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WE HAVE A VERY LONG TELEX FOR YOU

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RICHARD CORNER AND
DON HOEL

THE FOLLOWING TELEX WAS RECEIVED HERE TODAY FROM AXEL DOLLERIS
RE ROTATIONAL WARNINGS - SWEDEN

QUOTE

TWO STUDIES HAVE BEEN MADE IN SWEDEN REGARDING THE ROTATIONAL
WARNING LABELS ON CIGARETTE PACKS.:
ONE IS MADE BY STUDENTS AT THE COMMERCIAL HIGHSCHOOL IN
STOCKHOLM AND I BELIEVE THAT YOU ALREADY HAVE THIS REPORT.
THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THAT STUDY IS TO SHOW THAT THE STUDENTS
KNOW THEIR SUBJECT. IT IS VERY THEORETICAL BUT THE POPULATION
IS VERY SMALL AND IT SEEMS A BIT FAR OUT TO DRAW ANY RELIABLE
CONCLUSIONS FROM THIS MATERIAL. BUT IT MAY SERVE AS A MODEL
AS TO HOW IT COULD BE DONE. HOWEVER THE REPORT IS MAINLY
CONCERNED WITH THE REACTIONS TO THE CONTENTS OF THE SPECIFIC
WARNING TEXTS AND HAS NO BEARING ON THE AWARENESS AS SUCH.

A PROPER STUDY WAS MADE BY NTS IN 1976 AND REPEATED IN 1977.
THIS WAS A REPRESENTATIVE STUDY PLANNED BY NTS AND SUPPORTED
BY THE DIRECTORATE OF HEALTH. THE INTERVIEWS WERE CARRIED
OUT BY SIFO. THE POPULATION WAS 2000. A SUMMARY FOLLOWS AT
THE END OF THIS TELEX.

NONE OF THESE SURVEYS CAN SUPPORT DON HALLS CASE - ON THE
CONTRARY THEY SEEM TO PROVE THAT THE WARNINGS ARE EFFECTIVE.
I BELIEVE THAT AN IDENTICAL STUDY TODAY WOULD PRODUCE THE
SAME RESULT.

HOWEVER I ALSO BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO CONSTRUCT
A SURVEY ON AWARENESS WHICH MIGHT SHOW THAT THE SMOKERS PAY
LITTLE ATTENTION TO THE WARNINGS SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY HAVE
STOPPED NOTICING THEM.

AS TO THE EFFECT OF WARNING LABELS IT IS OF COURSE IMPOSSIBLE
TO MEASURE IT BECAUSE THERE IS NO WAY TO SEPARATE IT FROM THE
GENERAL ANTI SMOKING PROPAGANDA.

IN ORDER TO OBTAIN CREDIBILITY I WOULD PREFER THAT SIFO DID
THE INTERVIEWING BECAUSE THEY NORMALLY DO THIS FOR NTC. BUT
IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO BUILD UP THE QUESTIONNAIRE WE WOULD NEED
A NOTHER RESEARCH INSTITUTE WHICH WILL UNDERSTAND OUR NEEDS.
I HAVE CONTACTS WITH A FIRM THAT MIGHT COOPERATE WITH ME ON
THIS BUT BEFORE GOING ANY FURTHER I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE AN
APPROVAL FROM YOU OR DON HOEL.

I LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU AND SEND MY BEST REGARDS.

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SUMMARY OF THE NTS STUDY ON THE FUNCTION OF THE SWEDISH TOBACCO
LABELLING SYSTEM

BY
LARS M. RANSTRÖM PH.D.
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF NTS

THE STUDY HAS BEEN MADE BY INTERVIEWING A REPRESENTATIVE POPU-
LATION SAMPLE OF 2 000 PEOPLE. THIS WAS DONE AT THE END OF 1976,
IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE INTRODUCTION OF THE LABELLING SYSTEM, AND
ONE YEAR LATER, AT THE END OF 1977, WHEN THE LABELLING SYSTEM
HAD BEEN EFFECTIVE ALMOST A YEAR. CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE
AND BEHAVIOURAL VARIABLES WERE MEASURED BY IDENTICAL QUESTIONS
BOTH YEARS, AND, THE SECOND YEAR, A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC
QUESTIONS WERE ADDED CONCERNING EXPLICIT REACTIONS TO THE
LABELLING SYSTEM.

