

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

19 September 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR LEON PANETTA
ERSKINE BOWLES
BILLY WEBSTER

CC: JENNIFER O'CONNOR
CHRIS CERF

FROM: HAROLD ICKES *XX*

SUBJECT: TOBACCO COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Attached is a communications strategy that was put together by a working group including Don Baer and White House Communications staff, Ann Lewis, Health and Human Services Communications staff, and others. It lays out a plan to relaunch the President's tobacco initiative. It recommends a number of events for the President's participation.

I recommend that this plan be discussed at the next short term scheduling meeting so that all or parts of it may be integrated into the President's schedule.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 15, 1995

MEMORANDUM TO HAROLD ICKES

FROM: TOBACCO COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

SUBJECT: TOBACCO COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Now that we have a better sense of our legislative and FDA rule strategy, we are forwarding this follow-up communications plan for the President's Tobacco Initiative. These recommendations can be amended to your liking in order to be presented to Leon Panetta and/or the President. Once the plan is approved, we are prepared to submit scheduling requests immediately.

OBJECTIVE

By all accounts, the President's announcement of this initiative was a solid success. A follow-up strategy is imperative in order to continue to get mileage out of his decision, especially since the FDA rule or legislation will not be enacted any time in the near future. Specifically, the purpose of a continued effort on the part of the President and Administration officials should be:

- *To reinforce the President's leadership on this issue.*
- *To continue to present the President as someone who is fighting to protect children.*

[Note: Reinforcing the President's leadership on this issue can take a number of forms. At some point in the future, we will need to determine whether or not conveying this message calls for anti-tobacco industry activity.]

THE PLAN-GENERALLY

Achieving the above objectives calls for doing the following:

- Standing by our tough proposal in the face of watered-down proposed legislation.
- Acting as if the FDA rule is already in effect; in other words, not getting bogged down in technical issues of timing, rule making, etc..
- Developing a plan that "reconnects" the President with the issue as soon as possible as well as other Administration officials. The goal of this activity is to associate the President so closely with the proposal that when others speak out, the President is associated with the initiative and receives credit for it.

THE PLAN-SPECIFICALLY

The President

We propose that the President take part in three events in order to remind the American public of his leadership and commitment on this issue. It is important that the first of these take place relatively soon, with the others not too far behind. The events are:

- **ADVOCATES/OPINION LEADERS EVENT.** The President would invite the newly created Coalition on Smoking or Health to the White House to applaud their formation and intentions. The core group, comprised of the American Heart Association, American Lung Association, and American Cancer Society would be joined by 200 organizations such as the Boys Club, YMCA, PTA, etc. to announce their support for the President's proposal and their plans to mobilize their members to educate the public about it. We can also arrange for the unveiling of the Coalition's paid advertising campaign at this event. This event has both national and regional hooks, and will help to create a sense of urgency for these organizations and the big tasks ahead.
- **CHILDREN'S EVENT.** The President would participate in a discussion with children on the Nickelodeon cable network. Linda Ellerbe's program is the most likely forum. We can also arrange for the unveiling of the Smoke-Free Class of 2000 educational video on this program, a perfect compliment.
- * **PARENTS' EVENT.** Through the PTA or other parent organizations, the President would address or interact with a national audience on the health and future of their children.
- **SMALLER-SCALE, REGIONAL EVENTS:** These events should be considered on a regular basis when the President travels (we recommend once a month). The events provide the President an opportunity to highlight programs, communities' efforts, etc. Some suggestions are: Highlighting communities or schools which have voluntarily created anti-smoking programs for children; Accompanying children in anti-smoking programs to sites of industry advertising geared towards children-- convenience stores, school areas, playgrounds, etc.; and, meeting with convenience store owners who have voluntarily removed displays.

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There are additional ideas for Presidential participation should we choose to pursue them. Some of them include:

- An appearance on SAVED BY THE BELL, an NBC children's program which plans a "No Smoking" episode in December.
- An appearance with Cal Rypkin, reported to be an anti-smoking advocate. (Still being confirmed).
- An address to the American Association of Pediatrics; San Francisco, October 16th, 10,000 pediatricians.

The Other Principals

The Vice President, The First Lady and Mrs. Gore all have a strong interest in participating in this follow-up plan, but need guidance on how much of a priority it should be taking into account their already limited time. Once we have the President's participation firmed-up, we are eager to outline suggestions for the other principals. We envision their participation including:

- Participating in events when they see fit.
- Taking part in appropriate interviews requested by the Press Office when they can.
- Taking advantage of opportunities that do not involve principals' personal time, such as a column for PTA chapters nationwide, or a letter to high school students and their parents in high school newspapers.

The Cabinet

We understand that the Cabinet is also eager for guidance as to where this should fall on their priority list. Certainly HHS and FDA cabinet and sub-cabinet officials should be as active as possible, and we are aware of their extensive plans to be so. As for other Cabinet and sub-cabinet officials, activity is at their and Cabinet Affairs' discretion, although we encourage enough activity to create a steady drumbeat.

LONGER-TERM OPTIONS

In addition to the recommended plan above, a number of opportunities will be available to us on a longer-term basis. We should be prepared to take advantage of them. They are:

- The Coalition on Smoking or Health, our greatest resource, will regularly uncover opportunities which

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will be ripe for our participation. Specifically, the Coalition will identify independent campaigns which we can tap into. These opportunities should be seriously considered as they will often provide the President an occasion to ask the American people for action whether it be through a media or grass roots campaign. These instances will be invaluable resources to us as we get farther along and it becomes increasingly difficult to generate coverage due to a lack of news hook.

- The HHS, FDA and Media Affairs press and communications operations will continue to operate a quick response operation as well as their news analysis activities and recommendations for media participation from the Administration. (These activities are detailed more thoroughly in a separate memo from those offices.)
- There will be an effort to ensure that tobacco-related stories are thoroughly covered by the media. This may entail working with the television networks on story ideas and development, responding to tobacco industry's legal and lobbying efforts, etc. This effort will be undertaken by HHS, FDA, Media Affairs, Communications and the Coalition.

THE RESULT

The Tobacco Industry's actions continue to generate news and media interest around this issue, and will continue to do so. The efforts described above are intended to take advantage of that interest without engaging in the specific industry-based fight while, at the same time, showing the President and his Administration both working to protect children and fulfill a commitment.