

## Weekly Report

To: David Small, CTMC  
Marie-Josée Lapointe, CTMC

From: Dirk Laudan, Barr Gass & Wilcox Group

Re: Proposed Vancouver Smoking Ban.

Date: Week ending September 8, 1995

*Vancouver file*

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### 1. Status of Coalition

#### (a) Royal Canadian Legion

Several delegates will be selected to represent Legion branches opposed to the ban at the next meeting of the Steering Committee.

Ongoing action: Dennis Prouse, Peter Symons, Holly Thompson

#### (b) Tourism Vancouver

Report on Tourism Vancouver's decision on whether to oppose the ban will be available next week.

Action: John Barr

#### (c) Steering Committee meetings

Planning session for steering committee took place on Sept. 7, to prepare for Health Canada conference (item 7, below). Next scheduled meeting is for the last week in September.

### 2. Stakeholder consultations

#### Meeting with Health Officials

I. Medical Health Officers and Environmental Health Officers said the following:

##### (A) Recommendation to council

- (i) confirmed that they would recommend the adoption of a total ban
- (ii) they will also set out potential alternatives to a ban, such as ventilation or air quality standard, in their recommendation to council. The recommendation will clearly be that a ban be adopted, however.

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(iii) the recommendation will be released publicly two weeks before the vote at City Council (which is scheduled for September 28), i.e. on September 14 or thereabouts.

(B) Arguments in favour of the ban advanced by the bureaucrats

(i) the ban would have absolutely no negative economic effects. They said they knew this because of experience with previous regulations, which had no economic effects, and also because of the Angus Reid poll.

(ii) people "killed by ETS" according to the EPA and related studies.

(C) Air quality study

See under item 9, below.

II. Members of the Hospitality Group advanced these points:

(A) Opposition to ban

(i) Economic loss (based on expertise as hospitality operators, and Insight Canada genpop poll)

(ii) California ban is not comparable because it is not the same sort of ban, it is not enforced, and California has a different climate.

(iii) Casino and bingo business will flock to US, Indian reserves, and illegal games

(iv) The ban would be difficult and even dangerous for operators to enforce

(v) Consultation process was flawed

(vi) Alternatives to a ban were never seriously considered

(vii) ETS does not have the health effects that are attributed to it by the propaganda of the Health Department. Dr. Holcomb spoke at some length in this vein, quite aggressively. Health officials, in particular the medical doctors, agreed to look at his research, but expressed great scepticism about his position.

(B) Compromise positions

The group expressed the view that it would not contemplate compromise until the ban was off the table. No compromise was offered or intimated by health officials, however.

3. Bulletin

No bulletins were sent out this week.

Upcoming issues:

- Legion takes up arms against ban

- meeting with Medical Health Officers
- failure of smoking bans in California, ETS conference
- costing of Health Department's Angus Reid poll (depending on information obtained from a Freedom of Information request we have filed)
- the issue of ETS and how its risks have been overstated

Also possibly issues on the following at the appropriate time:

- Union joins fight against ban
- Announcement of upcoming media event, e.g. march on City Hall

Action: Dirk Laudan, Peter Symons

4. Media coverage this week

(a) Television

No coverage.

(b) Radio

CKST Dave Abbott Show, September 7, 1995, 10:05 A.M. Bruce Clark and Larry Holcomb interviewed by Dave Abbott on the smoking ban and on ETS. Phone in segment included an anti-smoking crusader who asked Clark if the tobacco industry contributed to the campaign, and Clark confirmed that it did.

CKST Jim Nielsen Show, September 7, 1995, Larry Holcomb interviewed on ETS, with call-in segment.

(c) Letters to the editor

None.

(d) Dailies

*Vancouver Province*, Sept. 8, "New West council to the rescue", Byline (op-ed article submitted by member of the public) Ironic article referring to new, tougher regulations for smoking in restaurants and other hospitality establishments in New Westminster (these regulations stop short of a total ban). Author says as a result of the bylaw he has "already started to cut down. Cut down going to New Westminster restaurants, that is."

(e) Community papers.

*Royal City Record/NOW* (New Westminster), August 30, "Pool players puff for now". New

bylaw in New Westminster would ban smoking in billiards halls, but not other hospitality establishments. The bylaw comes into force on September 30. Councillors have a variety of views on whether the bylaw should be enforced.

*Royal City Record/NOW* (New Westminster), August 30, "Billiards owner wants fair play", New Westminster billiards owner says he would support a total ban in billiards halls if it applied in all municipalities. As it is, he will lose his smoking customers to neighbouring municipalities. Owner said that he was never consulted about the bylaw.

5. Job loss/ Economic Impact figures

Job loss prediction by professional economist John De Wolf is going forward and will be complete on approximately September 20.

Continued action: John Barr, Dennis Prouse.

6. Municipal Councillors

Dr. Holcomb met with Vancouver mayor Phillip Own, Richmond mayor (also Chairman of the Greater Vancouver Regional District) Greg Halsey-Brandt, and Vancouver city councillor Jenny Kwan. All were receptive to his points, and in particular councillor Kwan, who said that she had not been given adequate information on this issue by city staff.

Coordination of meetings between stakeholders and Vancouver council continues, as does tracking of councillors' opinions on the issue.

Continuing action: John Barr, Dennis Prouse, Dirk Laudan

7. Conference on ETS in the Hospitality Industry on Sept 7

The conference took place in the Richmond Delta Resort. Approximately 40 people attended.

(a) Stakeholders, led by Bruce Clark, succeeded in changing the agenda to allow Larry Holcomb to speak to the entire conference. Holcomb was reasonably well received, with a number of delegates expressing genuine interest in his points. There was some hostility to him from anti-smoking activists.

(b) Stakeholders successfully steered discussions in the "break-out groups" away from ETS specifically, and towards the broader question of indoor air quality.

(c) No member of the news media attended the conference. Staff are not aware of any press coverage of the conference.

(d) Conference proceedings were recorded by a staffer of Temple Scott, the consulting firm that ran the conference.

8. Request to Vancouver Health Department under the British Columbia Freedom of Information Act

Information gathering continues.

Action: Dirk Laudan, Holly Thompson.

9. Air Quality study by the Vancouver Health Department

There has been a substantial change in the degree to which the Health Department wants to "own" the air quality study it had previously promoted.

The air quality study had been advertised by the Vancouver Health Department in letters to stakeholders requesting their participation, and also in personal appeals for participation by Domenic Losito, Environmental Health Officer for the City of Vancouver.

However, when Dr. Blatherwick (Vancouver's Medical Health Officer) was questioned about the air quality study at the meeting between health officials and stakeholders on September 5, Blatherwick said he was not really in favour of the project. He said that the study is being run and financed entirely by the Heart & Stroke Foundation, and that the Health Department's participation was only to send a "doorknocker" letter asking stakeholders to participate. He said that he now regrets that they even went that far to support it.

Losito agreed with Blatherwick and said he was now "lukewarm" to the idea of the air quality tests, and implied that he never really supported the idea fully.

The reason for the change in attitude was not clearly articulated.