

Who Needs Enemies When We Have Friends Like the Marlboro Man?

Arizona Chapter, American Cancer Society, September 27, 1963

Reprinted from the Congressional Record, Proceedings and Debates of the 88th Congress, First Session. October 15, 1963.

My friends, I have here in my hand an envelope. It has all the appearances of an ordinary envelope. It may be empty. It may have no message for this meeting. But suppose I told you that in this envelope was a secret plan to undermine the United States and take the lives of 100,000 or more Americans in the next 12 months. I didn't say a hundred, or a thousand, but 100,000. And I didn't say Chinese; I said Americans. Suppose I told you that this 100,000 figure was only a conservative estimate, that in fact the number of fatalities resulting from this secret plan might exceed a quarter of a million -- say roughly the population of Tucson. Would you be shocked? Would you want to know who had hatched this evil scheme? Would you want to know how to head it off? I'm confident you would.

But let's go a little further. Suppose I told you that the contents of this envelope were already known by persons in the highest places, and that they were doing nothing about it. Suppose I told you that many of your fellow Americans were not only aware of these facts but were coconspirators in the plot. Suppose I told you that most of your fellow Americans were already aware of this evil design, and they didn't really care. Suppose I told you that your own neighbors, and perhaps some people in this very room, would help contribute more than \$7 billion in this same 12-month period to carry out this mass murder. Would you wonder about the sanity of the American people?

My friends, there is such a plan. It may or may not be formulated in specific terms and placed in this envelope. Like a certain Senator a few years back, I'm not going to show it to you. I'll keep you guessing. But I'll tell you this: Formulated or not, conscious or not, deliberate or not, a program is going forward that will take 100,000 or more lives this coming year, and every succeeding year, and up to this point nobody is doing much about it. If Nikita Khrushchev had hatched the scheme, it couldn't be more effective. If Americans had been brainwashed by the Communists, they couldn't care less.

By this time I'm sure you know what I'm talking about. I'm not talking about some Soviet plot, or even some plan of those lunatics in Arlington, Va., the members of the

American Nazi Party. I'm talking about the plan of the American tobacco industry to lure more and more young people to smoke cigarettes, to stimulate more and more adults to smoke more and more packs a day, in the face of mounting scientific evidence showing that the end product of this massive sales effort will be annual casualties from 300 to a thousand percent higher than the much-publicized death toll on America's highways.

Speaking as a parent and a concerned citizen, I might express my reaction to these facts in some such manner as this: Who needs enemies when we have friends like the "Marlboro Man"?

I am speaking to you this evening also as a Member of Congress. I have devoted some study to the problems of tobacco consumption as they relate to cancer, emphysema, heart disorders and other ailments, often fatal in their consequences. I have introduced legislation which may be a first step in the direction of getting at these problems.

Let's look at some of the facts I have come upon in my study:

In 1920 consumption of cigarettes in this country was 750 for each adult American.

In 1961 the American people smoked nearly half a trillion cigarettes, and the average per adult was 4,000.

Medical experts, including your own American Cancer Society, say that three-fourths of all lung cancer cases are caused by cigarette smoking. Among men who smoke two packs a day, more than 25 times as many will die of lung cancer than among those who do not smoke at all. Deaths attributable to lung cancer now total over 36,000 a year in the United States.

The U.S. Public Health Service completed a study in July of last year showing that there is a relationship between cigarette smoking during pregnancy and the occurrence of premature births. Birth weight was found to be inversely proportional to the amount of cigarettes the mother smoked during pregnancy. More startling relationships, such as infant breathing difficulties and other abnormalities, are likely to show up as a result of further studies.

The same U.S. Public Health Service has said that the death rate among persons who have smoked is 32 percent greater than for persons who have never smoked. Among persons who smoke regularly, the ratio of deaths from cancer is approximately 10 times that of nonsmokers. (Let me point out that these statistics apply to any given year of life. I assume that, no matter how many advances we make, the overall death rate is going to continue right around 100 percent.)

The Surgeon General of the U.S. Air Force said last year that there is an ever-increasing link between cigarette smoking and lung cancer, pulmonary diseases, cardiovascular diseases, etc. Because of the seriousness of the evidence now accumulating he announced that the Air Force no longer will permit cigarette companies to make free distribution of cigarettes in Air Force hospitals and flight lunches.

