Holding aloft the Olympic smoke

The decision of the International Olympics Committee (IOC), in collaboration with UNESCO and the World Health Organisation, to declare the 1996 Olympic Games smoke-free did not deter marketing executives handling the Peter Stuyvesant brand in Malaysia. In open defiance of the decision, they sewed up a deal to sponsor broadcasts of the games from Atlanta, US, back to Malaysia. Malaysian health advocates did their best to block the arrangement, lobbying the IOC during the two months run-up to the games, urging it to withdraw broadcasting rights from Peter Stuyvesant. The IOC duly protested to the head of Radio Television Malaysia that no tobacco company trademark should be associated with the Olympic games, and that Peter Stuyvesant's advertising campaign falsely implied that the cigarette brand was a sponsor of the games. However, no action resulted and health advocates were especially disappointed by the IOC's failure to have Peter Stuyvesant's broadcasting rights withdrawn.—DS

Respect for consumers

A touching story of tobacco company thoughtfulness reaches us from Romania. RJ Reynolds has added a health warning to the packs of cigarettes it sells there even though they are not required by law. The warning, which appears in small print on the side of the pack, translates as: "Medical warning: giving up smoking now considerably reduces the risk to your health". RJR reportedly explained that it had added the warning "as a token of respect for Romanian consumers".—DS

Shaming Big Tobacco's friends in California

Anti-smoking activists in California proved the efficacy of a paid-media advocacy campaign in May, when Governor Pete Wilson bowed to mounting political pressure and restored funding to anti-tobacco edu-

cation and research programmes. The funding had been awarded under the tobacco tax initiative known as Proposition 99, approved by voters in 1988. The measure, which has been under attack by the tobacco industry's well-funded supporters in the California legislature ever since its inception, raised California's cigarette tax by 25 cents per pack, and earmarked five cents per pack for tobacco education, and one cent for tobacco research. Wilson, with the help of the California legislature and the California Medical Association, siphoned off the anti-smoking funds and earmarked them for an unassailable cause—healthcare for the poor, despite the fact that 70% of the tax was already devoted to the same cause.

The restoration of funding followed a year-long media campaign against Wilson launched by Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights (ANR), a national lobbying organisation based in Berkeley, California. The campaign began in July 1995, with a radio advertisement exposing Governor Wilson's ties to the tobacco industry—ties made glaringly apparent when Governor Wilson named Craig Fuller, senior vice president at Philip Morris (PM), as his campaign manager in his failed bid for the American presidency. It was the perfect opportunity to let the public know about the unholy alliance between California's Governor Wilson and the tobacco industry.

The radio spot followed Wilson's presidential campaign across the United States, and slammed Wilson both for his continued assaults on Proposition 99, and for his association with PM's Craig Fuller. Radio listeners heard a cowboy-style voice, over background theme music straight from the Old West: "Seems like it's always the way—yuh chase off the bad guys, and first thing yuh know, they come sneakin' back. Like that Philip Morris gang." The spot concluded, "Yuh think Pete Wilson's running for president—or just wants to be the next Marlboro Man?" Besides the radio air time, ANR also paid for a print advertisement in the nationwide daily newspaper *USA Today*, giving a telephone number readers could call to hear the recorded advertisement.

Julia Carol, executive director of ANR, comments, "Because we timed the ads to coincide with the Wilson campaign's multiple announcements of his entering the race (he officially entered three times, once on national television, once in Iowa, and once again in New York), his campaign completely overestimated the reach of the spots. "He thought we were

everywhere—in fact, we spent less than \$5000. We just bought the time wisely, and sent out a media alert with every series of radio spots we'd run. The paid media was a catalyst for getting free media."

The distinctive spot generated much media attention. The *Wall Street Journal* ran a front-page article about it in September 1995, proclaiming, "Anti-tobacco crusaders dog Pete Wilson's presidential campaign." A month after an embarrassed Wilson dropped out of the presidential race, the commercial was still being talked about in forums such as the trade magazine *Advertising Age*. And, best of all, the spot impressed an anonymous donor to ANR, whose gift made possible the second phase of the paid advertising campaign.

