AD WATCH

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Just when they thought no one was watching...Ad Watch

Each edition of *Tobacco Control* will feature a special section reporting new developments in tobacco advertising and promotion. Ad Watch will publish examples of advertising, sponsorship, and promotion from around the world that show:

- Double standards in advertising practice (themes or scenes voluntarily restricted by tobacco companies in some countries but flagrantly used in others)
- Appeals to new markets such as children and women
- New examples of brand stretching
- Misleading claims
- Industry gaffes and examples of foot-inmouth disease (see our first example from India)

• Pernicious examples of casting tobacco images of unsurpassed affluence in contexts of dire poverty.

Please send original examples (not photocopies) of such material to Simon Chapman, deputy editor, at the address given on the inside front cover. When possible the originals should be accompanied by information on the source or location of the advertisement, the name and address of the tobacco company concerned, and the company's relationship (if any) to tobacco transnationals. Any interesting industry inhouse memoranda or material about cigarette marketing plans, developmental research, and focus-group results that may have fallen off the back of a fax in your direction are also of interest to *Tobacco Control*.

Official! Industry admits smoking causes disease

Is this advertisement the shape of things to come? Are wider cracks in the industry's international denial of the harm caused by smoking starting to appear? The Indian tobacco company, GTC Industries Ltd, ran this full page advertisement in the Times of India on 14 May 1991. According to the Maxwell Consumer Report of 30 October 1990, GTC held 14 % of the massive Indian cigarette market in 1989. Adopting the voice of an authority, the advertisement addresses the smoking reader with some astonishingly frank admissions about smoking: "[your] habit became an addiction by the mid-'20s"; smoking will be "adding to your health troubles"; and "statistics reveal that your lungs would now be stained with nicotine, your phlegm thick and tar coated." Acknowledging that "common sense tells you the best option today is to quit smoking," it goes on to urge that the "second best option" is to switch to Legend, which has 12 mg of tar compared with the Indian king size average of 21 mg. Legend promises to lower "the highly toxic carbon monoxide intake. Thereby reducing the risk of developing lung cancer." Perhaps the industry's epidemiologists are on to something new? Readers are invited to send for a free booklet "on the ills of smoking" (GTC Industries Ltd, LTLN Division, 8 E, Vandhna Building, Tolstoy Marg, New Delhi-110 001, India).

The most explicit reference to the toxic properties of cigarettes we had seen previously was R J Reynolds's Premier advertising campaign in which its marketing people came up with "cleaner" smoke and the copy talked of Premier reducing "controversial compounds" in tobacco smoke. Against this euphemistic standard, GTC in India has really let the cat out of the bag. – SIMON CHAPMAN

