

NEWS ANALYSIS

All articles written by David Simpson unless otherwise attributed. Ideas and items for News Analysis should be sent to David Simpson at the address given on the inside front cover.

Australia: smoking “K . . . s”

Philip Morris (PM) chief Geoffrey Bible, an Australian resident in the USA, wrote to the incoming chief executive officer of PM Australia, David Davies, in March 1993 “there is a lot of nervousness on the food side at our including them [Kraft] publicly as part of the corporate body when we are dealing with contentious issues. Kraft is the manufacturer of one of the household darlings of Australia, namely Vegemite [a black, yeast based spread]. Every Australian is born with a jar of Vegemite in his/her hand and would never believe that it is owned by a US company. Kraft Australia is not anxious that a lot of noise be made about this...”¹

In March this year, Kraft Australia got very anxious indeed. Australian folk hero entrepreneur and air balloon adventurer Dick Smith launched a new brand of peanut butter, with a sales pitch emphasising that the product was made in Australia and that all profits would stay in the country. He prepared a television advertisement where, in one hand, he held jars of Kraft peanut butter, and in the other, a pack of Philip Morris’s biggest selling Australian brand (overall and with children), Peter Jackson. Smith selected a pack with the prominent health warning “Smoking Kills” on the top. He said to the camera “So when you buy these [the peanut butter] you are supporting a company which kills our kids. But we’re fighting back. It’s with our own peanut butter. It has fantastic quality and taste. And the wealth stays here, giving our children and grandchildren a future.”

All television advertisements in Australia have to be cleared through the television industry’s Federation of Australian Television Stations

(FACTS). FACTS told Smith that he must have the Peter Jackson pack “pixelated” out so it could not be identified, and the word “kills” bleeped out. Smith agreed under great public protest, generating widespread news coverage from news programmes rushing to editorialise on the stupidity of the pack saying that smoking kills, but Smith not being allowed to utter the profanity about a particular brand.

In Australia, four letter words beginning with “f” are bleeped out when used in television material screened before 9 pm. So when my 17 year old son saw the advert on television, he asked me “So, is Dick Smith saying that cigarettes f . . . our kids?” Precisely.

SIMON CHAPMAN

¹ Bible G. Inter-office correspondence to David Davies March 3, 1993. http://www.pmdocs.com/PDF/2047896065A_6071.PDF

Uganda: athletes fight BAT’s abuse of sports

BAT must be concerned that its sponsorship of sport in Uganda has been attracting a rising chorus of criticism.

Starting with its leading brand, which bears the unsubtle name Sportsman, BAT’s policy on top level sport sometimes seems akin to ownership. But while sports journalists might usually be among the first to blow the whistle, or at least question the highly inappropriate association between cigarettes and sport, BAT has found a simple solution—sponsoring the well organised Ugandan Sports Press Association (USPA). For 10 years, USPA has taken BAT’s money, and in that time, few voices critical of tobacco have been heard among its membership. Some are prepared to speak privately about their disapproval, but not on the record.

Kenneth Matovu, USPA’s general secretary and its journalist of the year for the last two years, was asked in a recent interview why he had not written an article analysing tobacco sponsorship of sport in Uganda. Appar-

ently deeply troubled by the issue, his reply was simple: “I can’t be quoted. No comment.” Journalists in other fields, however, are well aware of the contradictions. Joachim Buwembo, editor of the *Sunday Vision* and president of the Ugandan Newspaper Editors and Proprietors Association (UNEPA), has said: “USPA is the most active media association. UNEPA commends them for the great job they have done over the years. But we would be happier if they downplayed the identity of their tobacco sponsor or, better still, got another sponsor.”

