

FORWARDING MEMORANDUM

To Members of the Planning Committee:

Attempt has been made to organize this material in such a fashion that you can get the gist of it all in half an hour, by quick skimming; then you can go back to study what interests you most.

To reduce the longer enclosures to mere extracts might omit (through some blind spot in the mind that tried to edit the material for you) the very item where you yourself will find the important key to the problem.

This is, of course, the most challenging problem our organization has ever faced - and perhaps the most challenging problem that ever faced a great industry, one with annual sales of almost \$5 billions at retail, and with economic roots that reach clear back to the farm.

The serious nature of the challenge seizes one, as he explores the material enclosed. You'll find that some of this information is confidential, and requires treatment as such. To have omitted it would have foreshortened the picture.

Folder 2 contains the lung cancer news in recent magazines and broadcasts. -- You may have read these pieces separately; but they are worth re-reading as a group. Folder 3 contains many pages of medical opinions that seem to exonerate cigarettes from the recent charges made against them, at least in good part. Folder 4 contains reports on our interviews with four research directors of major companies. At the Monday night meeting, tearsheets of recent company advertising will be on hand.

The attitude of the men we must directly deal with in the industry is at once interesting, and important for us to understand. That is why notes on the four interviews with "research directors" are given at some length. You'll get from them little real information about lung cancer, pro or con; but you'll find some mighty interesting opinions. One of the men said, "It's fortunate for us that cigarettes are a habit they can't break." Said another: "Boy! wouldn't it be wonderful if our company was first to produce a cancer free cigarette. What we could do to competition?" Said another, "Suppose everybody smoked just one cigarette less a day. That would be maybe 40 billion a year!" And again, "The stock market fall is terrible, when you remember dividends are going to be much larger next year without the E.P.T."

At the moment, these men feel thrown for a loop. They've competed for years - not in price, not in any real difference of quality - but just in ability to conjure up more hypnotic claims and brighter assurances for what their own brand might do for a smoker, compared to another brand. And now, suddenly, they feel all out of bounds, because the old claims become unimportant overnight; they are suddenly challenged to produce just one, simple fact. Walter Winchell told his own audience the nature of this fact, in brief words: "The burden of proof has shifted. It is no longer up to the scientists to prove that cigarettes cause lung cancer. It is the duty of all concerned to prove that they do not."

And this, of course, is exactly what no individual in the whole world can prove at this juncture; - and until that proof comes in some form, arguments over the logic of some scientist, and criticism of his particular ideas of cause-and-effect, can satisfy neither scientists nor public; or get anywhere. And the days of bright promotion claims, tossed off Madison Avenue heads like Lorelei's locks, are suddenly finished.

"This is the way the world ends - not in a bang but a whimper."

But, naturally, that is something almost too terrible for most of the industry's men to realize, even yet -- though the very heads of the great corporations themselves signalized the end of the old days, when they linked arms and walked together to consult with us.

To work with these men successfully, it is most important for us to understand a wide range of extraordinary things - so that all of us can reach a rather new outlook together.

There is only one problem -- confidence, and how to establish it; public assurance, and how to create it -- in a perhaps long interim when scientific doubts must remain. And, most important, how to free millions of Americans from the guilty fear that is going to arise deep in their biological depths -- regardless of any pooh-poohing logic -- every time they light a cigarette. No resort to mere logic ever cured panic yet, whether on Madison Avenue, Main Street, or in a psychologist's office. And no mere recitation of arguments pro, or ignoring of arguments con, or careful balancing of the two together, is going to deal with such fear now.

That, gentlemen, is the nature of the unexampled challenge to this office.

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Problem 1:

The very first problem is to establish some public confidence in the industry's leaders themselves, so that the public will believe their assertions of their own interest in the public health. Grant Clark remarked on the telephone: "Look at the statements on the Viceroy package. Look at the Kent advertising. They've been engaging in that sort of competition for years. You fellows at H and K are in the middle, and so maybe can do something. Meanwhile, I'm not allowed to send you those ads that were written for Camel. Darr may still want to run them, after your own campaign gets started."

(Note here that Darr might use. His excuse for withholding these ads was the industry's fear of anti-trust action if ideas are too generously shared. But that apprehension could readily be clarified, in this emergency, through having a few frank talks in Washington. May not our real problem be the establishing of a complete understanding that old patterns of idea-competition are not going to be perpetuated in this emergency?)

Problem 2:

To reassure the public, and still instinctive fears, in this interim when definitive facts for giving complete assurance are still lacking; when scientific doubts must remain; and when new "unfavorable" information can emerge from some laboratory at any time, to act as a bomb shell on the whole tobacco industry -- if it has meanwhile tried to pooh-pooh the unfavorable finding to date.

The fact is, of course, that no one who has been a heavy smoker is going to benefit himself now by falling into a panic, and eliminating the pleasure and comfort of cigarettes. He might just as well go on enjoying his smoke in this interim while research pursues the facts, with full assurance that if any cancer-causing agent is ever really found in tobacco, the manufacturers will quickly find a way to eliminate it.

Problem 3:

How to validate this message of assurance. The men talked to in the cigarette companies tend to:

(a) Think occasionally in terms of trying to "smear" the personal responsibility, motives, judgments, or techniques of Wynder and others supporting him. (But this approach would be most dubious.)

(b) To believe the scientific case can be arguing in the public arena, by leading the layman through elaborate statements which only specialists are really qualified to weigh and debate, in their own scientific councils; for the quest of ultimate causes behind known effects is the specialists' job. (This approach is shown in the documents from Philip Morris and American Tobacco, when they extract quotes from the various journals, and assemble them for public circulation. But it is extremely doubtful whether anyone could trim such an assembly of quotes in a fashion that would (1) give the smoker absolute psychological assurance, and (2) still leave the compilation a completely honest statement of the cancer situation, in a way that would satisfy most scientists at this juncture. Honesty in science requires careful consideration and weighing of all points of view. The cigarette companies cannot hope to sponsor any public debate over cause-and-effect that would satisfy both smokers and scientists. Hence they are bound to lose in this effort regardless of what they might briefly gain.)

