



# Interoffice Memorandum

Subject: Public Issues  
Jaron Summers  
"The second-hand smokescreen."

Date: June 3, 1985

To: Mr. Herb Osmon  
RJRT/Public Issues  
7th Floor  
Reynolds Building

From: Miriam G. Adams

The attached letter was referred to my attention from Mr. Wilson's office.

Do you have answers to Mr. Summers' questions about Mr. and Mrs. Fisher?

Miriam G. Adams  
Tobacco Public Relations

MGA:bkm

Attachment

# The second-hand smokescreen.

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MAY 14 1985

For decades, public and private organizations have waged a massive campaign to discourage cigarette smoking. For most of that time, the target of this effort has been the smoker.

Recently, however, the emphasis has undergone a major shift. Today there are scientists who claim that cigarette smoke in the air can actually cause disease in *non-smokers*. We hear a great deal about "second-hand smoke" and "passive smoking."

But is this new approach wholly motivated by concern for the non-smoker, or is it the same old war on smoking in a new guise?

These doubts are raised when we recall statements like the following, by a spokesperson for the American Lung Association:

Probably the only way we can win a substantial reduction [in smoking] is if we can somehow make it nonacceptable socially.... We thought the scare of medical statistics and opinions would produce a major reduction. It really didn't.

Obviously, one way to make smoking "nonacceptable socially" would be to suggest that second-hand smoke could cause disease. So it is not surprising that we are now seeing a flurry of research seeking scientific support for these suggestions.

Many independent experts believe the scientific evidence on passive smoking is questionable. But a zealous group of anti-smokers are using this issue in their campaign against tobacco as if the claims were established scientific fact.

We deplore the actions of those who try to manipulate public opinion through scare tactics. As the late, respected pathologist, Dr. H. Russell Fisher, stated in testimony submitted to a Congressional hearing on passive smoking:

...[I]n the absence of any scientific proof of harm from atmospheric tobacco smoke, we are dealing with a social question and not a medical one. In this regard it should be noted that, since fears and phobias can lead to ill health, those who urge policies based on fear and not scientific facts could be making a medical problem out of a social one. This is indeed a strange prospect to see coming from the efforts of members of the medical profession.

We are not ignoring the fact that cigarette smoke can be bothersome to many non-smokers. But we believe this problem is best solved not by governments but by individuals, and not with more rhetoric but more common sense and courtesy.

Of course, if anti-smoking advocates want to work for the abolition of smoking, that is their right. We only wish they would come out from behind their second-hand smokescreen.

R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company

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Mr. Jaron Summers  
2345 Roscomare Road  
LA, CA 90077

May 4, 1985

Mr. J. Tylee Wilson  
R.J. Reynolds Industries  
Reynolds Boulevard  
Winston-Salem, NC 27102

Dear Mr. Wilson,

1 - Is it true that Mr. Fischer, himself, died  
from cancer of the lung? (Or lungs, I'm not sure which.)

2 - Also, I have heard that his wife -- who smoked  
only a little bit, also died the same way. What do your  
research people know about this?

The way the story is going around, neither  
one of these fine people smoked but they conducted experments  
with rats and things in which they kept the animals in a lab  
filled with cigarette smoke. I heard a lot of the rats died  
-- but when Dr. Fisher held the rats in his hand, the rodents  
would cough on him and stuff. (Mrs. Fischer was with him  
when this happened.) So is this why they died?

I like to keep an open mind. I don't know  
about passive smoking hurting anyone. But don't you think,  
Mr. Wilson, that if Dr. Fischer and his wife died from passive  
smoke from rats that there's a problem somewhere. I realize  
it's a small problem. Not many people inhale smoke from  
rats but if this story is true, please alert your researchers.

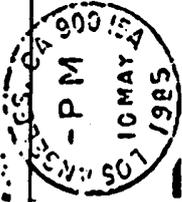
One more question. Just out of curiosity.  
Do you smoke? If so how much? How does the family respond?  
You don't have to answer if you don't want to, business  
letters are not supposed to be personal.

Sincerely,

  
Jaron Summers



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*Miriam Adams*  
*Ray; Bldg*

Mr. J. Tylee Wilson  
R.J. Reynolds Industries  
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