

cc Messrs. Hahn
Ross
McComas

cc Messrs. Darrow
Hoyt
Thompson

Just file copy

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF WISCONSIN
Archives Division

July 8, 1954

CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. Timothy V. Hartnett
301 West Liberty Street
Room 900-31
Louisville, Kentucky

Dear Mr. Hartnett:

We have a number of steps in the area of public relations which we will want to discuss with you when you are in New York next week. They are as follows:

1. Advertisements

It is our opinion that one way to help bring back a more balanced public perspective with regard to the smoking problem would be to point out in a paid advertisement, similar to the one run on January 4, 1954, some of the reassuring developments which have been smothered out by the sensational headlines in recent weeks.

Accordingly, draft of same proposed copy has been prepared and I am attaching a copy. Before making any move on this, however, it seemed desirable to check with Dr. Little, which I did this afternoon. I read the copy to him over the telephone. Dr. Little expressed great sympathy with our problem and our purposes, but said he feels that an ad of this kind now would be inadvisable from the standpoint of the Advisory Board. He is fearful of any statements by the Committee which quote scientific authorities and might lead to controversy. However, he said he would want to talk the matter over with the members of his Board, and if you think a statement of this kind would be helpful, we can take it up with him at the next meeting of the Advisory Board.

2. Editorial Request Booklet

We have been collecting an interesting assortment of constructive editorial comment and column material from the papers throughout the United States. We believe that reprinting a selection of these editorials in a booklet for distribution

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to the press and others would be most helpful.

3. A Poll of Doctors

It is our feeling that we should take a cross section poll of doctors' opinions in order to find out what doctors are advising their patients regarding smoking.

This can be done without any identification whatever of the tobacco industry by the Medimetric Institute, which has a national physicians advisory panel that is regularly polled on current subjects. We have had occasion to use the Medimetric Institute in connection with other matters, with considerable success.

We also think it desirable at this time for the Committee to reconsider the matter of the Pollin poll of the smoking habits of the general public.

4. Top Level Press Contacts

We are planning a series of meetings with top editors and publishers of New York newspapers and news magazines over the next few weeks. These will be most effective if Messrs. Barnett, Hahn, McCamus and other top tobacco executives from New York, as well as Dr. Little, can find it convenient to participate.

The purpose of these meetings would be to give the publishers a full understanding of the objectives of the Committee and its approach to the problem, and to bring about a better balanced treatment of the subject in the press.

5. Washington Activities

Some Washington activities that are under way with the cooperation of others will be discussed with you when you are in New York next week.

6. Analysis of Hammond-Nora Report

We have a professional statistician reviewing the transcript of the Hammond-Nora Report in San Francisco, and will shortly have an evaluation in hand. We also are reviewing this Report to determine the public relations advisability of any further comment being made on the study itself. Of course, anything along this line would have to be checked with Dr. Little.

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7. Insurance Companies

In view of the statement by Hammond and Hara that the life span of certain age groups is being shortened by cigarette smoking, we have checked with leading life insurance companies to find out what action, if any, they are taking on this point. We have found no indication of any intention on the part of the companies to differentiate between smokers and non-smokers in policies.

However, this information must be handled very carefully, as some of the companies told us they would not want to be "put on the spot" in connection with this. Furthermore, some of the companies stated that their medical or statistical departments have been asked to carefully review the full Hammond-Hara Study when it is available.

8. Press Activities

We are continuing to work with a number of publications and writers on suggestions for possible articles of a positive nature. Steps have been taken to insure availability to the press and other writers of all materials at hand which work toward a balanced perspective on the subject.

I am due to have a physical check-up the first few days of next week, but Messrs. Darrow and Thompson will be available for any discussion on these matters until my return.

Looking forward to seeing you and with kindest regards,

Very sincerely yours,

John W. Hill

jwh/sw
enc.