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## Weekly Report

To: David Small, CTMC

From: Dirk Laudan, Barr Gass & Wilcox Group

Re: Proposed Vancouver Smoking Ban.

Date: Week ending July 21, 1995

### 1. Status of Coalition

#### (a) Restaurant Association

The Restaurant and Food Services Association of British Columbia and the Yukon has rejoined the coalition. Restaurant Association representative Geoffrey Howes confirmed that the Association is fully in agreement with the coalition's position of total opposition to the ban, without compromise. Howes is also comfortable with the role of staff in the process. He agreed to allow the name of the Association to be restored to the masthead of the bulletin.

Howes said that he will distribute a special newsletter relating to the ban to the 12,000 member of his Association. Newsletter to be drafted by staff: it will amount to a thorough briefing on the issue, assuming no prior knowledge of it, and include suggestions on what restauranters can do to fight the ban. Approximate time of release: mid-August.

Action: Dennis Prouse (liaison), Dirk Laudan (drafting of newsletter).

#### (b) Chinese Restaurant Initiative

Over 60 Chinese restaurants in the lower mainland have signed the statement of opposition to the ban prepared by Chinese Informedia Consulting.

The opposition to the ban will probably be made public in a press conference on July 27 (subject to the satisfaction by staff that it is properly organised by Chinese Informedia, and subject to strategic consideration that may arise). Staff will have no open role in the press conference and the initiative will appear to have arisen solely from the Chinese community. However, staff will extensively brief Chinese Informedia on the conduct of a press conference. Staff have given Chinese Informedia a database of media sources and have prepared a media advisory for the press conference. Staff will monitor the activities of Chinese Informedia closely up to the time of the conference.

As spokesman for the Chinese restauranters is currently being selected. This is a very political issue among the fiercely competitive Chinese restauranters, and is being handled

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solely by Chinese Informedia and the restaurateurs themselves. A venue is being explored by Chinese Informedia: it will likely be a Chinese community centre.

Ongoing action: John Barr.

(c) Breweries

Letters have been sent to Molson's and Labatt's giving information on this issue. No response as of yet.

Ongoing action: John Barr and Dennis Prouse

(d) Steering Committee meetings

Successful committee meeting on July 21, at which Geoffrey Howes of the Restaurant Association attended (results of his attendance, above).

Information collected and decisions made at the meeting discussed in the separate headings in this report.

Next steering committee meetings set for August 3. Chief subject for discussion then: operations and strategy for August-September.

2. Metropolitan Board of Health's Consultation Meetings

(a) Insight Canada GenPop Study.

No response yet from the Strategic Action Group, the facilitators of the consultation process who were hired by the Health Department, to Bruce Clark's written request that the Insight Canada GenPop be included in report.

NOTE: As a general point, it is believed by staff that the Strategic Action Group is being quite fair in the consultation exercise. They are a private firm and have no emotional commitment to the anti-smoking issue.

(b) Consultation meetings are over

The consultation meetings are over, according to the Strategic Action Group. (Consultant assured John Barr of this on the record) The consulting firm confirmed that the consultation meeting tentatively scheduled for July 27, at which municipal health officers might attend is definitely cancelled (municipal health officers have not attended a consultation meeting).

Statements coming out of the health departments to the media last week indicated that more

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consultation meetings might occur. There is a high level of confusion in the statements of the health departments on the current status of the consultation exercise.

(c) Report

(i) Content

The report from the facilitators of the consultation meetings to the health departments will strongly reflect the negative response of stakeholders to the ban and also to the process of consultations. According to a member of the stakeholders' steering committee, who spoke to one of the facilitators, there will be eleven findings, *viz*:

- 1) Poorly defined goals of public policy
- 2) This is not just a public health issue, as the health department had maintained
- 3) Institutional considerations were omitted from the consultation process, e.g. effect on private clubs, hospitals, and so forth
- 4) Insufficient economic analysis
- 5) Flawed process: stakeholders' input should have been had from the beginning
- 6) Health Department's information was misleading: it made no mention of the economic impact on tourism, for example
- 7) Enforcement of the ban remains a serious issue
- 8) Bureaucracy operated in a high-handed way
- 9) Freedom: people's right to choose is an issue
- 10) Inequities exist: US establishments and those on Indian reserves
- 11) Improper jurisdictional authority

We have not yet confirmed these officially, and staff are seeking a written version of the facilitators' report.

(ii) Status of report with respect to publication

The report is not published, and most of the transcripts of the public meetings are not available.

The transcripts of the consultation meetings, with the exception of the first two meetings, have not been distributed to participants. Transcripts are not available to the public or the media. The report is apparently in the hands of the Metropolitan Board of Health steering committee for the total ban, which includes Dr. John Blatherwick and two others.

According to one of our stakeholders, at least one medical charity (Heart and Stroke Foundation) has a copy of either the transcripts of the consultation meetings or the final report.

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Effort is under way to obtain a copy of the report and transcripts. Staff are preparing a formal request under the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (B.C.) for all relevant documents.

