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Tobacco industry attempts to counter the World Bank report *curbing* the epidemic and obstruct the WHO framework convention on tobacco control[☆]

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ABSTRACT

In 1999 the World Bank published a landmark study on the economics of tobacco control, *Curbing the Epidemic: Governments and the Economics of Tobacco Control (CTE)*, which concluded that tobacco control brings unprecedented health benefits without harming economies, threatening the transnational tobacco companies' ability to use economic arguments to dissuade governments from enacting tobacco control policies and supporting the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). We used tobacco industry documents to analyze how tobacco companies worked to discredit *CTE*. They hired public relations firms, had academics critique *CTE*, hired consultants to produce "independent" estimates of the importance of tobacco to national economies, and worked through front groups, particularly the International Tobacco Growers' Association, to question *CTE*'s findings. These efforts failed, and the report remains an authoritative economic analysis of global tobacco control during the ongoing FCTC negotiations. The industry's failure suggests that the World Bank should continue their analytic work on the economics of tobacco control and make tobacco control part of its development agenda.

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Introduction

Tobacco use is the largest preventable cause of disease and death in the world, causing about five million deaths annually, a toll projected to rise to 10 million by the 2020s, 70% of which will be in developing countries (Bettcher et al., 2001). This epidemic is promoted by an industry that has argued that efforts to reduce tobacco use would have dire economic implications, especially in developing countries, and that efforts to regulate the production and

marketing violate international trade laws (Warner, 2000). Because policy-making within the United Nations, including its World Health Organization (WHO), is state-centric, tobacco companies have used these economic arguments to convince member states to obstruct tobacco control policy development.

In 1995, the World Health Assembly, WHO's policy-making body, began developing what became the 2003 WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) (WHO, 2003). WHO Director General Gro Harlem Brundtland made tobacco control a cabinet project, and the FCTC passage one of her two priorities (along with malaria) when she took office in 1998.

When Brundtland took office, the World Bank was developing recommendations on tobacco control. To provide an authoritative review of the economics of tobacco control, researchers in the Bank's Health, Nutrition and Population sector, led by Prahbat Jha, started a study that, in May 1999, resulted in the Bank's publication

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Curbing the Epidemic: Governments and the Economics of Tobacco Control (CTE) (Jha & Chaloupka, 1999). CTE concluded that, with the exception of a very few agrarian countries heavily dependant on tobacco, tobacco control can bring unprecedented health benefits without harming economies.

WHO used *CTE* as a background technical document to provide the economic justification for the FCTC, as did the Framework Convention Alliance (FCA), the organization of civil society organizations that lobbied for a strong FCTC (Mamudu & Glantz, in press). As a financial institution with substantial influence in developing countries¹ (Ruger, 2005), the Bank's publication of *CTE* threatened to undermine the tobacco companies' economic arguments. As a consequence, the companies worked, without success, to discredit *CTE* and to counter its conclusions through a public relations campaign, critiques prepared by paid academics, "independent" economic analyses and front groups (particularly the International Tobacco Growers' Association, ITGA^{2,3}).

Tobacco companies resist tobacco control at all levels of governance (Saloojee & Dagli, 2000; WHO, 2000), whether domestic, (Brandt, 2007; Landman, Ling, & Glantz, 2002; Mandel, Bialous, & Glantz, 2006; Ong & Glantz, 2001; Tsoukalas & Glantz, 2003) regional, (Ashraf, 2002; Barnoya & Glantz, 2002; European Commission, 2004; Gilmore & McKee, 2004; Neuman, Bitton, & Glantz, 2002), or global (Francey & Chapman, 2000; Landman, Cortese, & Glantz, 2008; Muggli & Hurt, 2003; Ong & Glantz, 2000; Satcher, 2001; WHO, 2000; Yach & Bettcher, 2000). The industry worked directly and through surrogates to divert attention from the public health issues raised by tobacco consumption, attempting to reduce budgets for WHO's scientific and policy activities, pitting other UN agencies against WHO, distorting scientific studies, and trying to convince developing countries that tobacco control is a "First World" agenda.