A study published by the Scientific American last year revealed that out of 3,361 deaths among cigarette smokers felled by coronary artery disease, only 1,973 would have died, had they been nonsmokers. That meant that more than 40 percent of the deaths from coronary artery disease in this group were attributable to cigarette smoking. Reflect for a moment on the fact that, nationally, heart disease is our No. 1 killer, taking around a million lives a year, and consider for yourselves whether this percentage might be important.

These are just a few of the facts that are accumulating in regard to the effects of cigarette smoking in this country, and yet what are we doing about them?

I'll tell you one thing that has been done the last few years. The cigarette companies stepped up their advertising. And they set up a so-called Tobacco Industry Research Committee ostensibly to determine and publicize factual reports on the hazards of smoking, but in fact to minimize the importance of scientific findings and to question the truth of scientific findings.

As a parent I have watched this heightened advertising campaign with some alarm, for it has been obvious to me that the cigarette companies were brazenly setting out to lure youngsters in high school and college to their harmful products. I have seen the sensual, alluring appeals using pretty young girls no red-blooded young man could possibly resist. I have seen the pictures of leading sports figures lighting up in the locker room and on the way back to the clubhouse. I have seen my own youngsters watching commercials like this on television, listening to them on radio, and looking at ads like this in magazines and newspapers. How much influence they will have no one can say. But we're all human. We all want to be admired by our peers. We hate being on the outside when other people are having fun. We want to belong. And how does one belong in this day and age? To look at the ads, it seems you have to smoke Kent, or Pall Mall, or-- if you really want to be a man -- Marlboro.

Just to give you an idea of what effect all this advertising has had, let me cite the following facts, reported in a major study published in 1959 in the American Journal of Public Health:

"Of high school students in Portland, Oreg., it was found that by the time they were seniors only 19 percent of the boys and 32 percent of the girls had never smoked. Here is how the progression went on regular smoking among the boys:

	<i>Percent</i>
"Freshman year	15
Sophomore year	25
Junior year	31
Senior year	35"

"Figures on the girls were somewhat lower, but even so by the time they had reached their senior years 26 percent of the girls were, not occasional experimenters, but regular smokers."

I think these figures are shocking, and considering the evidence now coming in on the serious effects bound to occur among many, or even most, of these young people later in life, it is time we started doing something to head off a national catastrophe.

Through the years, since the American Cancer Society began its campaign to acquaint the American public with the dangers of smoking, we have heard a variety of arguments attempting to show that the case had not been made, that the facts weren't in, and that, in all probability, people wouldn't be harmed by continuing to smoke. Let me cite some of the more interesting arguments along these lines.

1. People who are going to get lung cancer have an increased desire to smoke throughout their adult lives. Thus the correlation of high mortality with high cigarette smoking is not significant and can be ignored.
2. Smoking produces cancer only in the lungs of people who are in any case going to get cancer somewhere anyway, and smoking simply determines it will be in the lungs instead of, say, the left ear lobe.
3. Lung cancer affects people who would have died of tuberculosis in former times but who have now survived with lungs susceptible to cancer.
4. Smokers inherit their desire to smoke and with it inherit a susceptibility to some other undiscovered agent that causes lung cancer.
5. Smokers are by their nature more liable to many diseases, including lung cancer, than the "self-protective" minority of nonsmokers.

6. Smokers tend to drink more alcohol than nonsmokers, and it's the booze, and not the cigarettes, that does them in.

Such explanations, of course, are ludicrous, but they're understandable when one considers this important fact: the tobacco industry is a \$7 billion industry. It pays \$3 billion in taxes to various levels of government. It is one of the major users of advertising in all media, adding heavily to the earnings of Madison Avenue agencies, television networks, publications of all kinds, and thousands of local radio and television stations.

I know something about the size of that advertising dollar because I ran up against it early this year. I sent out a questionnaire in which I asked constituents whether they thought we should limit advertising of beer, wine, and tobacco products to hours after children go to bed. Fifty-six percent of my respondents said "yes," and I reported this fact. That's all I did. I didn't even introduce a bill, or say that I was going to introduce a bill. You should have seen the flood of mail and angry telegrams my little question produced. "UDALL, are you out of your cotton-picking mind?" That's the way one radio man addressed me in a hot letter a few days later. One advertising man on the west coast even went so far as to say, in print, that the children of America needed protection from Congressmen like MORRIS K. UDALL.

