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PREMISE

- * For the first time the cigarette industry has the opportunity of advancing convincing and legitimate scientific arguments for the presence of no-effect threshold in cigarette smoking.

Epidemiologic evidence sustains this concept; this evidence can be further reinforced by additional epidemiologic studies specifically planned, and by appropriate animal experiments.

- * Current tobacco production in the United States results in cigarettes that yield a 10:1 ratio of tar to nicotine in the smoke.

Current methods for reducing total particulate matter (TPM) also reduce nicotine. Nicotine yields of less than 0.5 mg per cigarette may not be compatible with sustained cigarette acceptability.

On the other hand, current evidence suggest that certain daily intakes of nicotine may not be a long term chronic hazard to man. This would open the opportunity for cigarettes of low smoke delivery but with high relative contents of nicotine, as compared to current cigarettes. A ratio of tar to nicotine lower than 10:1 can be achieved by several approaches, such as addition of synthetic or natural nicotine, or reduction of TPM by methods that do not waste the natural nicotine present in tobacco. This last approach would entail the removal of nicotine from the blend, processing of the blend to remove TPM precursors, addition of the original nicotine to the processed blend, and the use of filters less efficient than current ones.

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- * Up to now the negative effects of cigarette smoking have been largely emphasized, but mounting evidence suggests that positive effects can be measured and quantified in terms of quality of life, performance, etc. Also the issue of susceptibility and resistance in smokers needs to be better investigated.

ACTION REQUIRED

- * Research is desirable in the following areas:
 - Chronic effects of nicotine in animals.
 - Nicotine compensation behavior in smokers.
 - No-effect threshold studies in animals (inhalation studies in beagles, cilia-toxicity studies in vivo).
 - No-effect threshold studies in man (epidemiology).
 - Positive effects of smoking in animals and man.
 - Definition of susceptibility and resistance characteristics in human smokers.
- * Scientific information activities are necessary for the discussion, acceptance, and dissemination of the above research. This can be accomplished through research conferences on the topics of no-effect threshold, as they apply to tobacco and other human hazards, and by publishing scientific reports in the open literature.
- * Public information on the concepts of thresholds and unavoidable risks is necessary. This can be achieved by proper utilization of the media, television, radio, and newspaper articles.

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IMPLEMENTATION

For a variety of legal and public relations reasons it is obviously important that the above activities should not be undertaken directly by the cigarette industry. Probably the best option is to establish an endowed chair at a recognized university or other independent institution of learning, and to entrust the development of such general research to a person or group of persons that would be recognized as authorities in the field because of their expertise and prominence.

Aside from scientific qualification, the person or group involved would have to be willing and capable of interacting with the media and of writing compelling articles at the lay level.

The activities of this person or group should and can go beyond issues of smoking and would touch on no-effect thresholds in general, on the need to accept certain levels of hazards and on the general issue of hazards and benefits. By expanding to a broader area of research than smoking, the significance and credibility of the message would be strengthened.

FUNDING

Establishment of an endowed chair would require an initial investment capable of sustaining a top professional salary, one secretary, and the necessary institutional overhead costs. Specific research and action costs would have to be negotiated item by item as the chairperson develops and submits proposals to achieve specific objectives.

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