The companies' activities can be understood as transnational corporations' behavior in the world political economy with the instrumental motive of maximizing profit (Charney, 1983; Gilpin, 2001; Keohane & Nye, 1972; Sikkink, 1986; Sklair, 2002). The major tobacco companies – Philip Morris (PM), British American Tobacco (BAT), and Japan Tobacco International (JTI), which together control over 41% of the worldwide tobacco market - are based in developed countries, but operate globally (Davis, Wakefield, Amos, & Gupta, 2007; Mackay, Eriksen, & Shafey, 2006; Sklair, 2002; Yach & Bettcher, 2000). This globalization of the industry, which makes it difficult for a single country to regulate it (Charney, 1983; Lowi, 2001) and the associated tobacco epidemic, stimulated the creation of the FCTC (Bettcher & Subramaniam, 2001; Satcher, 2001; WHO, 2003).

International political and legal action can lead to significant pressure on transnational corporations from domestic laws or political-economic decisions that follow from the development of international norms (Charney, 1983). The tobacco industry is not just an economic entity

but also an organized interest group (Charney, 1983; Grant, Martinelli, & Paterson, 1989; Lowi, 2001; Sklair, 2002) aware of the necessity to promote its interests in the international treaty-making process (Charney, 1983; Lowi, 2001; Malanczuk, 2000). The FCTC negotiation rules made state the only formal participants, with non-state actors (including the tobacco industry) as observers (Mamudu & Glantz, in press). Because the companies could not represent themselves directly in the negotiations, they lobbied delegates during the FCTC negotiations in Geneva and policy-makers at the country level (Charney, 1983; Higgot, 1996; Mamudu & Glantz, in press; Sally, 1996; Strange, 1992; Wilson, 1990).

Having lost the argument on the health effects, the industry focused on the potential-economic implications of the FCTC for developing countries, particularly its alleged negative impact on employment and government revenue. Because the industry selected this frame to oppose the FCTC, it became particularly important for them to undercut *CTE* because it was the key WHO (and FCA) technical background document on these issues. These efforts, however, did not undermine acceptance of *CTE* during the FCTC negotiations and *CTE* has remained an authoritative economic analysis of global tobacco control.

Methods

We used internal tobacco industry documents available at the Legacy Tobacco Documents Library (http://legacy.library. ucsf.edu), the British American Tobacco (BAT) Document Archive (http://bat.library.ucsf.edu) and Tobacco Documents Online (http://tobaccodocuments.org). Between August 2005 and November 2007, we used standard search techniques, beginning with the terms "World Bank report," "Curbing the epidemic," "Economic impact studies," and "economics of tobacco control" to locate documents. We conducted followup searches using Bates numbers near informative documents and names of individuals and organizations identified in the documents. We retrieved over 1000 documents and selected 150 for detailed analysis. (These publicly available documents may not be the complete record of all tobacco industry activities against CTE, which may limit our knowledge of such activities.) We used WHO and World Bank archival documents and Internet search engines to corroborate the tobacco documents.

Results

Shifting the position of the World Bank on tobacco control

The World Bank's mission is to support development and reduce poverty. The Bank has evolved from having no presence in global health to become a major financier of health (Ruger, 2005), exceeding US\$10 billion for health in 2003 (World Bank, 2006).

Until the early 1990s, the Bank supported tobacco growing and manufacturing as part of developing economies' productive base^{4,5} (Ramin, 2006). However, in 1991, the Bank adopted a policy of not supporting tobacco production because of the health consequences of tobacco use^{5–8} (Ramin, 2006). Economic analysis by the Bank at the

¹ References indicated with superscripts can be found, in the online version, at doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2008.09.062.

time also concluded that the "global welfare cost of tobacco projects greatly exceed the gains to producer countries." The Bank issued a Directive to implement the policy in 1992.⁷

In the early 1990s, Howard Barnum, a senior Bank economist provided a new perspective on tobacco in developing countries based on welfare economics.⁹ According to Barnum, unlike other consumption choices, the economic presumption of market efficiency does not apply to smoking because many smokers are not fully aware of tobacco's health dangers and because of tobacco's addictiveness⁹ (Barnum, 1994), particularly because most begin smoking as children. The inevitable conclusion of this economic understanding was that reducing tobacco use would provide net social benefits⁹ (Barnum, 1994). Barnum concluded in a 1994 article that, "The world tobacco market produces an annual global loss of US\$200 billion" (Barnum, 1994). This publication led to a new World Bank analytical framework for the economics of tobacco control. The WHO Tobacco Free Initiative, established in July 1998 to promote tobacco control around the world, quoted the US\$200 billion figure as one rationale for global tobacco control.¹⁰