To be sure, a lot is at stake when we talk about doing something to reduce the hazards of smoking. However, a lot is at stake when we talk about winning the space race, or building antimissile missiles, or probing toward some kind of disarmament. Imagine what would happen to towns like Tucson or Phoenix if this country suddenly stopped building missiles or maintaining bomber and missile squadrons. The economic effect would be tremendous. But I don't think anyone would suggest we should maintain a military machine just to keep dollars flowing into Phoenix and Tucson. The same is true of the prosperity enjoyed by the tobacco industry.

I don't have any ill will for my friends in North Carolina and Kentucky. I want them to have all the prosperity possible. But I don't want them enjoying that prosperity at the expense of the American people, and that is what they are doing now. If a way can be devised to take all the harm out of tobacco, and I hope it can, I will bless their efforts at expanding their industry, and they can run all the ads they want. Until that millenium, however, I think the American people had better do something about the menace in their midst.

Actually, there are a number of changes taking place today in the tobacco and advertising industries. How much good they will do I don't know. Perhaps the most important is the decision, made this summer, to discontinue cigarette advertising in college newspapers around the country. This is a major step. Up until now 40 percent

of all advertising in college newspapers has come from the cigarette companies. That's a big percentage, and it indicates how much importance the cigarette people attached to the college market.

Here is how the college sales director of one cigarette company put it: "Students are tremendously loyal. If you catch them, they'll stick with you like glue because your brand reminds them of their happy college days."

How is that for bringing the issue out into the open?

Last summer I had a young student from the University of Arizona in my office as a congressional intern. In the course of the summer he mentioned that he had a regular job during the school year distributing free cigarettes at college functions. For this he received a regular salary of \$50 per month. He said other companies did the same thing, and one company -- I believe it was Marlboro -- had a contest to see who could bring in the most wrappers. He said all the fraternities assigned quotas to all their pledges -- generally freshmen newly arrived from the innocence of hearth and home -- which they would have to meet each month.

They might just as well have given prizes for the pledges who could infect the most people with cancer per month. It would amount pretty much to the same thing.

But, as I said, the major companies have decided to pull back from their intensive college campaigns, and this is a step in the right direction. Here is another development: The major companies several months ago decided to tone down their appeals to young people to start smoking. They began emphasizing that smoking is an "adult" habit. However, the success of this attempt may be less than overwhelming. I'm sure you have heard this new advertising pitch, now being used on radio.

"Luckies separate the men from the boys -- but not from the girls."

Well, that's fine. It suggests smoking is for men. But it strikes me that that business about "the girls" is going to cancel out all the good qualities of the so-called "adult" appeal. After all, young men are known to have an interest in young girls. And I don't see anything in this copy about "adult girls" or "old girls" or "old ladies." It just says "girls." It just may be that this advertising juggernaut will not be stopped.

There are some changes in advertising, however, and I suppose they're all to the good. We ought to be glad for any change from the all-out grab-the-kids campaign of recent years.

Because of the enormous accumulation of scientific evidence indicating serious effects from cigarette smoking I have wondered for some time what I might do as a Member of Congress to reduce or check the toll being taken every year by tobacco. Then I came across this startling fact:

The Food and Drug Administration controls the nicotine content of foods sold to the public. The FDA permits nicotine to be present as a residue in food only to the extent of 2 parts of nicotine to 1 million parts of food. But what about the nicotine content of cigarettes, some of which gets into the human organism when cigarettes are smoked? There is no regulation affecting this. And what is the nicotine content of the average cigarette? It's not 2 parts in a million; it's 12,000 parts in a million. In other words, cigarettes are permitted to be sold containing 6,000 times as much nicotine as the Food and Drug Administration permits in food products.

When I discovered this fact, I decided the time had come for one concrete step by the Congress, and that was legislation to bring smoking products under our Federal food and drug laws. I prepared such a bill and introduced it last April 30. Since then companion bills have been introduced on the Senate side by Senators CLARK, of Pennsylvania, and MOSS, of Utah. We are awaiting reports from the Food and Drug Administration and the scheduling of committee hearings. I don't expect we will see any progress on our bills this year.