Action: Dirk Laudan

(iii) Strategic considerations

The level of confusion in the Health Department on the consultation report process may be evidence that municipal officials are unable to decide what to do with the report.

The fact that the Health Department has not released the text of the consultations or the report allow their members to continue to assert in public that "opinion is divided" among stakeholders on the issue of the ban, whereas it would seem to be a fairer inference from the transcripts and report that opinion is mostly *opposed* to the ban.

The continuing stall of release of the transcripts and report may provide us with opportunities to attack the process and attract media attention.

Action: All staff

3. Bulletin

Bulletin issues have covered: the impact of a ban on business as demonstrated by the GenPop survey results; a media review; and the end of the consultation process with the health department in confusion.

Upcoming issue will discuss: the disastrous experiences of local pubs and cabarets that have gone non-smoking voluntarily, and a decision by the Pacific Command of the Royal Canadian Legion to oppose the ban.

Action: Dirk Laudan

4. Media coverage this week

(a) Television

BCTV early news, 5:18 p.m., July 12. Figures from Insight Canada GenPop study reported: support for current regulations at night clubs (64%) and fine dining establishments (80%) reported, and contrasted with finding of support for a ban in the Angus Reid poll.

(b) Radio

Coast 1040 AM radio, 10 a.m., July 17: Bruce Clark interviewed by conservative talk-show

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host Dave Abbott. The interview lasted 25 minutes and included a phone-in segment. Abbott was extremely supportive of Clark's position. Clark emphasised the Insight Canada GenPop study and economic arguments. Callers were evenly mixed between those supporting Clark and those supporting a smoking ban.

(c) Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor by pro-ban side continue to outpace anti-ban letters. Effort to correct this to be taken (see "Upcoming Media Initiatives", below).

(d) Dailies

No coverage.

(e) Community papers.

Burnaby *Now*, July 19, "Hotels get their own survey on cigarettes", running the Insight Canada GenPop survey story from the news release, with a photograph of Bruce Clark

Vancouver *Echo*, July 12, columnist Randy Shore, "Restaurant owners don't get it", referring to the Insight Canada business survey, pro-ban columnist argued that restaurateurs do not care about their employees' health and do not deserve to be consulted on the by-law.

Whistler *Question*, July 10, columnist Paul Burrows, "Statistics depict interesting picture". Rambling opinion column discussed, *inter alia*, the Insight Canada business survey, the negative experience of The Town Pump when it voluntarily went non-smoking, and the potentially negative effect of a smoking ban on Asian tourism.

NOTE:

There has been a very significant increase in the number of health-related media articles relating to the effects of smoking. Staff believe that the health issue is being given heightened emphasis by health officials, governments at various levels, health organisations, anti-smoking media, and anti-smoking lobby groups to affect the debate on the by-law. This is consistent with the strategic direction that the pro-ban side is taking is setting up the ETS health conference (item 8, below)

5. Campaign materials

(a) Poster

Focus group testing completed on July 20. Awaiting report of testing firm. Staff attended focus group sessions: some poster ideas and slogans tested quite well. Originals of poster designs to be sent to CTMC.

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(b) Petition

(i) Ongoing campaign

Petition campaign continues strongly at hospitality establishments.

Ongoing Action: Dennis Prouse, coordinating drive and liaison with stakeholders.

(ii) Petition at Vancouver summer special events

Project in planning stage for petition drive at major summer public events including Benson & Hedges Inc. Symphony of Fire (Jul. 29 - Aug 4), the Pacific National Exhibition (Aug. 19-Sept 1) and the Molson Indy race (Sept. 1-3).

Two students may be hired to man the petition booths. A budget has been outlined for this project and submitted to CTMC.

Action:

John Barr for strategic planning of drive  
Dirk Laudan and Dennis Prouse, staff, preparation of campaign materials, training of petition staff  
Peter Symons, staff, to coordinate logistics of special event activities.

6. Job loss/ Economic Impact figures

All stakeholders have reported their projected job-loss figures arising from a smoking ban, except for the Casino Management Council (representative Jacec Schaefer returns from holidays July 24 and will send report promptly thereafter) and the Restaurant Association (Association was asked for job loss figures when it rejoined the coalition: it will also respond promptly).

Continued action: Dennis Prouse.

7. Municipal Councillors

Tracking continues, based on direct contact with stakeholders, correspondence and media reports of councillors' attitudes. Steering committee members continue to funnel information to staff on attitudes of councillor to a ban.

Continuing action: Dirk Laudan

Preparation of councillors briefing package on the issue remains a priority for staff.

Action: All staff

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8. Conference on ETS in the Hospitality Industry to be held in Vancouver

According to information staff have received from stakeholders, Health Canada is organising a conference on ETS in the hospitality industry, to be held in Vancouver in September. Stakeholders are already being contacted by conference organisers to invite them to participate. Presumably, this is part of the health department's plan to emphasise the health issue, especially now that it has not won on its arguments that the public supports the ban, or that a ban would be economically beneficial for the hospitality industry.

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