THE TREATMENT OF FLUE-CURED PHILIPPINE TOBACCO WITH AMMONIA

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SUMMARY

Following indications that ammonia treatment of tobacco appeared to lead to a reduced degree of irritation in the smoke, it was suggested by Mr. Gilliam that it might be useful to treat inexpensive tobaccos which cannot readily be used due to their irritant characteristics. Philippine flue-cured tobacco was suggested as a specific example which, when treated, might be suitable for incorporation into some types of blended cigarettes.

A sample of this tobacco has been made into cigarettes and treated with ammonia vapour. The changes in the tobacco and cigarette smoke are very similar to those found previously together with a large increase in the proportion of extractable nicotine and the virtual elimination of formaldehyde.

The R. & D.E. taste and flavour working party was unanimous in finding that ammonia treatment reduced the degree of irritation in the smoke, and preliminary smoke tests at Millbank confirmed this observation. However, an undesirable "off-taste" is associated with the cigarettes made entirely from the ammonia-treated tobacco, but it is possible that this "off-taste" may not be detectable if a proportion of the treated tobacco is incorporated into an inexpensive blended cigarette. This question needs to be answered before further work is done.