

Hiding News Bad Policy

"Hiding news, even derogatory information, is an old fashioned way of doing public relations," Donald E. Lynch, executive director of the Public Relations Society of America, said in a Portland interview Thursday.

Businesses, the government and other organizations should not hold back news of legitimate value because when it is found out, it will hurt worse, Lynch added.

Here to address a meeting of the Columbia River Chapter of the society, Lynch said he is primarily interested in developing individual chapters and in the professional growth of public relations through the society.

Ethics Code Noted

He said the society insists on prospective members having five years of professional, executive experience before being invited into membership and that they subscribe to the society's code of ethics.

Public relations is "making tremendous advances" in the past few years and many businesses are adding a public relations staff in order to promote understanding between the firm and the public, he said.

Even the United States government, Lynch said, has put public relations principles into effect in foreign affairs.

"Edward R. Murrow (director of the U.S. Information Office) has his work cut out for him," Lynch commented.

Most important among the solutions being used by the State Department, said Lynch, is the person-to-person relationship in getting foreign people to understand America and Americans.

"It is difficult to understand," Lynch said, "why an American and an Italian, for example, can have a few drinks in a bar and within an hour become friends but the two nations have so much trouble getting along."