

"For the American Cancer Society to help in the advertising of cigarets and to accept money from such a source is comparable to Alcoholics Anonymous promoting and profiting from the operation of a liquor store or tavern." —

*Dr. George Meyer
Fort Lauderdale radiologist*



Slims' Cancer Benefit Sparks Ire

By **MARK NEUBAUER**
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A cigaret manufacturer throwing a benefit for the American Cancer Society?

That's what will happen Jan. 14, when the Virginia Slims tennis tour, sponsored by Philip Morris Tobacco Co., holds a benefit night at the Hollywood Sportatorium for the Broward Chapter of the American Cancer Society.

A local doctor calls the cancer society's involvement "a form of prostitution." The state cancer society sniffs that it is "not endorsing the product."

The two local chapter workers who arranged the benefit say they wish they hadn't — and a Phillip Morris spokesman, told of the affair Tuesday, could only mutter an expletive.

"THE PHILIP MORRIS Co.

sponsors these tennis tournaments for the purpose of selling more cigarets, and now the American Cancer Society is helping in the promotion of a known cancer-producing product," anti-smoker Dr. George Meyer, a Fort Lauderdale radiologist, said. "It's a form of prostitution."

Meyer wrote the society's national and state offices, protesting the local group's efforts to sell 500 tickets to the tournament. Officials of the cancer society's Florida headquarters said Tuesday that they were disturbed about the alliance.

"Had we known earlier, we would have discouraged any participation by the Broward chapter with the Virginia Slims people," Bob Wichman, state executive vice-president, said. "But, you know, sometimes these local people

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get carried away with their enthusiasm."

The local cancer crusade director admits that she is embarrassed

about the connection.

"I GUESS WE were stupid, but we just figured we were selling tennis tickets and not cigarets," Ann Forte said.

"We felt we were just working with tennis people (to raise money) the way we have worked with golf people, such as those with the Jackie Gleason Inverrary Classic," Mrs. Forte added.

But Meyer said he feels that the cancer society's letter soliciting ticket sales to the benefit match is an implied endorsement of smoking.

The letter, sent with the cancer society's letterhead, portrays a young woman holding a tennis racket in one hand and a cigaret in the other.

"For the American Cancer Society to help in the advertising of

cigarets and to accept money from such a source is comparable to Alcoholics Anonymous promoting and profiting from the operation of a liquor store or tavern," Meyer said.

ANOTHER CANCER society leader, volunteer chairman Marie Maxson, said Tuesday that she disagreed with Meyer's condemnation of the benefit.

"We're selling tennis and entertainment, and not cigarets — people should know that by now," Mrs. Maxson said. "Maybe this isn't the best thing we could have sponsored, but we need the money wherever we can get it, and we got into this with the best of intentions."

"We really haven't sold that many tickets," Mrs. Forte said, adding that it is too late to pull out.