EXPLICIT REACTIONS

BY MEANS OF MASS MEDIA PUBLICITY AND SIMILAR THINGS THE WARNING
LABELS AS SUCH ARE GENERALLY, KNOWN BY MOST OF SWEDISH
PEOPLE. BUT THERE IS A STRIKING DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SMOKERS AND
NON-SMOKERS, SO THAT SMOKERS HAVE A MUCH BETTER DETAILED KNOWLEDGE
OF THE SHAPE OF THE SYSTEM. THIS SHOULD MOST PROBABLY BE INTER-
PRETED AS AN INDICATION THAT SMOKERS IN GENERAL HAVE REALLY
STUDIED THE LABELS, NOTICING THEM RATHER THAN NEGLECTING THEM.
AROUND HALF THE POPULATION BELIEVES THAT WARNING NOTICES DO HAVE
A FAVOURABLE EFFECT. THE TWO MAJOR WAYS BY WHICH FAVOURABLE EFFECTS
ARE BELIEVED TO OCCUR ARE:
1/ MAKING PEOPLE BETTER AWARE OF THE HEALTH HAZARD RELATED TO
SMOKING, AND
2/ ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO STOP SMOKING OR ENCOURAGING YOUNG PEOPLE
TO REMAIN NON-SMOKERS. THE BELIEF THAT WARNING NOTICES MIGHT
ENCOURAGE SMOKERS TO STOP IS HELD EQUALLY BY SMOKERS
AND NON-SMOKERS, WHICH STRENGTHENS THE CREDIBILITY OF THESE ANSWERS.
THE MAJORITY OF RESPONDENTS ALSO THINK THAT A ROTATION SYSTEM IS
BETTER THAN HAVING A SINGLE WARNING STATEMENT. THE MAIN REASON
FOR THAT IS STATED AS THE ROTATION SYSTEM EVOKING CURIOSITY
SO THAT THE NOTICE IS REALLY READ, NOT NEGLECTED. AGAIN, THIS
IS AN OPINION HELD EQUALLY BY SMOKERS AND NON-SMOKERS, I.E. IT
IS NOT JUST NON-SMOKERS' BELIEF BUT SMOKERS' ACTUAL, SELF-REPORTED
REACTION.

WHEN ASKING ABOUT THE DECLARATION OF CONTENT WE GOT AN EQUALLY FAVOURABLE
REACTION BY AROUND HALF THE RESPONDENTS STATING THAT THEY THINK
IT REALLY DOES GOOD. EVEN MORE SMOKERS THAN NON-SMOKERS SAY SO.
THEY GENERALLY INDICATE THAT THE WAY THE DECLARATION OF CONTENT
IS USEFUL IS THAT IT FACILITATES CHOOSING A BRAND YIELDING SMALLER
AMOUNTS OF HARMFUL SUBSTANCES. HERE AGAIN THERE IS A STRIKING
DIFFERENCE SO THAT SMOKERS KNOW MUCH BETTER IN DETAIL HOW THE
DECLARATION SYSTEM IS SHAPED, AND THIS GIVES FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT
THE SMOKERS HAVE BOTH NOTICED AND UNDERSTOOD THE SYSTEM.

