

OCTOBER 21, 1966

Tobacco Institute Comments on "Tar" and Nicotine

Washington -- The Tobacco Institute today issued the following statement in response to inquiries concerning a forthcoming magazine article, and earlier published reports on the subject of "tar" and nicotine:

The increasing attention in recent weeks to the subject of "tar" and nicotine appears to reflect a considerable amount of misunderstanding and confusion about this subject.

While some scientists believe that "tar" and nicotine are harmful, other scientists do not agree.

We know of no valid scientific evidence demonstrating that either "tar" or nicotine is responsible for any human illness.

Even those who maintain that smoking is harmful have not been able to establish that any particular ingredient in cigarette smoke causes human disease.

With respect to nicotine, the report on Smoking and Health of the Surgeon General's Advisory Committee points out that "There is no acceptable evidence that prolonged exposure to nicotine creates either dangerous functional change of an objective nature or degenerative disease." The report goes on to state that nicotine "probably does not represent a significant health problem." p 32

There is no "tar" in cigarette smoke, and smoke is not "tar."  
"Tar" is the name given to some of the components in smoke that can be collected by laboratory techniques.

TIMN 317069

The growing emphasis on "tar" and nicotine can mislead and confuse the public insofar as it suggests that science has established human health significance for "tar" and nicotine. At best, such a suggestion is a matter of opinion and guesswork.

Former Surgeon General Terry said in testimony last year before the U.S. Senate Commerce Committee: "While it seems at least plausible that cigarettes with lower tar and nicotine may present lesser health hazards, there is presently no proof that this is so."

Nor is there any scientific proof today that "tar" and nicotine has significance in terms of human health.

Scientists throughout the world are continuing to investigate to learn the full facts about "tar" and nicotine, and about questions concerning tobacco and health. The tobacco industry is supporting much of this research and will continue to do so.

oo0oo

TIMN 317070