Throughout the 1990s, the Bank's tobacco team built the foundation for CTE. 11-14 In January 1998, team members presented evidence to Bank President James Wolfensohn on the economics of tobacco control as a reason for the Bank to act. 12 An April 1998 Bank paper, Tobacco Control and Policies in Developing Countries, presented three recommendations: "increase efforts in tobacco control," "provide global knowledge on economic issues of tobacco control," and "work closely with ... WHO and partners." ¹⁴ In April 1998, Jha emailed a discussion paper to the Bank's Health, Nutrition and Population sector board notifying it of the Bank's overall tobacco control recommendations, including tax increases, comprehensive bans on tobacco advertising and promotion, and building tobacco control capacity in developing countries. 11 Among the potential Bank efforts Iha listed were "an analytic report on the economics of tobacco a nd of tobacco control," "partnerships with WHO, UNICEF [United Nations Children's Fund], CDC [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention], and NGOs on tobacco control" and support for Brundtland's efforts. 11 After reviews by policy-makers and academics, the Bank published CTE in 1999 to fill the gap in the literature on tobacco control, setting the stage for additional, more intensive research on the economics of tobacco control in developing countries, the Bank's client base for health investments.

Tobacco companies' response to the World Bank policy shift on tobacco

The transnational tobacco companies closely monitored the Bank's policy shift in the early 1990s and tried to undercut its recommendations through international lobbying on excise tax policy and trade. 1,8,15-17 They prepared "economic impact studies" in an attempt to convince governments that, contrary to the Bank's conclusion, tobacco positively impacted their economies. 1,8,15,16

Philip Morris (PM) used its Worldwide Regulatory Affairs department to monitor the Bank's tobacco control

developments. In February 1992, PM International's European Region Counsel sent a memo, "Anti-cigarette policy." to PM Company's Vice President and Associate General Counsel and PM's International Senior Vice President and General Counsel, notifying them of the Bank's new tobacco policy and PM's efforts to establish contact with the Bank and asking the officials to bring the Bank's new policy to the attention of people in PM in New York. 18 In response, Matt Winokur, PM Director of Worldwide Regulatory Affairs, indicated in a March 1992 memo that it had proven difficult to influence the Bank's policy and that they were working through Arnold and Porter, a Washington, DC, law firm, and an economist familiar with the Bank to find ways to change the situation.¹⁹ Winokur indicated that Wendy Burrell, PM International's Director of Public Affairs and Communications, would continue to monitor Bank activities through the 1990s.^{20,21}

By 1995, BAT had also developed a World Bank/International Monetary Fund (IMF) lobbying program with the intention of expanding its activities in Washington, DC, because of the Bank's growing support for "anti-tobacco lending and trade policy" and its "vocal support for the WHO programmes." 1,22

BAT¹ made a presentation to UK Departments of Trade and Industry, Treasury, and Official Development Assistance in October 1995 in an effort to obtain their assistance in influencing the Bank and IMF on excise tax policies. The Department of Official Development Assistance resisted BAT's effort to obtain official support for their position on the economic impact of tobacco on developing countries before the Bank. In 1996, BAT continued its efforts to obtain UK government support to explain the economic impact of its activities in developing countries to the Bank and IMF because BAT felt that, as a private company, it had limited influence on the Bank. 22,24–31 It appears that BAT managed to make a presentation before the World Bank and IMF. 32

In 1997, BAT allocated £570,000 per year for 1998, 1999 and 2000¹⁶ to lobby influencers within the World Bank, IMF, European Union (EU) and U.S. Trade Representative on excise tax and trade issues and £50,000 for economic impact studies. ^{16,17,33} Peter Wilmott, an attorney at the Prisma Consulting Group, a public affairs firm BAT employed to work on trade-related issues, was in charge of lobbying the World Bank and IMF on trade. ^{16,17,34} Wilmott indicated in a July 1998 report that BAT could take advantage of its position as a UK and EU company to influence the Bank's tobacco policies. ³⁵

Countering the economic arguments in favor of tobacco control in curbing the epidemic

When it became clear in late 1998 that the Bank would release a study on the economics of tobacco control in 1999, the tobacco companies began commissioning critiques using leaked drafts.³⁶ When it became evident in April 1999 that the Bank was going to release *CTE* to coincide with the 52nd World Health Assembly in May, PM and BAT collaborated to make a "call to action" to the International Tobacco Growers' Association (ITGA)^{37,38} to lobby individual governments to delay the start of the FCTC

negotiations using arguments that counter central conclusions of *CTE*^{37,38} and they did.³⁹ These efforts failed; *CTE* was released during the Assembly, which approved starting the FCTC negotiations (WHO, 1999).

