

Please reply to:

Dr. R.E. Thornton,
British American Tobacco Co. Ltd.,
Research & Development Centre,
Regent's Park Road,
Southampton, SO9 1PE.

RET/DM/46D

1st August, 1986

Mr. B. Simpson,
Tobacco Advisory Council,
Glen House,
Stag Place,
London,
SW1E 5AG.

Dear Brian,

Within B.A.T. we have discussed the events relating to the premature leaking of Lee's paper on passive smoking and the actions taken by T.A.C. I would be less than honest if I did not write to you about the concern felt within this company. I am also writing because Peter Lee has another study approaching completion and we must establish an optimum strategy with regard to this paper.

First, it was probably inadvisable to draw attention at such an early stage to a study that had been financed by the Industry. By doing so, T.A.C. may have succeeded in converting what might have been accepted as an un-biased objective study into something which will be regarded and referred to as "tainted" by the anti-smoking brigade.

Secondly, the study is suggestive rather than definitive. The end of the summary says:

"From all the available evidence, it appears that any effect of passive smoke on risk of any of the major diseases that have been associated with active smoking is at most small, and may not exist at all."

The results are actually consistent with any of the following:

- (a) Passive Smoking having a + VE effect
- (b) " " " " - VE effect
- (c) " " " " no effect

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This of course is typical of all epidemiological studies in this area but constrains what can be reasonably said about them.

Of course, we believe that T.A.C. should take a firm position on this issue, but it is necessary to consider both scientific and public affairs aspects of specific issues as they arise. If time is short this could be in discussion with such company members as are readily available, rather than waiting for committee meetings.

I have written because we feel that passive smoking is sufficiently important to require the optimum strategy, and I would obviously be very happy to discuss the matter further with you. Unfortunately, this probably cannot be until mid September, although I have made arrangements to see Mr. Lincoln in Millbank on August 26th to discuss passive smoking.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,



R.E. THORNTON

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