The next step in the battle took aim at a slightly wider target, bringing the California Medical Association (CMA) into the fray. The CMA had provided cover for Wilson's diversion of anti-tobacco money into indigent healthcare, forming a peculiar alliance between physicians and the tobacco industry. Outraged, ANR ran an advertisement in the newspaper of Sacramento, California's capital city, where Governor Wilson could not miss it. This time the American Heart Association (AHA) also signed the advertisement. Designed by ANR board member Leo McElroy, it nominated Wilson, along with Steve Thompson, the CMA's lobbyist, to a "Tobacco Industry Hall of Fame" (figure). Below their pictures and short accompanying text outlining their misdeeds on behalf of Big Tobacco, the advertisement asked readers who believed "these Tobacco Industry Heroes belong in a Hall of Shame instead" to call the governor's office and "Tell him to enforce the law we passed", and call the CMA to say it had let Steve Thompson make it a pawn of the tobacco industry.

The third-of-a-page advertisement caused a giant uproar among California physicians and public health advocates. Says Julia Carol, "We pointed fingers. We named names. And we had the American Heart Association with us. This was news." The advertisement was widely quoted in newspapers across California, and was reprinted in its entirety as part of a feature story in the nationally circulated news magazine *Physician's Weekly*. Although the targets of the advertisement denied ties to the tobacco industry, the advertisement won accolades from former US Surgeon General Dr C Everett Koop, and caught the attention of others who noticed that the AHA was willing

Nominated* for the TOBACCO INDUSTRY HALL OF FAME

Pete Wilson
Governor

Refuses to fully fund California's tobacco education and research programs, defying court rulings and the mandate of the voters who passed Prop. 99.

Steve Thompson
California Medical Association

Tobacco industry cheered when he led CMA's raid on tobacco education dollars. Former top aide to Willie Brown (largest recipient of tobacco \$\$ in the history of the California legislature).

If you believe these
Tobacco Industry Heroes
Belong in a **HALL OF SHAME** instead:

Call:

Governor's office: (916) 445-2841

Tell him to enforce the law we passed.

California Medical Association: (415) 882-5100

Tell them Steve Thompson made them a pawn of the tobacco industry.

* Nominated by the American Heart Association and
Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights, who paid for this ad.

and the AHA. This \$250 000 grant to "educate the public about the status and importance of Proposition 99 programs" allowed the highly effective paid media campaign to continue, using the services of the Public Media Center, a well-respected social marketing firm. The first of a two-part series of advertisements urged the CMA's membership to reverse the organisation's stand and support restoration of anti-tobacco funding. It was signed by prominent physicians, including Dr Koop. The second in the series came after the CMA's House of Delegates had adopted a "new" position, voting to support full funding for Proposition 99's tobacco education and research programmes, but remaining willing to take diverted funds for direct medical services if that was all the legislature would provide. Under the headline "Has the California Medical Association sworn off tobacco?", it outlined the problem facing the CMA and challenged it to cease its "attacks on life-saving Prop 99".

The perfect subject for the next advertisement—an interoffice memorandum on Philip Morris letterhead, most likely written by PM lobbyist James W Dyer (figure), found its way to ANR. It said: "Wilson is only sending back about 16K of the 100K he collected... You will also be pleased to know that Pete is still 'pro-tobacco'."

After the contents of the memorandum had been publicised in a press release, a print advertisement was designed featuring the entire text of the leaked memo under the headline, "Is this why Governor Pete Wilson is gutting Proposition 99 anti-tobacco education & research programs?" This advertisement appeared only four times, but news of the memorandum spawned front-page headlines in newspapers across California, also receiving national coverage.

Each of the advertisements included coupons for readers to tell the Governor and/or the CMA that they wanted the right thing done for Proposition 99. The public was being given information, and a way to help out. In addition, the advertisements and media coverage generated letters to the editor and commentaries on radio shows.

