

THE TOBACCO INSTITUTE

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SAMUEL D. CHILCOTE, JR.
President

October 28, 1988

MEMORANDUM

To: The Members of the Executive Committee

From: Samuel D. Chilcote, Jr. 

The anti-smoking community turned out in force Thursday for the Interagency Committee on Smoking and Health (ICSH) hearing on "The Effects of Tobacco Sponsorship of Sporting Events." The absence of their leader, Surgeon General C. Everett Koop (in New York where the World Health Organization was honoring former President Jimmy Carter for his anti-smoking efforts), caused barely a ripple in the day-long session of self-congratulations.

Star witness and Olympic Gold Medalist Greg Louganis drew a fair amount of press coverage. Institute spokespersons taped interviews with Group W, Cox and Post-Newsweek broadcasting stations, and with CNN.

The Surgeon General provided a video message of welcome to the committee he chairs, calling "disturbing," especially for children, the use of sponsorship to draw attention to tobacco. Noting there is little information available about monies spent on sponsorship, he urged the Federal Trade Commission to begin collecting separate data, on cigarette as well as smokeless tobacco activities.

Koop suggested that tobacco advertisements in sporting arenas, and the use of cigarette logos in sporting events, violate the spirit, if not the letter, of the federal law prohibiting cigarette advertising on television. This was to be a recurring theme throughout the day.

Copies of all statements, including six submitted in support of industry positions, are enclosed. Although industry representatives did not appear, statements were submitted by The Institute, the Committee for Affordable Sports and Entertainment (CASE), the National Tobacco Council, the Smokeless Tobacco Council, the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater and the Washington Legal Foundation.

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CASE, a coalition of organizations that sanction motor and golfing events, and Ailey noted the importance of corporate sponsorship to the survival of most sporting and cultural spectator activities. Without corporate sponsors, they noted, ticket prices would become too expensive for the average American.

In a prepared statement, diver Louganis, appearing on behalf of the Coalition on Smoking OR Health, suggested that athletes and sporting groups have become dependent upon tobacco sponsorship.

Alan Blum of Doctors Ought to Care (DOC) joined most other witnesses in claiming that sports sponsorship activities directly targets children.

British researcher Frank Ledwith urged anti-smokers to refrain from responding directly to industry claims that sports sponsorship does not cause children to smoke. Instead, he said, anti-smokers should focus on demonstrating that sponsorship of televised sporting events acts as advertising. "If it does, then it is illegal and should be stopped," he said.

A representative from the Minneapolis Metrodome described his committee's deliberations that led them to refuse to renew a cigarette billboard advertising contract. Anti-smoking sentiment led to the decision, Earl Craig noted, although no one from the tobacco industry had lobbied for renewal.

Witnesses from ASH Australia and the American Medical Association, and testimony from the World Health Organization, renewed calls for bans on all forms of tobacco advertising. The ASH representative noted that a 10-cent cigarette tax in Victoria, Australia, is earmarked to fund sporting, arts and entertainment events.

SDC:lmd

Enclosures

cc: Committee of Counsel
TI Senior Staff