

CBC 13 JUNE 2000 - EARLY EDITION RICK CLUFF (HOST): The Workers' Compensation Board is heading into day two of its hearings into smoke in the workplace today. Now the board wants to eliminate cigarette smoke from bars and restaurants. The hospitality industry opposes the move and it's formed a coalition to speak out at these hearings. Yesterday a group called Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada claimed the tobacco industry is helping groups like the coalition oppose regulation of cigarette smoke. Vance Campbell, who speaks for the coalition had this to say. VANCE CAMPBELL (HOSPITALITY COALITION): The coalition of hospitality organizations has not received any funding from the tobacco industry, I can tell you that. All of our organizations have banded together to fund this fight on our own. This is our own money that we're using. We have not accepted any -- we have purposely not accepted any money from the tobacco industry. That's all.

CLUFF: Now in a moment we'll hear from an anti-smoking analyst who follows the tobacco industry very closely. But first on the line is Dave Laundry. He has been on the program before as you know. He is vice president of the Canadian Tobacco Manufacturers Council. Good morning to you. DAVE LAUNDY (CANADIAN TOBACCO MANUFACTURERS COUNCIL): Hi Rick. CLUFF: Now you've heard Vance Campbell say that the tobacco industry isn't helping members of the hospitality industry in their fight for the WCB. Now do you provide--I understand you do provide some money. What's it for? LAUNDY: Well, I mean, he's probably right. I don't know how they finance their specific fight here, because we have not been involved in any way, shape or form in that fight at all. But there is a program that the hospitality industry nationally can tap into called Courtesy of Choice. This is a program that works with all aspects of the hospitality industry to try to help them to accommodate both smoking and non-smoking customers. And the tobacco industry is one of a number of groups that contributes to that. But we have no idea of where the money goes. It's a national program. In fact, it's an international program. And I don't know whether any of that money has gone into the fight against the WCB here, and I would certainly have no reason to doubt Mr. Campbell's word. CLUFF: So indirectly there is money available if they so chose to tap into this Courtesy of Choice program. Correct? LAUNDY: Yes. But the Courtesy of Choice program has a broad mandate. And essentially, as I say, its sort of motto is to help the hospitality industry get rid of the smoke not the smokers. So its focus is on the ventilation solution, but it's not simply how to argue in favour of it, it's also, there's training materials and that kind of thing to help them train their staffs how to deal with difficult and sensitive situations. CLUFF: Would it be fair to say that funds could be used for research, advertising, public relations or even legal fees necessary to promote the program's goals if so desired? LAUNDY: I'm not sure about legal fees. I don't think that it's used for advertising. It's essentially used more I think internally, in the bars and pubs themselves. But as I say, we don't know what they do with the money. It's a program and there's a pot of money thereof which we are one contributor. CLUFF: How big of a fund are we talking about here? Do you know? LAUNDY: I actually don't know exactly how big the fund is. I think, certainly the tobacco industry's contribution, and this is for a national program, is something in the neighbourhood of, I think it's in the \$800,000 dollar range, something like that. CLUFF: How much money did tobacco manufacturers kick into this? LAUNDY: Well I think that's about how much that we contribute to it. CLUFF: You contribute \$800,000 to it...LAUNDY: Something like that, on a national basis. I don't know what the full fund is because that's only a portion of it. CLUFF: Were you aware that this--could it be used for anything other than to help--when you say, get rid of the smoke but not the smokers, could it be used in this campaign here in BC? LAUNDY: I honestly don't know. It's a program that's administered by the Hotels Association and by the hospitality industry generally. CLUFF: Dave, thank you for your time