PM discussed a public response after *CTE* was released in May 1999. 40.41 On May 18, 1999, Richard Johnson, Manager of Corporate Affairs, Belgium, sent an email to David Kentoff, Counsel for PM at Arnold and Porter, notifying him about the release of *CTE* and acknowledging that *CTE* would be used against tobacco companies and their allies in international forums. 42 Similarly, Winokur sent an email on May 20, 1999, to PM officials in Latin America notifying them of *CTE* and telling them that PM would have *CTE* evaluated by "competent economists" and provide the results for lobbying against *CTE*. 41

On May 17, 1999, Simon Millson, BAT Director of Regulatory Affairs and member of the Consumer and Regulatory Affairs Department (CORA) steering group, sent an email⁴³ to BAT officials around the world with an article by Lorraine Mooney, administrator of the European Science and Environment Forum (ESEF), in the Wall Street Journal Europe attacking CTE as a collusion between the World Bank and WHO against the tobacco industry⁴⁴ and was translated into Spanish most probably by BAT.⁴⁵ On June 30, 1999, Millson sent another email to BAT officials around the world encouraging them to forward Mooney's critique of CTE to ministries of trade, agriculture and finance in their countries⁴⁶ in an effort to show governments that the tobacco companies were not the only organizations alleging flaws in CTE. BAT succeeded in getting Mooney's critique republished in South Africa's Sunday Times.⁴⁷ Meanwhile, by August 31, 1999, BAT had paid ESEF a cumulative amount of £117,788 for consultancy services under its "WHO Project". 34 Mooney's article did not acknowledge that her employer, ESEF, had received these monies from the tobacco industry.

Strategies against curbing the epidemic after it was published

All three major tobacco companies – PM, BAT, and JTI – worked individually and collaboratively to discredit *CTE* (Table 1). Weinberg Group, a Washington, DC, consulting firm that had previously worked with the tobacco industry to oppose smoking restrictions (Barnoya & Glantz, 2002) prepared a critique *CTE* for PM.⁴⁸ The critique⁴⁸ which Weinberg acknowledged was prepared for PM, concluded that *CTE* contained insufficient information to justify its proposals and that governments should not implement them.⁴⁸ Communication among PM officials suggests that they may have influenced the critique because drafts were circulated among PM officials.^{49–51}

PM wanted to illuminate alleged flaws in *CTE* through evaluation by economists, ⁴¹ and as a result a May 27, 1999, critique of CTE probably developed by DRI/McGraw Hill probably for Philip Morris focused on among others the methodological weakness of CTE. ⁵² A July 20, 1999 "Talking Points" on CTE also by DRI/McGraw Hill and probably developed for Philip Morris claimed that, "Rather than presenting a reasoned economic analysis ... [*CTE*] asserts political ideas and contains little factual information. The

methods used by the authors are highly suspect and do not follow the rules and norms of economic analysis...."53 The criticism was based on research by Jane Gravelle, an economist with the Congressional Research Service (which provides research support for the US Congress), and "industry models" developed by DRI/McGraw Hill.⁵³ Information from the Weinberg critique and "Talking Points" was included in a document developed during a BAT/PM meeting on the FCTC in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in October 1999 to discuss the industry's response to CTE. 54 At the meeting, BAT and PM agreed that CTE was an important foundation for the FCTC and agreed to cooperate in lobbying against the FCTC in Latin America.⁵⁴ They agreed on a detailed document (in English and Spanish) criticizing CTE to governments "to prove that the majority of the arguments that will form the basis of the first meeting of the Working Party responsible for drawing up the FCTC of the WHO (Geneva, 25th Oct. 1999) [does] not provide the policy-makers with a solid analysis of the fundamental economic and social facts in the control of tobacco."54 PM and BAT also agreed to work through the National Manufacturers' Associations to undermine CTE as part of the effort to obstruct the FCTC.⁵⁴ BAT distributed the lobbying document to its officials for lobbying stakeholders attending WHO's meeting in Geneva in October 1999.⁵⁴

