

Tobacco Outreach Meeting: Industry Whistleblowers

Roosevelt Room

9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m., Friday, July 18, 1997

Meeting requested by Ron Klain.

Briefing prepared by Toby Donenfeld and Jerry Mande.

EVENT

You, Secretary Shalala and Bruce Reed will participate in a closed press meeting with former-scientists/whistleblowers from tobacco companies to discuss the variety of research they conducted on the following topics: addictiveness of nicotine, effects and the manipulation of nicotine, the development of "reduced risk" cigarettes and how the companies tried to suppress some information and stifle development. *(Please see attached bios for specific information on the research conducted by each person).*

Each of the four attendees made an important contribution to the FDA's understanding the role of nicotine in cigarettes, which eventually led to the FDA rule on youth smoking, released in 1996.

This is one in a series of outreach meetings which Bruce Reed and Donna Shalala are hosting as part of the Administration review of the tobacco settlement.

LOGISTICS (As of this writing, subject to change)

- You will be briefed in your West Wing Office at 9:25 a.m.
- You will proceed to the Roosevelt Room.
- You will make brief opening remarks and invite the attendees to make brief remarks.
- You will have the opportunity to ask questions and you will close the meeting.
- Following the meeting, Donna Shalala, Bruce Reed and the other participants will go out to the stakeout and make brief remarks to the press.

PARTICIPANTS

You

Secretary Shalala

Bruce Reed

Jeffrey Wigand (formerly with Brown and Williamson)

Who is
the
"you"?

Victor DeNoble (formerly with Philip Morris)
Paul Mele (formerly with Philip Morris)
Ian Uydess (formerly with Philip Morris)

YOUR ROLE/CONTRIBUTION

This meeting provides you with the opportunity to hear first-hand from former tobacco industry scientists on what research was being conducted by the tobacco companies on nicotine addiction and manipulation and the development of "reduced risk" cigarettes. The participants may be able to provide insight into what type of research has been completed in the past and may be continuing today.

PROGRAM NOTES

- We believe that the CEOs of the major tobacco companies are meeting on Friday in New York to discuss a strategy related to settlement.
- In the last two weeks, Secretary Shalala and Bruce Reed have been holding meetings with several groups to discuss the proposed settlement. Those meetings were with: Drs. Koop and Kessler (you attended), Attorneys General, public health groups, lawyers for the tobacco companies, tobacco farmers/growers with Governor Jim Hunt and a meeting with the Senate Democratic task-force on tobacco.

ATTACHMENTS

- Bios on meeting attendees.
- Your talking points.
- Suggested questions for you to ask.
- Two-page summary of the tobacco settlement.

TALKING POINTS FOR TOBACCO MEETING

- Thank you for being here today. We realize, that in many ways you are four heroes in the tobacco wars. Each of you stepped forward, in the face of considerable personal risk, to tell your stories and set the record straight. At a critical time, you made an important contribution to FDA's understanding of the role of nicotine in the design of cigarettes, which helped lead to the announcement by the President in 1996 of FDA's historic rule on youth smoking. I would like to acknowledge your courage and to thank you for being here today.
- The FDA rule, the President's courage and the work of the Attorneys General on this settlement negotiation may provide us with another historic opportunity. We may have the opportunity to change tobacco products so its marketplace is not based on addiction, and to make it less hazardous.
- We would appreciate your assistance in helping us understand the research you conducted and the opportunities that the proposed settlement might provide us to realize the work you did to develop a non-addictive and less hazardous tobacco product.
- In this review process being led by Secretary Shalala and Bruce Reed, we are trying to understand what is likely to happen absent this settlement and what is likely to happen under the proposed settlement or other tobacco legislation. Other groups have been brought in to provide us with their expertise. We look forward to a productive discussion with you today.

QUESTIONS FOR THE TOBACCO MEETING

1. Could you each briefly describe why you went to work in the tobacco industry and what, as scientists or researchers, you thought you would be able to accomplish?
2. Do any of you believe that this industry has had the capability for some time to manufacture a cigarette with reduced risk to the smoker?

Follow up:

If they had this capability, why have we not seen these products marketed as alternatives to conventional cigarettes?

3. Do any of you believe it is possible to produce a less or non-addictive cigarette that still provides the mood-altering effects many users seek such as stimulation, and sedation, and other effects such as weight loss?

Follow up:

If we put the type of economic muscle proposed in the settlement behind it, how many years should it take to develop such a product?

4. The settlement contains a provision that seems to allow the companies to be able to make "health" claims for "reduced risk" cigarettes. One argument against such claims is that the "reduced risk" products will still be dangerous. What are your views on this?
5. Given the industry's track record, what steps does the federal government need to take to be able to verify that the companies are doing all that can be done to put safer products on the market?
6. One section of the settlement would enable government scientists to gain access to industry research. Do you have any guidance for us in developing that section?

Background Information on Whistle Blowers Attending 7/18/97 Meeting

Jeffrey Wigand

Wigand is the highest-ranking whistle blower to come forward to date. He was Vice President for Research at Brown and Williamson from 1989 to 1993. He has since publicly acknowledged that he spoke to FDA during the agency's investigation. Wigand has intimate knowledge of various ways the tobacco industry manipulates and controls nicotine levels in cigarettes, including the genetic manipulation of tobacco leaf and the chemical manipulation of nicotine delivery in cigarettes. He has spoken publicly about efforts by B&W to stifle the development of safer cigarettes. For his troubles, Wigand has been sued by B&W and been the object of a public relations campaign by the company designed to question his character and credibility. Wigand is currently a high school teacher in Louisville, Kentucky.

Victor DeNoble and Paul Mele

DeNoble and Mele are scientists who worked for Philip Morris in the early 1980's. DeNoble was initially hired to establish and direct a behavioral pharmacology laboratory. Mele was DeNoble's assistant. At PM they demonstrated, for the first time, that laboratory animals would self-administer nicotine by repeatedly pressing levers to get more nicotine. This finding established one of the hallmark properties of addiction, and constituted state-of-the-art research that was years ahead of similar work being done outside the tobacco industry. For their troubles, DeNoble and Mele were fired, their laboratory was shut down, and PM refused to allow them to publish their findings. They told their story to the Waxman subcommittee at a hearing in April 1994. DeNoble is currently employed by the State of Delaware; Mele works at Walter Reed.

Ian Uydess

Uydess put in two stints as a scientist at Philip Morris, from 1977-1981 and from 1982-1989. He worked on research projects designed to develop a safer cigarette. He believes that his work proved that a product that was less carcinogenic could have been produced, but that the company never acted on his findings, claiming that the products had objectionable flavors. He also had first hand knowledge of the extensive research that PM did on nicotine, and how that understanding was applied to product development efforts. He saw how potential products were discarded because the nicotine level was thought to be too low to succeed with smokers. Uydess has described how PM was concerned about how the word "addictive" was being used inside the company and how PM management reviewed memos and notebooks to make sure that so-called "sensitive" terms were not being used. Uydess, until a few months ago, worked as the Training and Safety manager for Pharmaco International in Richmond.