again this morning. LAUNDY: You're more than welcome. CLUFF: Dave Laundry, who is the vice president of the Canadian Tobacco Manufacturers Council. Now on the line we're joined by Rob Cunningham. He is a senior policy analyst with the Canadian Cancer Society. He's also written a book on the tobacco industry and he's been following the industry's methods of funding opposition to smoking very closely. Good morning to you. ROB CUNNINGHAM (CANADIAN CANCER SOCIETY): Good morning, Rick. CLUFF: Now Rob, in your book *Smoke & Mirrors* you document the funding by the tobacco industry of so-called front groups. Now what links have you discovered here? CUNNINGHAM: A couple of examples. First in Canada there was an organization that previously existed called a Smokers Freedom Society. This was a group supposedly to defend the rights of Canadian smokers but in fact it was a front group created and funded by the industry and virtually all of its 6000 members happened to be employees of tobacco manufacturers or tobacco farms. There was another group in 1995 established in the Vancouver area called the Lower Mainland Hospitality Industry Group. This was a group that received strategic and other assistance from tobacco manufacturers and funding. And it was created simply for the purpose to oppose proposed by-laws in Vancouver and area municipalities. We've seen lots of examples in the United States, especially California, which has been on the cutting edge of smoking restrictions in the past decade. And there's been a series of front groups that, initially they have often denied that they're connected to the tobacco industry. But our experience and in many countries, is that when you have a group that suddenly appears, they're pro-smoking or they're opposing tobacco control measures, you dig deep enough and eventually you find a link to tobacco manufacturers. CLUFF: What do you know about this Courtesy of Choice program? CUNNINGHAM: Well I heard the previous statement that \$800,000 dollars is being given by tobacco manufacturers in Canada alone. And I'm actually shocked that that amount is that high. And I think that's very important information for the public to know. And you know, we had a lot of evasive answers from Mr. Laundry of the tobacco lobby as to exactly what that money is being spent on. But we've seen in the last few years a spate of legal challenges to by-laws in various municipalities. There's one currently underway in Waterloo in Ontario, and we've seen a number in British Columbia. Well these things cost money. And I think we've just hit the bullseye here in terms of the source. And it's very important for the public to know that it's not just a grassroots opposition by bars and restaurants and so on, but there's some grass-tops organizations and the tobacco industry behind the scenes is there. This Courtesy of Choice program is something that the multi-national tobacco industry is doing in various countries around the world to oppose smoking restrictions. Tobacco companies, and we know this from their internal documents that are now public, don't want these smoking restrictions because it reduces the social acceptability of smoking. It makes it less cool. And studies have shown that if you go from a workplace that is completely smoking-permitted to completely smoke-free for those people that are employed there there will be a reduction in smoking of perhaps 15 or 25%. That's very significant and you add that up on a country-wide basis and that's a lot of reduced sales. Of course, it's very good from a public health point of view in addition to the protection you give to non-smokers. CLUFF: But what's wrong with the industry funding research for hotel associations on ventilation issues? If we take Dave's word, and we have no reason to doubt that that's what it's for, to help, he says, to get rid of the smoke not the smokers, what's wrong with the tobacco industry kicking in money there? CUNNINGHAM: Well there's a couple of issues. First, the tobacco industry recognizes that they have very little credibility. And that's why they need others to fight their fights. And that's why they give money to these front groups. And it's much better to have restaurants and bars opposing things than tobacco manufacturers who, you know, have no facilities in British Columbia for example. Tobacco companies are trying to protect their sales. They're engaged in activities

that protect their profits. But often their involvement is concealed from the public. Well first of all, it's important that the public be aware of what manufacturers are actually doing. Second, tobacco manufacturers are advancing a completely flawed solution. We've had decades of experience with tobacco manufacturers engaging in junk science, engaging in public relations activities to deny that smoking is harmful or that secondhand smoke has been proven to be harmful. And now they are advancing this solution with ventilation. It simply will not work. I know that there is evidence presented to the Workers' Compensation Board yesterday by Mr. Neil Colishaw, formerly in charge of the tobacco and health program at the World Health Organization in Geneva. If it was so good and so practical then we would have had bars and restaurants implementing it voluntarily. That hasn't happened. Apart from the impracticality of enforcement and the expensiveness of implementation, from a health point of view it has not been accepted by Health Canada or other similar health authorities. CLUFF: Rob, we're out of time. We just have a few seconds. But I ask you, is this the right place to wage this battle or should it be waged politically in Ottawa because the tobacco lobby will say we sell a legal product in this country? CUNNINGHAM: Well I think in terms of smoking restrictions it is very much appropriate at the provincial level to protect workers, because that's where occupational health and safety regulation is normally done. Should the federal parliament ban tobacco? I don't think so. There's too many Canadians that are addicted and if we ban it we'd have contraband overnight. CLUFF: Thanks Rob. CUNNINGHAM: Thanks Rick. CLUFF: Rob Cunningham, senior policy analyst with the Canadian Cancer Society. He has also written a book on the tobacco industry called Smoke and Mirrors: The Canadian Tobacco War. What do you think? Does it sound like the tobacco industry is pulling strings here or do you believe there truly is a grassroots opposition to the proposed WCB regulations here in BC? Why not call our answering machine at 662-6976.***WORDS: 1859

Vancouver Sun Article Smokin' over tobacco - Vancouver Sun
It's been 20 years of slow progress against the perils of second-hand smoke.