(c) To overlook the fact that in this particular instance, the stakes for the public are even larger than for the tobacco manufacturers. (For the public, an issue touching the deepest of human fears and instincts is involved - the issues of uncontrollable disease and death. Hence cigarette companies might not

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readily be forgiven, if their approach to this problem is stemmed only from eagerness to protect their earnings, and if they twisted the research of medical science (which seeks to save men) into a device to save stockholders. There is no precedent where a great industry has been forced to face such grave issues.

In the past, industry has given little twists to the facts of science, to convert them into sales propaganda, without much risk. The cigarette industry has indeed been doing this for years. We can therefore readily understand its assumptions that the same technique will work now, in devising propaganda. But it is highly important to note that the deep issues of life-and-death that are now involved make highly doubtful the question as to whether the familiar techniques can be relied on. The stakes are too large; the penalties for losing could be too great.)

(d) To assume that agents like science writers can be guided and encouraged to disseminate special "interpretations" of current findings, in ways that would blame lung cancer on everything else but cigarettes - or (even better) in ways that would throw doubt on the validity of statistics showing great increases in lung cancer. If the issue were merely coughs, or sore throats, or warts, this might work. There is serious question as to whether anyone -- after due reflection -- would consider such a course useful for long term purposes, in the present circumstances.

Problem 4:

We must early decide our own attitude toward the findings of men like Wynder, Rhoads, Ochsner, et al. We have a choice, as previously indicated, of:

- (a) Smearing and belittling them;
- (b) Trying to overwhelm them with mass publication of the opposed viewpoints of other specialists;
- (c) Debating them in the public arena; or
- (d) We can determine to raise the issue far above them, so that they are hardly even mentioned; and then we can make our real case.

Problem 5:

Problem 5 hitches on to Problem 4 and all subsequent problems. How can we move immediately to identify the tobacco companies completely with concern for the public good? This accomplishment -- if we can manage it -- would throw everything else into proper focus, and would show the answers to the other various problems.

Problem 6:

There is much to indicate that we have one essential job - which can be simply said:

Stop public panic, without ever getting in the position of giving false assurances, or of giving false emphases.

The facts for the average man are reassuring enough, without getting into any scientific arguments whatever: his chances of getting lung cancer are too infinitesimal to worry about at all, in this moment of scientific uncertainties. Some 22,000 people in the U. S. will die of lung cancer this year - that's 22,000 too many. Let any man give up smoking cigarettes if he wants to. But the average man is lots more likely to die by an automobile accident (some 36,000 deaths annually); or of tuberculosis (some 24,000 deaths annually); or of heart disease (over half a million deaths annually). So let the scientists do the worrying for us - that's their business; and meanwhile let us go on eating, and working, and playing, and smoking, and relaxing, and riding in automobiles, and living a good life everyday.

You can count on the cigarette companies (who have obligated themselves to pour millions of dollars into cancer research) to take anything out of your cigarette that is a health hazard, if our science ever really finds any such hazard in the wonderful tobacco leaf. Meanwhile know this: despite the most elaborate attempts, no efforts to give mice a lung illness by making them live days on end in tobacco smoke have ever produced a case of such illness through that kind of exposure.

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Some Things to Do

The items on this page comprise quick suggestions by various members of the organization, starting with Mr. Goss. They are intended as suggestions for debate, and for stimulating others:

1. Name for Committee?
2. A basic Credo Statement: "We place health first; we have long been seeking the facts; we are financing more research, seeking still more facts." Then -- consider exactly what viewpoint and attitude industry will universally adopt toward unfavorable research reports.
3. Explore advisability of having made a truly scientific summary review, and analysis of the facts, as these are recognized by the majority of our best researchers and research institutions at this time. Could National Cancer Institute do?
4. Consider authoritative brief digest (5-10 pages) of "favorable" scientific reports, to go with full texts of the same reports to science and magazine writers, cigarette salesmen, important magazines and syndicates. Could National Cancer Institute authenticate?
5. Decide whether we suggest company publicity or advertising. Consider what the chief points in such messages should be. Decide how this advertising could be coordinated, so that it doesn't bog down a competitive dog fight. Decide what any one company could say, that couldn't be better said by all companies jointly -- when they honestly face a problem of human import where competition has no place.
6. Start screening and planning a scientific research program by research committee.
7. Select an agency to plan institutional advertising to (a) doctors and (b) public. Consider what kind of messages you want to get across.
8. Get research data on excessive smoking, if definable; on smoking by sex, age, region, urban and rural districts.
9. Develop some understanding with companies that, on this problem, none is going to seek a competitive advantage by inferring to its public that its product is less risky than others. (No claims that special filters or

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Some Things to Do (Continued)

toasting, or expert selection of tobacco, or extra length in the butt, or anything else, makes a given brand less likely to cause you-know-what. No "Play-Safe-with-Luckies" idea - or with Camels or with anything else.)

10. Consider how appropriations for cancer research by industry could be most effectively handled -- not alone from viewpoint of research institutions, but also from viewpoint of how this occasion can contribute to building public confidence in the integrity of the industry's leaders.
11. Consider whether publicity on this subject (after its tenor is established under Point 2) should all emanate from one central source; and if not, how the various companies can avoid the risk of having all efforts at confidence building spoiled -- just because some bright boy on Madison Avenue reverted some morning to his old techniques.