Another distinguished journalist and editor of the *Monitor*, Charles Onyango Obbo, told an interviewer: “There is an element of cowardice in the attitude of the sports journalists. It is not because their newspapers would not run critical articles on tobacco sponsorship of sport—I would run them, but I just don’t receive them.” The explanation for this, he said, lay with what he called “club relations”—journalists being reluctant to offend the sponsor of their club. So the key pressure not to write anti-tobacco articles comes from a journalist’s



Beatrice Ayikoru, Assistant General Secretary of the Ugandan Amateur Athletics Federation, who still holds the women’s national marathon record.



Grace Birungi, 26, sprinter turned middle distance runner, is the mother of two small children yet has stayed in the sport, making her a much admired role model.

peers, rather than directly from the tobacco lobby, an illuminating evaluation of the effectiveness of BAT's sponsorship. Other leading sports figures have also begun speaking out. Major General Francis Nyangweso, president of the Ugandan Olympic Committee (UOC), and David Agong, the president of the Ugandan Amateur Boxing Federation, both recently emphasised their opposition to tobacco sponsorship of sport.

The highlight of USPA's year is the annual Sportsman Gala, when it traditionally crowns its "Sportsman of the Year". This year, the rally driver Charles Muhangi was awarded the title, with athlete Grace Birungi and boxer Mohammed Kizito runners up. The regulations of the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) (rule 18.3) prohibit tobacco advertising at athletics events, and a logical interpretation in relation to the USPA Gala would mean Grace Birungi being asked not to attend the ceremony.

This point is well appreciated by Beatrice Ayikoru, the much respected Assistant General Secretary of the Ugandan Amateur Athletics Federation (UAAF), senior member of the Ugandan Olympic Committee and a former athletics star—she still holds the women's national marathon record. Grace Birungi, 26, used to be a sprinter, but recently converted to middle distance (800 m), in which event she last year won a bronze medal at the All African Games in South Africa. Unusually for a woman athlete, she has two small children, yet has remained in top level athletics. She is thus a particularly powerful female role model, a point no doubt not lost on BAT's marketing

department. In a country where few women smoke, the importance to BAT of trying to get her to a much publicised tobacco promotion cannot be overstated.

Bangladesh: voyage of disdain sunk without trace

The story so far: BAT's the *John Player Gold Leaf*, a sailing boat bearing the name of a cigarette brand, having sailed from London on a "voyage of discovery" (otherwise known as a massive and cynical cigarette promotion, showing utter disdain for the health of people in some of the world's poorest countries), failed to dock at one of its Sri Lankan destinations following demonstrations there by health advocates (see *Tobacco Control* 2000;9:9–10), and turned northwest for Bangladesh. But here, too, the sponsors were in for a big surprise.

In June, health advocates in Bangladesh were alarmed to see advertising for the "voyage of discovery", BAT's huge multinational promotional campaign for its John Player Gold Leaf cigarette brand. A development group, Working for a Better Bangladesh, realising that this campaign was too big for any one organisation to tackle alone, called a meeting of organisations known to work in tobacco control. The National Non-Smokers' Forum attended, and the two groups agreed that a coalition of anti-tobacco groups be formed to address the issue. In August and September, more groups came forward and attended meetings to discuss what to do about the voyage, and possible collaboration in other areas of tobacco control. Outrage at the advertising campaign was universal, perhaps matched only by a sense of impotence in dealing with the multinational tobacco company, which in 1996 bought the controlling share of the former Bangladesh Tobacco monopoly, Bangladesh Tobacco Company, and is now the biggest taxpayer in Bangladesh.

As the months progressed and voyage adverts on billboards, in newspapers, and at points of sale for tobacco multiplied, about 15 organisations came together to protest against it. With this surge of interest came the Bangladesh Anti-Tobacco Alliance (BATA), an informal coalition of health, antidrug, tobacco control, and women's groups, including the Bangladesh Cancer Society, the National Anti-Drug Federation of NGOs, the Consumers' Association



Syria: narguileh makes a comeback. Smoking narguileh (hubble bubble), a habit formerly confined mostly to older Syrian men (top), has recently started to attract wider usage, including at women's gatherings, and among teenagers (bottom).

of Bangladesh, and the long established tobacco control organisation ADHUNIK.