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CHANGES THAT SEEM RELATED TO THE LABELLING SYSTEM

KNOWLEDGE

BOTH 1976 AND 1977 THE RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED TO WHAT DEGREE THEY APPROVED OR DISAPPROVED TO STATEMENTS LIKE "SMOKERS ARE MORE SUSCEPTIBLE THAN NON-SMOKERS TO GENERAL AIR POLLUTION". THE CONTENT OF THIS STATEMENT COINCIDES WITH THE CONTENT OF ONE OF THE 16 WARNING NOTICES. AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO THE WARNING NOTICE, THAT IS THE SMOKERS, THERE IS A DEFINITE CHANGE TOWARDS INCREASED KNOWLEDGE OF THIS, WHILE THERE IS LESS SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN NON-SMOKERS, WHICH SERVE AS A NON-EXPOSED "CONTROL GROUP". THIS PATTERN COULD BE INTERPRETED AS EVIDENCE FOR THE ATTRIBUTABILITY OF THE KNOWLEDGE CHANGE TO THE EXPOSURE TO THE WARNING LABELS. THIS MEANS THAT THE WARNING LABELS HAVE NOT ONLY BEEN NOTICED AND UNDERSTOOD BUT HAVE ALSO MADE AN IMPACT ON PEOPLES KNOWLEDGE.

BEHAVIOUR

THE STUDY HAS ALSO REGISTERED THE CHOICE OF BRAND OF EVERYONE OF THE CIGARETTE SMOKERS. BOTH AMONG MEN AND WOMEN IN THE DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS THERE IS A CONSISTENT PATTERN OF SHIFT TOWARDS "WEAKER" BRANDS. THIS MIGHT OF COURSE BE, AT LEAST PARTLY, DUE TO OTHER INFLUENCES AS WELL, BUT AS STATED ABOVE, THE SMOKERS HAD EXPLICITLY STATED THAT THEY FELT THE DECLARATION BEING USEFUL JUST AS A TOOL FOR THAT SORT OF CHANGE AND THAT MAKES IT RATHER PROBABLE THAT THE ACTUAL CHANGE OF THAT KIND THAT HAS OCCURED HAS BEEN VERY MUCH AN EFFECT OF THE INTRODUCTION OF THE DECLARATION SYSTEM.

IN SWEDEN SMOKING RATES AMONG MALES HAVE BEEN DECREASING SINCE 1969 AND RATHER CONSTANT AMONG WOMEN SINCE 1970. WHEN LOOKING AT FIGURES FOR 1977 COMPARED TO 1976 (THAT IS A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE LAST YEAR BEFORE AND THE FIRST YEAR AFTER THE INTRODUCTION OF THE LABELLING SYSTEM), WE FIND AN ACCELERATED DECREASE AMONG MEN AND A BEGINNING DECREASE AMONG WOMEN. NO DEFINITE CONCLUSIONS ABOUT TRENDS CAN BE DRAWN FROM FIGURES RELATING TO JUST TWO CONSECUTIVE YEARS. HOWEVER, SINCE A LOT OF SMOKERS HAVE INDICATED THAT THE WARNING NOTICES MIGHT INDUCE SMOKING CESSATION (SEE ABOVE) IT SEEMS PROBABLE THAT THE ACTUAL INCREASE IN SMOKING CESSATION AT THE VERY TIME OF THE INTRODUCTION OF THE WARNING NOTICES COULD BE AT LEAST PARTLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO THESE LABELS.

IN SUMMARY, THIS STUDY SUPPORTS THE IDEA THAT THE SWEDISH LABELLING SYSTEM HAS BENEFICALLY INFLUENCED THE SMOKING BEHAVIOUR OF THE SWEDISH POPULATION BOTH BY CONTRIBUTING TO AN INCREASED NUMBER OF PEOPLE STOPPING SMOKING AND BY ENCOURAGING REMAINING SMOKERS TO CHANGE TO BRAND YIELDING LOWER AMOUNTS PER CIGARETTE OF HARMFUL SUBSTANCES.

UNQUOTE

BEST REGARDS

TANA WELLS
"JM"

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