Wednesday, January 17, 2001

C. Stuart Houston, MD and Neil Collishaw

Today is Weedless Wednesday, a day for personal and political action in Canada against smoking. This year Weedless Wednesday coincides with the 20th anniversary of the landmark study showing that second-hand smoke was also a killer.

On Jan. 17, 1981, Professor Takeshi Hirayama published the first solid evidence showing that tobacco smoke could cause lung cancer in the non-smoking wives of Japanese smokers. Initially, the scientific establishment and governments reacted cautiously to these findings, and set out to confirm the findings with further study.

The evidence quickly mounted. Five years later, the United States surgeon-general had concluded that "involuntary smoking is a cause of disease, including lung cancer, in healthy non-smokers." Within a decade, studies had also shown that second-hand smoke caused heart disease and was responsible for many forms of childhood

illness.

In this past year, Health Canada scientists have pointed to second-hand smoke as a possible cause of breast cancer. The science is in and the message is loud and clear: All exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke is hazardous and should be eliminated.

As the evidence grew, so did the public health measures. Public authorities have acted on this ever-strengthening scientific evidence to limit exposure to second-hand smoke. Twenty years ago, smoke-free public places, trains, buses, airplanes and workplaces were the exception rather than the rule. Now the reverse is true, and most, but not all, Canadians have some protection from second-hand smoke in public places and workplaces.

There remain, however, millions of Canadians who are exposed to second-hand smoke every day. Health Canada estimates that each year second-hand smoke causes more than 300 lung cancer deaths and 800 heart disease deaths. Added to these are the more than 100 children who die from the effects of their parents' smoking.

Some would say that Hirayama's paper alone presented strong enough evidence to ban smoking in all public places in 1981. All public health workers would agree that the evidence was most certainly strong enough to justify such action by the time of the surgeon-general's report on the subject in 1986.

So why, in the year 2001, do smokers still expose their families to smoke? Why are provincial and municipal governments across Canada still stymied in their efforts to provide protection to the workers who are most exposed to this known health hazard -- those who toil in bars and restaurants?

The answer is that there is a joker in the pack -- the tobacco industry. Newly released tobacco industry documents show the determination with which they have fought restrictions on smoking, and have steadfastly diminished public awareness of the dangers of cigarette smoke.

The tobacco companies identified early the risks they faced if the public became aware of how dangerous other people's smoke could be. As early as 1978, even before Hirayama's paper was published, a report prepared for the tobacco industry identified the second-hand smoking issue as "the most dangerous development to the viability of the tobacco industry that has yet occurred." The major multinational companies, including those operating in Canada, joined forces to set up a global disinformation campaign to challenge science and to influence public opinion.

The documents show how Canada's McGill University was exploited in one of many tactics used by the companies to subvert science. In 1989, the companies sponsored a scientific symposium on environmental tobacco smoke at McGill, stacked the meeting with scientists and pseudo-scientists known to favour industry positions, and published the results in a

serious-looking book that they then provided free of charge to libraries, politicians and journalists.

A decade later, they collaborated in a massive public relations campaign to discredit a study on passive smoking published by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), a sister agency of the World Health Organization. Before the study was published, they had arranged for front-page stories around the globe providing a misleading "spin" on the scientific results. Documents show that the companies planned to spend (and probably did spend) three times more to discredit the study than IARC spent to actually conduct it.

The tobacco companies can often buy support from other business agencies. It was recently revealed that from 1997 to 2000, the Canadian Tobacco Manufacturers' Council had given the Hotel Association of Canada \$3.2 million to operate the Courtesy of Choice campaign -- a campaign designed to ensure that workers and patrons in bars and restaurants would continue to be exposed to second-hand smoke, a known health hazard.

For over 20 years, all the credible scientific evidence has spoken to the importance of banning smoking in workplaces and homes. As early as 1986, enough was known about the subject for the U.S. surgeon-general to have concluded: "The simple separation of smokers and non-smokers within the same air space may reduce, but does not eliminate, the exposure of non-smokers to environmental tobacco smoke." The international authorities that set standards for occupational health exposure and ventilation standards agree -- banning smoking is the only way to protect health.

Several Canadian municipalities, including Vancouver, have already moved to make all public places smoke-free, and more are preparing to take this important step. More and more parents are recognizing the importance of raising their children in smoke-free homes.

Professor Takeshi Hirayama, now gone to his reward, would smile and approve. So too might the Japanese wives whose early deaths signalled the dangers of second-hand smoke.

Dr. Houston is professor emeritus at the University of Saskatchewan.
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