

Doc

NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS

5510 Greenbriar, Ste. 235
Houston, Texas 77005
Telephone (713) 798-7729
Fax (713) 798-7775

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

NOVEMBER 16, 1993

CONTACT:

**Eric Solberg
(713) 906-0062**

SICK BEDFELLOWS

Houston, TX--Pharmaceutical corporations and other health related companies are among the leading allies of the tobacco industry, according to the international health organization DOC (Doctors Ought to Care). A recent report by the physician-based group highlights the hypocrisy of such companies by revealing their long-standing connections to tobacco manufacturers.

"The actions of these pharmaceutical companies, in continuing to work hand-in-hand with the tobacco industry, speaks louder than their statements bemoaning the rising cost of health care," stated Dr. Alan Blum, the founder and chairman of DOC. "It's time the pharmaceutical industry and the retail pharmacy industry end this charade and disassociate themselves from the growth, manufacture, and promotion of tobacco products."

CIBA-Geigy, which manufactures Habitrol (a nicotine patch which the company promotes as an aide to stop smoking), tops the list as a supplier of pesticides used in growing tobacco. The patent holder for the nicotine patch, the Swedish conglomerate Procordia, is also the maker of the top selling brand of chewing tobacco, Red Man. 3M, the manufacturer of stethoscopes, lung medications, and surgical supplies also helps promote cigarettes through its top-ranked billboard subsidiary, National Outdoor, and actively lobbies against restrictions on tobacco advertising.

"The sale of these products to manufacturers and growers of tobacco represent only a small percent of their annual revenue," added Blum. "For example, Kimberly-Clark, which makes surgical masks and hospital supplies, derives less than two percent of its income from its tobacco products division. Is it really worth the damage to public health and their own reputation for them to continue to aid the leading cause of death and disease in our society?"

A portion of the report, which was published in the British Medical Association's *Tobacco Control Journal*, also focuses on Kodak. While building on its healthful image of a manufacture of a variety of diagnostic medical equipment, such as mammography for breast cancer, Kodak for years has been the world's leading manufacture of cigarette filter material. "We're saving millions of lives" boasts a recent ad in medical journals for its mammography equipment.

"Direct attacks on the tobacco industry may not be as effective as breaking the alliances that these otherwise decent companies have with tobacco companies," said Blum. "We feel that this new focus will provide a strategic approach for those working to counteract tobacco use and its promotion."

The report, which includes a list of pharmaceutical companies with direct ties to the tobacco industry, also focuses on familiar retail pharmacy chains, such as Eckerd and Walgreens, which not only continue to sell tobacco products, but actively promote cigarette and spitting tobacco brand names through in-store displays, direct mail, and coupons available in daily newspapers.

According to DOC's Executive Director, Eric Solberg, a second report is being compiled by the group which will focus on the close connections that various health charities have with tobacco companies. For example, the Walt Garrison rodeo, sponsored by United States Tobacco (UTS--makers of Skoal and Copenhagen spitting tobacco) is an annual event benefitting Multiple Sclerosis. Similarly, U.S. Senate Minority Leader, Bob Dole (R-KS), has received hundreds of thousands of dollars from cigarette manufacturer Philip Morris for his Foundation's campaign against prostate cancer. Health insurers and hospitals which own tobacco stock will also be featured in the next report.

p. 3

November 16, 1993

Founded in 1977, DOC is supported by members in 28 countries. The DOC Tobacco Archive and International Resource Center serves as the world's largest resource on the tobacco industry.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Eric Solberg (713) 906-0062
Executive Director