

## **Philip Morris Sues ABC and Day One**

*The documents in R001A are **Bates #2022988669 (19940324) and #2045990871 (19940324)**. They are a letter written by William Campbell to Philip Morris employees and a press announcement of PM's lawsuit against ABC and its Day One program.*

1994 was a difficult year for the tobacco industry. Attacked, as they saw it, by the congress and the FDA, they had to wrestle with an ever more aggressive press. ABC's *Day One* broadcast dealing with the manipulation of nicotine levels in the making of cigarettes could prove seriously damaging. Philip Morris decided they must respond to the "false allegations" by ABC. They did so by filing a \$10 billion lawsuit against the broadcaster.

On March 24, 1994, CEO William Campbell sent a letter to his employees telling them about the lawsuit and detailing the company's activities in the wake of the broadcast. He claimed ABC "...confused consumers and caused regulators to express unnecessary concern." He assured them that nicotine occurred naturally in tobacco and that it had declined in cigarettes more than 50% in the last forty years. Quoting Murray Bring on the importance of freedom to Philip Morris, he assured them that PM would stand up for itself, for smokers, and the industry.

On the same day, VP and General Counsel Murray Bring announced a \$10 billion lawsuit against ABC. In speaking to the press, Bring claimed that ABC's allegations that Philip Morris "artificially spiked" its cigarettes to keep people smoking were not true and that ABC knew they were not true. He detailed the 'facts' and accused ABC of repeating them after they were "...informed of the inaccuracies." Asserting that "...there is no corporation more committed to freedom..." than Philip Morris, he nevertheless concluded that they had a duty to "draw the line at libel."

**Author:** William Campbell (letter) and Murray Bring (press announcement). William Campbell was Vice President of PM Inc. from 1984 to 1985, and President and CEO of PM USA in 1986 and then again from 1991 through 1995. He also served on the Board of Directors. In 1994 Murray Bring was also a member of the Board of Directors, as well as Senior Vice President and General Counsel for PM. **Addressee:** PM USA employees (letter) and the general public (press announcement).