In October, BATA held a press conference denouncing the voyage as an attempt to find customers in poor countries to replace those who are giving up smoking in the wealthy ones. Bangladesh, as one of the 20 poorest countries in the world, is a particularly inappropriate target for the predatory tactics of tobacco companies. At the time of the voyage, the price of Gold Leaf regular was 47 taka, about US\$1. The average per capita income for Bangladesh is only about US\$230 per annum.

Things heated up in November when *Bhorer Kagoj*, the only national newspaper that voluntarily refuses to publish tobacco adverts (see *Tobacco Control* 1998;7:228–9), convened another meeting. Tactics to counter the voyage were discussed, and Tania Amir, a lawyer donating her professional services to the cause, suggested filing a writ petition to the court, to prevent the boat from docking at its intended destination, the port of Chittagong. While she did not expect the petition to be successful, she explained that the alliance could at least test the opinion of the high court on tobacco advertising. (Bangladesh had a presidential decree banning tobacco advertising in 1990, but the parliament never turned it into law, so it remained frozen.)

BAT's by now infamous boat docked in Chittagong on 21 November, amid protests and "sinking boat" posters, and the writ petition was filed the next day (the delay was caused by

antigovernment strikes). BAT held an event celebrating the boat's arrival, at which the mayor of Chittagong, among others, welcomed it to Bangladesh, explaining that while smoking was bad for health, he wished to support the country's economy. However, ticket sales for concerts and other events were repeatedly postponed, as BAT was aware that the events might be banned.

To the delight of the health community at home and abroad, the high court responded favourably to the petition, banning all further promotional activities around the voyage, declaring it illegal based on the 1990 law (unfortunately, the law did not seem to extend to other forms of tobacco advertising). As a result of the decision, the concerts and other events planned around the voyage were cancelled, and the associated newspaper advertisements that had been appearing every day were

stopped. The boat sailed away quietly a few days later.

The victory was by no means total. Billboards and display cases remained in place. Bangladesh Television (BTV), which does not otherwise show tobacco advertisements (they are banned on electronic media), repeatedly aired adverts for the voyage. The victory may have generated rancour against the health movement, as some young people in Chittagong expressed disappointment at the concerts being cancelled.

But the fight was not over. Tania Amir appeared in court repeatedly, along with the lawyer representing ADHUNIK. On 7 February, in response to writs filed by BATA and ADHUNIK, the high court reiterated that the voyage was illegal, and further declared that the government should ban the production and trade of tobacco. Although such a law would

clearly be unfeasible, the high court ruling did contain many workable measures that BATA has since been pursuing, starting with making the warnings on packs and billboards large enough for people to see, and then banning tobacco advertising and smoking in public places.

BATA realised that its work had only just begun, and made plans to expand, once it had become a legal body, and to recruit many more organisations to its ranks. A new wing has been created to address issues related to the health and economic effects of active and passive tobacco use among women. BATA is drafting model legislation for Bangladesh, in response to the high court's decision. It also planned a series of events around the country throughout May, to educate and inform the public about the dangers of tobacco and about industry practices, so that the public will support the growing anti-tobacco movement. In a country where 80% of people are Muslim, a religion that views tobacco as haram (illicit under the teachings of the Koran), BATA anticipates strong public support for its work.

While BATA gains from the tobacco control experience of some of the larger non-governmental organisations among its members, the involvement of a wide range of groups, bringing their own experience, strengths, and contacts, has been critical to its success so far. There is still a long way to go before any genuine victory against BAT, and tobacco in general, can be declared. However, with strong backing from the high court, and the establishment of an active alliance against tobacco, in place of the previous situation of scattered groups working on their own, one thing is clear: a real tobacco control movement is alive and well in Bangladesh.

