



GUEST OPINION

"Stand Up To Cancer" not standing up to cigarette promoters



By Dr. Alan Blum

In three previous national telethons, Stand Up To Cancer has raised more than a quarter of a billion dollars for cancer research. Contributions to the "War on Cancer" pledged in the fourth such telethon on September 5 would seem to be welcome. But several sponsors that were praised in the telecast appear to be doing more to promote the leading cause of cancer — cigarette smoking -- than to prevent or cure cancer.

Take SIEMENS, a multinational engineering and electronics corporation that has cultivated an image as a medical equipment and health-care company in advertisements in major magazines and newspapers with headlines such as "More health care stories with happier endings." But this self-proclaimed health company also is a leading manufacturer of cigarette-making machinery. Among SIEMENS's customers is Philip Morris USA, maker of the best-selling cigarette brand Marlboro. According to SIEMENS's website, the company's tobacco industry division includes "machines for the manufacturing and packaging of cigarettes at speeds of 4,000 to 20,000 cigarettes per minute," and its "Simotion Motion Control System is now gaining a foothold in the cigarette manufacturing industry." I calculate that a single SIEMENS machine produced 1.2 million cigarettes (or 60,000 packs) during the one-hour Stand Up To Cancer telecast. SIEMENS is one of Stand Up To Cancer's "Champions," a high level Partner.

The Safeway Foundation, funded by Safeway Inc., is a Hero level Partner of Stand Up To Cancer. Safeway, with its acquisition in July by Albertsons, is part of the nation's second largest grocery chain. Safeway continues to sell cigarettes in its more than 1,330 stores. This contrasts with Target, Wegmans, and other retail chains that ended the sale of tobacco products over the past two decades. Safeway's slogan is "Ingredients for life. Creating better lives, vibrant neighborhoods, and a healthier planet." Are tar and nicotine among its ingredients?

Another Champion level Partner of Stand Up To Cancer is the Steve Tisch Foundation. A significant part of the Tisch family fortune came from the manufacture and sale of cigarettes. Between 1967 and 2008 the Tisch family-run Loews' Corporation controlled the nation's third leading cigarette manufacturer, Lorillard. The company, which is about to merge with No. 2 cigarette-maker Reynolds-American, produces Newport, the nation's top-selling menthol brand and the leading cigarette smoked by African-Americans who experience a higher prevalence of lung cancer than the overall population. Surely before one is welcomed with open arms into the anti-cancer cause, an apology is in order for the many years spent promoting cigarettes.

My research also shows that four of eight Publishing Partners of Stand Up To Cancer own mass circulation magazines that advertise cigarettes in almost every

issue, long after most publications have rejected these ads as contrary to their readers' health.

For instance, the August 18 College Football Preview issue of TIME Inc.'s *Sports Illustrated* includes an advertisement for Stand Up To Cancer with this text: "When we all come together cancer doesn't stand a chance." Also in the issue are four color cigarette ads—three for Reynolds-American's Camel brand, one stating "It starts with a spark, and the promise to fan the flames," and one for Newport promoting a "Wheel of pleasure" sweepstakes with "Hundreds of fantastic prizes waiting to be won," including a 2015 Ford Mustang. Yet in its 60-year history, Sports Illustrated has rarely, if ever, published an article on the harmfulness of cigarette smoking or the athletes who have died from smoking.

The current September 8/15 issue of *TIME* features a prominent ad for Reynolds-American's American Spirit "organic tobacco and organic menthol" cigarette brand that touts "100 Percent Additive-Free Natural Tobacco" above this Food and Drug Administration-required sentence in smaller type: "Organic tobacco does NOT mean a safer cigarette."

And in the latest issues of *WIRED* and *Vanity Fair*, published by Stand Up To Cancer Publishing Partner Conde Nast, the same ad for the event appears, as well as a nearly identical Camel cigarette ad that reads: "Inspired. Passionate. Original. Taste It All."

In this the 50th anniversary of the U.S. Surgeon's Report on Smoking and Health, released by Alabamian Dr. Luther Terry, it is shameful that the organizers of this cause would welcome the participation of manufacturers, promoters, and sellers of cigarettes. It's time that Stand Up To Cancer shuns tainted funding from Big Tobacco's cronies.

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