Soon, talk in the state legislature changed from that of repeating past diversions, to that of interfering with the content of the programmes. The day after PM announced its plans to tell children that they were too young to smoke (a message designed to fail), Pete Wilson and the California legislature began to consider rewording the re-authorization of the

An advertisement from the 30 January 1996 issue of the Sacramento (California) Bee, sponsored by Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights and the American Heart Association.

to fight hard to preserve the integrity of Proposition 99. Roman Bowser, chief executive officer of the AHA of California, says, "I was growing very weary of the actions that we and other health organizations had taken to try to protect the integrity of Prop 99 programs. It was time for a more hard-hitting approach. Also, I thought that the behavior of the governor and

the California Medical Association was so despicable that it needed to be aired publicly."

A campaign that had started out as one small advocacy group and a few radio spots was gathering momentum. The California Wellness Foundation responded positively to a grant proposal submitted by ANR's sister organisation, the ANR Foundation,

TO: Buffy

DATE: 4/24/90

FROM: Jim

SUBJECT: Pete Wilson

Wilson is only sending about 16K of the 100K he collected. This 16K includes checks he received from either a tobacco company or anyone working directly for a tobacco company, i.e., Hamish Maxwell, Mrs. Ehud, Bill Murray.

Apparently, he has also done this with other "controversial" industries such as lumber, chemical, and others. The decision to do this was Wilson's alone, and in the response to a wave of negative campaigning in California that not only attacks the candidates, but those who give to them as well.

You will be pleased to know that Pete called Hamish to explain that he was doing this to protect Hamish as well as himself. You will also be pleased to know that Pete is still "pro-tobacco".

An internal Philip Morris memorandum made available to Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights (ANR). According to an ANR advertisement, "Buffy" and "Jim" are most likely: Kathy M "Buffy" Linehan, who works overseas for Philip Morris; and James W Dyer, the company's former lobbyist, who is now staff director for the US House of Representatives' Appropriations Committee (the two worked together in the same office in 1990). Those mentioned in the first paragraph are: Hamish Maxwell, former chief executive officer of Philip Morris and now chairman of the executive committee; Mrs Ehud, wife of Ehud Houminer, chief executive officer of Philip Morris USA; and Bill Murray, former president of the company.

Proposition 99 bill to force the programmes to have a youth-only focus. The AHA and ANR Foundation were not to be stopped short. Their next advertisement charged Pete Wilson with playing into the hands of tobacco industry strategists, under the headline "The tobacco industry knows that the best way to get kids hooked on cigarettes is to say they're for 'Adults Only.' Why is Pete Wilson using tax dollars to help them?"

The advertisement quoted from tobacco industry marketing documents, showing how 'Kids & Smoking', the purported anti-smoking campaign developed by PM and endorsed by Governor Wilson, actually paralleled tobacco industry strategies for encouraging children to smoke. Just as Wilson was being hammered by this last advertisement, he suddenly "found" enough money to restore some of the purloined funds to

anti-tobacco education and research programmes, which he proposed to use immediately to reduce youth consumption of tobacco. The next advertisement helped clinch the deal. Headed "Where there's smoke, there's tobacco—there's a politician taking money from the tobacco industry," it listed the top 20 recipients of tobacco industry campaign contributions in the California legislature and highlighted the latest attempts to weaken Proposition 99 in the legislature.

The legislature passed, and Governor Wilson signed into law, full funding for Proposition 99 education and research work. However, funding was only restored for one year, leaving the door open for future raids on tobacco control funds. And pro-tobacco forces in the state government are trying to water down any anti-smoking media campaigns or local programmes.

"My feelings about the campaign are extremely positive", says Roman Bowser of the AHA. "I liked taking action as opposed to sitting around and debating who's going to be on which committee. In the final analysis, I think it's that approach which was largely responsible for the success of the campaign." The ANR Foundation and the AHA have become effective watchdogs over Proposition 99, along with other public health organisations. They plan to continue using the techniques they developed to convince California politicians and officials that it does not pay to get caught in bed with Big Tobacco.

REBECCA SHERMAN
Boston, Massachusetts, USA