DEBRA EFROYMSON
Regional Advisor, PATH Canada,
Dhaka-1205, Bangladesh
pathCan@citechco.net



South African B&H/Cancer & Emphysema campaign: Cars belonging to Ken Shepherd, Tobacco Control Centre, bearing the logo Cancer & Emphysema, which create a stir wherever they go. They are reported to remind some people of a popular cigarette brand, which makes them controversial items to park near a genuine promotion for the brand.

USA: the art of simple dying

What problems cigarette makers have in the USA these days! The modern American woman aspires to many fine ideals: to be in charge of her own life, stay looking young and beautiful as long as possible, keep fit and healthy, smell fragrant, be a good parent, and have enough money to enjoy life to the full. Smoking removes control through addiction, prematurely ages and wrinkles the skin, destroys fitness

and can cause debilitating and fatal diseases, makes smokers smell, sets an appalling example to children, and involves repeatedly spending money that could otherwise be used for, well, living life to the full. So how on earth can cigarette companies reassure women who smoke, and make those who have not yet started, think it is part of a normal, desirable lifestyle?

One way, it seems, is to give women their own magazine, cleverly mixing all the most enduring female aspirations and interests with pervasive imagery portraying smoking as a normal, rational activity, an integral part of the perceived ideal lifestyle of American women in the year 2000. Brown & Williamson, BAT's north American subsidiary, has done just that: it is funding a magazine misleadingly called *The Art of Simple Living*, that is apparently being sent, unsolicited, to women who subscribe to selfhelp and health and fitness publications.

Redolent of the American dream of happy married life, motherhood, and apple pie (the 21st century version), typical articles include "How to unclutter your emotional life", "Bird watching—a family affair", and even "Fitness loves company". Seen in their true context, some are sentimental to the point of nausea, outside the spectrum of even the cruellest satirist's palette, such as "Parent talk: wheel life episodes—a dad watches his girls grow up". Another fine example could have been tailored for those who lose a family member from tobacco: "Writing simple, touching notes for every occasion".

Cigarette advertisements abound—in one issue, all but two of the adverts are for cigarettes. There are competitions such as "Win a vacation in paradise", adverts for trinkets—"Express your own unique style with the Misty Rainbow Collection"—and not forgetting to flatter the intellect of readers, "The thinking person's crossword puzzle", part of a Carlton advert. And bowing to ever increasing hostile public reaction to passive smoking, we learn that "Superslim Capri means less smoke for those around you".

The publisher's statement says the magazine "is edited for a select audience of modern women who are interested in personal and spiritual growth, as well as in fulfilling their responsibilities to other people". So that's all right then. And financial support? This, the publishers admit, "is provided by the B&W Tobacco Corporation, which does not control editorial content. It is published for adult women". Despite the dis-

claimer, there are obvious links between much of the content and the kinds of concerns that women have, and the issues that are bound up with their smoking. And like some cigarette adverts, many of the articles counter women's concerns about smoking, such as those about fitness or parenting. There does not appear to be any way to subscribe to this publication, and even better news is that anyone who is sent it can ask to be removed from the "select Simple Living mailing list".

Japan: streets unsafe as machines prey on children

Tobacco control advocates concerned with youth access issues should dread the negative utopia where underage smokers purchase cigarettes almost anytime and anywhere. Sadly, such a utopia exists in Japan where over 500 000 cigarette vending machines generate over 40% of the total sales of cigarettes (1997 figures).

Although most shopkeepers in Japan will willingly sell tobacco products directly to minors, they do not need to. Just outside the ubiquitous convenience stores and supermarkets, on virtually every urban street corner, and even at unattended locations on rural highways, tobacco vending machines give young people unlimited opportunity to buy tobacco products with no one watching.

This unrestricted access brings predictable results. The legal minimum age for the purchase of tobacco in Japan is 20 years. However, survey statistics published by the Japanese

Ministry of Health last November indicate high rates of underage smoking via several indicators. Most notably, 19% of 15 to 20 year old men, and 4.3% of 15 to 20 year old women, identified themselves as smokers. Moreover, although the survey avoided counting smokers younger than 15 years old, among all smokers in Japan, roughly 8% of men and 6% of women said they started to smoke before they were 15 years old. Overall, 42% of all male smokers and 35% of all female smokers reported becoming habitual smokers before their 20th birthdays.

