Christian Science Monitor*:

"Public information to insure fair prices for the necessities and conveniences of living is fully as important now that prices are on a declining trend as it was some years ago, when rising prices made 'the high cost of living' a byword, declares the Massachusetts Special Commission on Necessaries of Life, in its annual report to the Legislature.

"The report points out instances in which publicity about market and supply conditions has brought about marked economies in the prices made to consumers, among these a deflation of the potato market last spring, and recommends that its method of public investigation and report be utilized instead of attempts at price control by legislation.

"Education rather than legislation is the more effective weapon with which to deal with price controversies between buyer and seller,' the report says. . . . Public scrutiny and dissemination of information tend to develop competition, which hastens the sharing of lower costs with the buyer in the form of lower prices."

### Clear Understanding

WALTER S. Case, president of Case, Pomeroy & Co., a New York commission house, summarizes in the annual financial forecast of *The New York Sun* the argument for co-operative railroad advertising long presented by *Advertisers' Weekly* and other trade publications," says *Advertisers' Weekly*, and quotes at length from his article. We excerpt a few passages:

"This brings us face to face with the vital problem which confronts railroad management. Managers have made great progress in the art of railroading and as manufacturers of transportation. But they have fallen behind other forms of industry as merchandisers of their product and in educating their customers to appreciate its intrinsic value. Good will is properly capitalized at millions of dollars by manufacturers of trade-marked goods. No good will appears on railroad balance sheets. Yet American transportation service is the country's greatest man-made asset. The balance of public opinion must be directed toward a constructive appreciation of the real value of this asset.

"This calls for the highest type of salesmanship. The value of railroad transportation must be sold to the public and good will must be built for the product and for the service which stands behind it. Strong railroad credit must be maintained by developing public acceptance of the value of good railroad service. The American people must be

brought to realize that the maintenance of service is far more important than any possible change in rates.

"The railroads must learn to sell their service exactly as the manufacturer of a trade-marked article has learned to build public acceptance of his goods."

"With such highly technical questions as valuation and recapture now in dispute before the Interstate Commerce Commission and the courts, it is highly important that the public should take a greater interest in these matters.

"Railroad management must find a way to lead public opinion to a clearer understanding of the situation. Railroad executives have failed to approach their problem as merchants of transportation. Such publicity as has been undertaken has been local in character and has been presented by individual roads. Railroad managers have failed to work together with a common purpose. The problem, however, is national and concerns all the railroads as one industry with the united purpose of providing the country with adequate transportation.

"A national organization is necessary to handle a national problem. Such an organization, made up of the best brains in the railroad industry, might well be formed to plan and carry out an intensive campaign of education.

"Railroad management must demonstrate the value to the public of a high quality of transportation service. Unless public confidence and support are won rate paring and recapture will lower earnings to the danger point."

### Un- Newspapers of Opinion

*Special to the Herald-Tribune*

NEW Haven, Conn., Jan. 9.—Recommending that college students take up journalism as a career, J. Alfred Spender, formerly editor of *The Westminster Gazette*, in delivering the first of the Bromley lectures at Yale this afternoon, predicted the return of newspapers in this country and England from the mechanism of the present day to the function of journals of opinion.

"As an effect of the mechanical age, journalism has turned from a profession to a branch of commerce, and the mass production of papers of the present has caused them to lose their independence in dealing with public questions, Mr. Spender asserted.

"The modern newspaper, he added, is mechanically a miracle of rapid and efficient news gathering and, if only the question of economy is considered, it is a great advance in journalism.

"The result has been to extinguish the varieties of opinion from which public opinion was built up and to restrict the opportunities of the free individual journalist, who also formerly played a great part in molding opinion."