




## ASH/ Industry conduct/ Philip Morris and passive smoking


These documents tell a story of how Philip Morris and its lawyers, Covington and Burling invented and orchestrated controversy around passive smoking by infiltrating highly respected science and policy institutions and by buying up scientists.


Many of the documents are original scans and have been recreated using Adobe Portable Document Format so you may need to get the free Adobe 3.0 or later Reader to view these documents. [Get Acrobat Reader](#)

 The first document is a write up by BAT of a meeting held in London in 1988 at which Philip Morris employee Helmut Gaisch set out PM's strategy for recruiting scientists in the UK "to keep the controversy alive" about passive smoking. These scientists would be directed by Philip Morris and their work scrutinised by lawyers. The question remaining was 'what actually happened'. The rest of the documents show that the plan was carried out.

 The second document gives Philip Morris's general strategy on ETS - and shows how seriously they have worked on this. See especially 'communications' and 'legal'. In the latter, there is a reference to 'develop witnesses'. This suggests that the recruitment of scientist was in part to aid PM in legal action they were anticipating on passive smoking - not only to stir up controversy.

 The third document "Proposal for the Organisation of the Whitecoat Project" describes the Whitecoat project and proposes an internal organisation, including a role for lawyers Covington and Burling. Project Whitecoat is the name given to the recruitment of scientists ("whitecoats"). The last page gives an organisation diagram for this - ICIAR Executive (C&B) refers to Covington and Burling, whose London office has responsibility for the project in Europe.

 The fourth document (letter from lawyers Covington and Burling to Philip Morris, January 1988) describes progress on 'witness development' around Europe. Page four describes scientists George Leslie and Francis Roe as 'chomping at the bit' to recruit new scientists to the Witness development programme.

 The fifth document is the most important. It is a 1990 report from Covington and Burling on what the 'Whitecoat Project' - European Consultants Programme - has achieved. This shows how it works: consultants are paid for the work they do, not on a retainer. Activities include:

- involvement as special adviser to a select committee of the House of Commons (see page 8). We understand that this refers to the Environment Committee and Roger Perry of Imperial College.
- infiltration of the Lancet (see page 7)
- infiltration of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC)
- establishing a 'learned society' - Indoor Air International and its journal. The first three presidents of this society were Philip Morris consultants. Many of the society's members did not know the origin of the society, but several of the names mentioned in doc. 1 above were members. (p.5)
- establishing a commercial consulting group ARIA (p.5)
- Providing medical advice to Middle eastern Governments.
- Sending European consultants to set up similar programmes in Asia (p.5)
- Research into factors other than passive smoking that cause lung cancer - keeping pet birds.
- Major conference opened by Portuguese Environment Minister (p.2)
- Numerous unattributed publications (p.6) and conferences (p.1)

This document is a large download (850K) but worth it!

📄 The final document shows the scale of Philip Morris's ambition and arrogance. It intended to create a foundation that would "**become *THE scientific authority on a wide range of human concerns, thus putting itself above WHO, FAO and other organisations who restrict themselves to narrower fields***" (original emphasis) Such a foundation was actually created with open PM support - the Philip Morris Institute (PMI). The PMI deals in issues of high European politics such as security, integration, post-Cold War development etc. We wonder if the eminent people that have written for the PMI Journal knew it was intended to diminish the role of the WHO and UN?