Not surprisingly, vending machines have long been a point of contention relating to youth access in Japan. In 1996, the tobacco industry announced voluntary measures to shut down outdoor cigarette vending machines between 11 pm and 5 am. Announced as a measure to limit youth access, tobacco industry promoters were merely blowing smoke in the faces of tobacco control advocates.

One guesses that the late night shutdown was designed primarily to help retailers reduce vandalism, because it could not possibly have been a bona fide youth access remedy. Having no need to sneak out for their purchases, most of Japan's underage smokers were fast asleep during the early morning hours, not out wandering the streets.

Statistics make the story obvious. Japan's Tobacco Problems Information Centre estimates that minors consumed approximately three billion packs of cigarettes in 1996. This translates to roughly eight million packs obtained by minors each day. If late night vending machine operations



Cigarette vending machines on the streets of cities in Japan, like these ones seen in Kobe last November, make access easy for children.

were young people's primary access point to obtain tobacco products, one would certainly expect the streets to have been much busier after hours.

Ironically, Japan prides itself on being the world's first nation to legally prohibit underage smoking in 1900. But that law gets no attention from law enforcement officials or prosecuting authorities. Between 1991 and 1996, public prosecutors received an average of only five cases of reported violations per year; every case closed without indictment or punishment.

A global ban on vending machines can be included in the forthcoming Framework Convention on tobacco control. Japan's accession to such a prohibition would be welcome. However, many readers will remember that the World Health Organization first recommended national prohibition of cigarette vending machines in 1975. Since that time, the number of tobacco vending machines in Japan has nearly doubled. One factor may be Japan's low crime rates, which generally reduce losses from vandalism for vending machine operators. But Japan's streets cannot be regarded as safe while deadly addictive products are virtually handed to its children on every corner.

MARK A LEVIN

*William S Richardson School of Law
University of Hawaii at Mānoa, USA
levin@hawaii.edu*

Kazakhstan: PM's "PR department" ignores tobacco

When Philip Morris (PM) signed up former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher as a part time consultant on a three year contract reportedly worth US\$2 million, one of her first tasks was to travel to Kazakhstan, to help persuade its leaders to sell PM a major stake in the state tobacco company. The minister for agriculture proposed selling off only 40% of the company, but President Nazarbayev overruled him and PM got total control over the former state tobacco factory.

Since then, PM's influence has, if anything, become even more powerful, and some journalists, having no doubt learned during the country's recent history to take a cynical look behind the official line, refer to the Kazakhstan government as "the public relations department of Philip Morris". Most outrageous of its achievements, many believe, was when the government decided to designate a day of memory to honour victims of mass hunger in the 1930s, when about half of the population died. It could have chosen any day of the year, but the one selected from the 365 available was May 31. Not surprisingly, since 1996, World No

Tobacco Day has been totally ignored in Kazakhstan. Health advocates, convinced this was not by chance, see it as a classic piece of tobacco industry hypocrisy to use victims of hunger to forget about victims of tobacco.

Representatives of PM have direct contact with President Nazarbayev and he has openly helped them to solve tax and customs problems. When smuggled cigarettes produced in the USA were captured at the airport, the names of the companies involved were not disclosed. Robert May, PM's representative in Almaty, estimated that the state budget loses US\$1.3 million each year from smuggling, and promised rewards for customs officers. When the speaker of the Kazakh parliament called for an increase in tobacco taxes last year (excise tax is extremely low, less than a third of the rate in the Ukraine), the only result was a significant increase in import duties on tobacco imported from Russia, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

There is a great deal of tobacco advertising on television, and streets are overwhelmed by billboards featuring the Marlboro man, together with some "prevention" messages, in which PM appeals to underage smokers to "make the right choice". In the government's draft "Health of the Nation" programme, however, tobacco is ignored.