But there is another development which is under way and which may involve the Government in this problem in the next 2 or 3 years. I think it's coming. The development was appointment by the President last year of the President's Advisory Committee on Smoking and Health. That Committee is composed of seven doctors, a chemist, and a statistician, and it has been working steadily for nearly a year. Its report is due before the end of the year. I predict the report will conclude that there is a clear and unquestioned link between cigarette smoking and various diseases, and that subsequently the Committee will recommend specific legislation to reduce those hazards.

In truth, I don't see how this Nation can go on indefinitely ignoring this problem. The evidence is everywhere at hand. Since I introduced my bill I have received letters from leading physicians and medical research people throughout the United States. Their letters have been an education to me.

Not only do these leading medical researchers agree that smoking is linked to cancer and heart disease, but they go on to point to other diseases as well which are very probably caused by or aggravated by smoking.

One of the most informative letters I have received was from Dr. Charles F. Tate, associate professor of medicine at the University of Miami. Dr. Tate asserted in his letter that, unless something is done about the smoking problem in this country, this Nation will be faced with one of the biggest medical catastrophes it has ever known within the next 25 to 30 years.

Dr. Tate said, also, that the increased consumption of cigarettes by youngsters aged 10 to 15 years of age was likely to result in a tremendous increase in disabling emphysema in the years ahead. He pointed out that chest specialists now believe emphysema is caused principally by smoking. And emphysema now ranks as the second highest cause of total physical disability in this country.

This kind of testimony from top medical people has been coming into my office for months. It convinces me all the more of the need for some kind of Federal action to stop the onward march of tobacco consumption in this country.

Are we headed for legislation? I think we are. Whether it will be my food and drug bill or some other kind of legislation I do not know. But the temper of the country is inclined toward some action. Consider these facts:

Recently a contestant on television was asked to rattle off the first word which occurred to her when another word was mentioned. One word given her was "Cigarette." Her immediate response: "Cancer."

A few months ago one of the country's top advertising men, Fairfax Cone, was asked about commercials for beer, wine, and cigarettes on radio and television. He said he thought there ought to be more decent ways of advertising than giving kids the idea that the best athletes light up every chance they get. He said: "Last football season almost any time you turned on a set there was Paul Hornung, the hottest star in football, nice clean-looking kid, puffing away." He also said he hates the pictures of young people in cigarette commercials. "And especially I hate the ones that show the sexy girl lying in clover, with the copy about 'treat you kindly.' It is cheap and degrading." When a top advertising man admits to sins like that, I think we are making a little progress.

In the end, of course, none of us ever really believes anything until the facts are brought home to him personally. I had them brought home to me recently in reading a report published by the Royal College of Physicians on smoking in relation to cancer and other diseases.

Here is what I found out. At my age -- I'm 41 -- there is one chance in 90 that I will die before I am 45. But if I smoked 25 or more cigarettes a day, the odds would be 1

in 23. When I get into the next bracket, over 45, the odds that I will die in the succeeding decade will be 1 in 27. But if I smoked in the same amount, the odds would be 1 in 10. Those are pretty low odds when it's your life that is at stake.

So this is not only a national, it's a personal problem as well for each of us. I know you people are concerned or you wouldn't be here tonight. The problem is making the great American public sufficiently concerned to do something about it.

I think the time is coming when we can do that something, but it's going to take the educational efforts of people like yourselves to do it. I commend you for your part in this enterprise.

If we get hearings on my food and drug bill, or if the President recommends some other legislation following his committee's report, I may have to ask you people to stir up the bushes out here in Arizona and get some support for this legislation. Contrary to what some people think, we don't pass bills back in Washington in a vacuum. Legislation always comes in response to expressed needs of the people. I'm going to depend on many of you here tonight to make the need for anticancer legislation felt in the offices of the Arizona congressional delegation and elsewhere. That's how the job can be done, and it's the only way it will be done.

And now, if there are any smokers present, let me say that I brought along tonight a new product perfected by a friend of mine in New York. It's a tobaccoless cigarette. It tastes pretty awful, and it smells worse. But it doesn't have any nicotine. It's made of lettuce.

Any of you who still want to smoke can see me after the meeting.