

September 12, 1967

INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM

Subject: World Conference on Smoking & Health,
Second Day (Tuesday), New York City

Attached is a copy of the Keynote Address, "Influencing Smoking Behavior," by Surgeon General William H. Stewart, which opened the second day of the Conference. The tone of the speech led a well-known anti-smoking writer to characterize it as "an olive branch held out to the cigarette industry." On page 5, Dr. Stewart states that industry competition in reducing "tar" and nicotine has helped the public: "The 1966 cigarette is, on the average, substantially safer than the 1960 cigarette; it contains about two-thirds as much tar and nicotine. This competitive response to public concern has resulted in positive public benefit. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for the 100 millimeter barrage..." On page 9: "For the tobacco industry and its advertisers there are a number of productive courses of action awaiting only the decision to help society cope with a problem that cannot be wished away. Among these are a sincere and wholehearted effort to develop a cigarette that is both as low in hazard and as acceptable to the smoker as science and technology can make it... The door to cooperation has always been open. It remains open."

Attendance at the meeting Tuesday continued high. An analysis of the advance registration list partly confirms the official description of the registrants as "scientists, educators, physicians and government officials." In addition there are a large number of paid administrators and volunteer workers representing the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, National Tuberculosis Association, and other constituents of the Interagency Council at state and national levels. Press and TV interest on Tuesday was noticeably diminished.

Following Dr. Stewart, Dr. Daniel Horn, director of the USPHS National Clearinghouse for Smoking and Health, led a panel discussion on "How Did Society Get Into the Cigarette Mess? Why Is It So Hard To Find A Way Out?" Dr. Horn took a somewhat philosophic view toward smoking, devoting most of his talk to a review of man's search for stimulants and tranquilizers: "Throughout history people everywhere have searched for natural products in their environment which would provide them not only with sustenance and shelter but certain pleasureable effects as well. In his search for gratification man has experimented with things to drink, sniff, smoke, chew or swallow -- coca leaf, betel nut, tobacco, alcohol, mushrooms, poppy, hemp and cactus plants, among others... We must face up to the fact that the cigarette caught hold because it fulfilled certain functions that needed to be fulfilled for a great many people. The cigarette offered an accessible, inexpensive way to deal with a variety of problems...if there were no harmful consequences it would have served mankind well. We simply had the rotten luck to have discovered after all these years that the harmful effects are overwhelming... The problem is complex... A variety of human reactions are tied up in the smoking habit, and a variety of control methods will be needed to solve it."

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Dr. Horn's view of the complexity of the problem was supported by the four panelists: Dr. A. C. McKennell, University of Southampton, England; Dr. Richard L. Foster, a District School Superintendent, California; Dr. Silvan Tomkins, City University of New York; Dr. Godfrey Hochbaum, Behavioral Science Section, USPHS.

The consensus of these professional psychologists was that people smoke for a variety of reasons and no single, simple method can persuade all of them to stop smoking. This attitude provoked a certain amount of hostility from the floor, some members of the audience advocating a tough "educational" policy. The panelists' rejoinder was stated by Dr. Foster: "We have learned from experience that the evangelistic approach simply does not work. It has a reverse effect."

After this panel, the meeting adjourned for lunch and workshop sessions. (Monday night Dr. Horn held a press conference at which he announced a new smoking motivation study to start in a few months. Three different groups numbering from 200 to 500 people each, geographically separated across the country, will be intensively studied and classified into six categories of smokers, applying experience accrued from previous PHS projects.)

Enclosure

cc: Senator Clements
General Counsel
Ad Hoc Committee
Company Public Relations Representatives
Chief Executives

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