KONSTANTIN KRASOVSKY
*ADIC-Ukraine
adic@info.kiev.ua*



India: who's boss in the new world order? Look who's boss now. This advert for a new brand launched by Godfrey Phillips, a Philip Morris subsidiary, portrays a young Indian film director at work on a film shoot. The members of his crew are westerners, and the advert appears to exploit national pride in India's internationally successful movie industry. The cigarette makers said the setting of the advert, an adventurous and challenging shoot on water, fitted with the core brand values of daring dynamism with a spirit of outdoor adventure.

Tobacco's Gulf war against health

No country is too small to escape the attentions of multinational tobacco companies, especially if they have special political or cultural influence. Recent experience shows that even in the comparatively small, albeit oil rich countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the industry is trying to forestall serious action with child "education" campaigns, and to buy political favours with gifts to worthy charitable organisations. Underneath the intended gloss of responsibility and generosity, however, lie the familiar stains of lobbying and propaganda efforts every bit as sinister as those found in the companies' home countries, as shown by internal documents released under US litigation settlements.

Earlier this year, the Qatar Handicapped Educational Centre received a Philip Morris (PM) "grant for charitable institutions" in appreciation of its support for handicapped

people in Qatar, becoming only the second Gulf charitable institution to receive one of these grants. PM says its grant scheme aims to honour institutions that care about handicapped and elderly people in the GCC states. It has not specified whether institutions looking after people with disabilities caused by smoking are eligible to apply.

Meanwhile, a brochure distributed in Oman by the industry's Middle East Tobacco Association (META) to retailers, full of industry language affirming that "smoking is an adult choice", ended with the assertion, "Supported by the Department of Health Education and Information". META, a coalition of companies including PM, BAT, and Japan Tobacco International, claimed the scheme was launched in 1998 with full governmental approval, but on receiving a strong demand for its removal a year later, agreed to drop any mention of the ministry of health in future educational materials. META's response could not resist the repetition of the very essence of the industry's cynical and opportunistic

line on youth education: that whatever disagreements there might be with health experts, "the issue of juvenile smoking is one where there is total accord".

Instructive background information on both types of activity described above can be found in PM's draft corporate affairs plan dated 25 November 1987. Boasting that PM and the industry are "positively impacting the government decisions of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE [United Arab Emirates] through the creative use of market specific studies, position papers, [and] well briefed distributors who lobby media owners and consultants", the plan detailed some of the strategies for continued success. These included cooperation with Rothmans and Gallaher to try to prevent a GCC consensus on tax harmonisation and, interestingly, the need to continue to support "our UAE distributor and his business partner, the finance minister, with arguments and studies".

Fighting further emission reductions and disclosure requirements, working closely with Kuwaiti media

owners to fight the proposals of the minister of health, the need to use organisations supported through sports sponsorships to "publicise the benefits", and strengthening the GCC chapters of the International Advertisers Association, were also spelt out.

Perhaps most sinister, however, were the plans to "[r]ecruit a consultant who can help us monitor and influence the Alexandria based WHO office which helps prepare GCC health plans", and to "[w]ork to develop a system by which Philip Morris can measure trends on the issue of smoking and Islam. Identify Islamic religious leaders who oppose interpretations of the Quran which would ban the use of tobacco and encourage support for these leaders".

Since then, fortunately, WHO's position and infrastructure on tobacco control has been significantly strengthened, and there are also signs of progress in the involvement of religious leaders in support of health. Countries in the Gulf region are relatively free from concerns about employment in the tobacco sector, and their wealth can help guard against undue influence from tobacco money. However, as is clear from current activities and past plans, tobacco companies have no intention of letting health policy take its course in the region, and health advocates will have to fight every inch of the way.

The big disappointment: USA weak on convention

President Clinton is known to be strongly against tobacco, but it remains unclear whether his government will actively support the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). At the first meeting of the working group on the FCTC in Geneva in October 1999, the well prepared US delegation was only in favour of addressing non-compliance with FCTC requirements by consultations and diplomatic means, not by binding mechanisms. It seemed that the American delegation could only accept what was already in place in the USA, or what did not need to be ratified by the Senate. A total ban on advertising was certainly not acceptable for "constitutional" reasons.

The attitude of the American delegation at the WHO consultative technical conference on the FCTC in New Delhi from 7 to 9 January 2000



USA: Virginia Slims find your voice campaign. In what appears to be an appeal to back to roots sentiments, this advert portraying a woman in Africa is thought to be aimed at US African American women. It contrasts with cigarette advertising in African countries where western, especially American, models are often featured.

was even worse. The aim of this meeting was to obtain a developing country perspective towards the negotiation of the WHO framework convention with participants from 50 developing countries. The draft resolution of the conference was discussed in the working groups and did not call for a total ban on advertising but mentioned, “deploring all direct advertising, marketing, promotion, sponsorship, and other practices by the tobacco industry aimed at encouraging the use of tobacco”. The American delegates in two working groups asked to add “advertising . . . aimed at encouraging the use of tobacco *by children and young adults*”.

According to the American delegation, the text without their suggested addition could imply a total ban on tobacco advertising, which was unacceptable to their government. In my working group there was no agreement to accept this addition, but I was

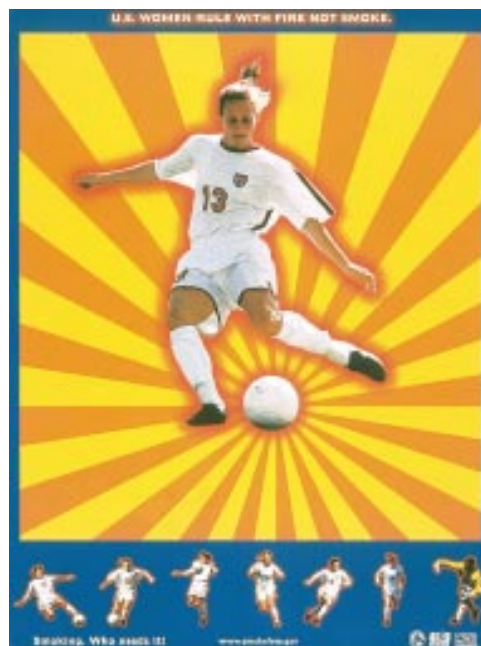
surprised that the addition was finally included in the final declaration. When the chairman of the meeting asked in the final plenary session whether everybody could agree with the final declaration, I asked for the floor and proposed to add one word—“especially”—to the declaration, as follows: “encouraging the use of tobacco, especially by children and young adults”. My main justification was that advertising is not only aimed at youngsters or young adults. The promotion of light cigarettes, for example, has kept many middle aged people smoking who otherwise could have stopped. Even the US surgeon general’s report of 1998 admits that advertising might increase tobacco consumption by encouraging adults to take up smoking or undermining existing smokers’ motivation to give up.

The addition of the word “especially” was, however, not acceptable to

the American delegation, and after some discussion it was decided to keep the declaration as it was. My feeling was that the American delegation had been overreacting. I do not see the link between a consideration in a consultative technical conference resolution and the automatic obligation for all countries to ban all tobacco advertising. But, even more worrying, it seems that the most powerful country in the world, and the home country of the world’s largest international cigarette producer, may not fully support an international solution for an international problem. A bitter disappointment for health can only mean big satisfaction for the tobacco industry in its global war against health.

LUK JOOSSENS

Consultant,
International Union Against Cancer,
Brussels
Joosens@globalink.org



This poster for the US women’s soccer team highlights the fact that all the players are non-smokers, regularly lending their celebrity status to help the fight against smoking among young American women.