PM discussed *CTE* at its August 25–26, 1999, FCTC planning meeting.⁵⁵ Dan Martz, Manager of Planning and Programs of PM International, was assigned to "Assemble and Apply Relevant Research and Expertise to Support Our [PM] Positions" with respect to "Independent analysis/ article on World Bank report" and prepare "Economic Impact Studies." Discrediting the *CTE* became an integral part of BAT's global efforts to oppose WHO on the FCTC.⁵⁶ BAT briefed its subsidiaries on both the WHO Tobacco Free Initiative's proposals and the Bank's *CTE* and sent materials for challenging the treaty's legal, economic and political foundations to CORA managers worldwide.⁵⁶

PM and BAT also focused on ensuring that FCTC issues were not raised at international trade venues. ⁵⁵ BAT was concerned that the FCTC might be on the agenda of trade ministers attending the World Trade Organization ministerial meeting in Seattle in 1999 because WHO was trying to recruit organizations like WTO to support the FCTC, so they monitored the Bank at the Seattle meeting. ^{57,58} We do not know whether or not these companies influenced the agenda or outcome of the WTO meeting.

By April 2000, JTI had developed a strategy of combating CTE through disseminating critiques and gathering intelligence on the Bank's tobacco-related activities. An April 2000 email from JTI's International Vice President to "Corporate Affairs Worldwide" noted that the company wanted to "ensure that all our Interlocutors are aware of the scholarly criticisms of the World Bank study...We will continue lobbying and PR efforts where useful, particularly in markets where the World Bank team may have made inroads." JTI retained the Washington, DC, firm International Business-Government Counselors to stay abreast of and challenge the Bank's continued involvement in tobacco issues with the WHO and other UN, international and national agencies. ⁶⁰

Table 1

Tobacco companies' consultants on the curbing the epidemic (CTE)

Philip Morris consultants Before CTE publication

Ingo Walter, Professor of Finance, Corporate Governance and Ethics

at the Stern School of Business, NYU Arnold & Porter, Washington, DC, law firm

After CTE Publication DRI/McGraw Hill

Weinberg Group, Washington, DC, scientific and regulatory consulting firm

Arthur D. Little International, Massachusetts consulting firm

British American tobacco consultants

Before CTE publication

Prisma Consulting Group, Washington, DC, PR firm

SIRES Inc., Montreal, Canada^{83,84}

After Publication of CTE

Professor Deepak Lal, James S. Coleman Professor of International

Development Studies, UCLA

Covington & Burling, Washington, DC, law firm

PriceWaterhouseCoopers, international accounting and

consulting firm

Weber Shandwick Worldwide, UK-based PR firm

Japan tobacco international After CTE publication

International business counsels

International tobacco growers' association consultants

After CTE publication

Hallmark public relations, UK-based PR firm

Reza Daniels, advisory services for economic research

Prepared critique of Howard Barnum, 1994 articles and Draft 4⁶⁵ of *CTE*^{66,128} Advised Philip Morris to develop PR strategy and transnational plan for dealing with tobacco control measures *CTE* proposed⁴²

Draft CTE talking points⁵³ Produced CTE critique⁴⁸

Economic impact study of tobacco for Czech Republic 112

Consultant on trade 17,34

"Consult W Bank Study (Cost Benefit)"34

"Economics of Tobacco Control in Developing Countries"
"Evaluate World Bank Report on Cost Benefit Analysis"
Review the World Bank's economic analysis and
prepare strategy paper on how to respond to it¹²⁹
Preparation of economic impact studies for 10 countries. 117–119

lobby on World Bank/IMF issues^{1,24}
Development of communication of "Economic

Impact Studies" reports for end markets 117–119,130

Monitor World Bank⁶⁰

Organized "Roadshow" in London, Africa, Asia and Latin America to criticize CTE^{95,131}, Arrange for Reza Daniels' CTE critique⁹⁵ Collate information from members for submission to FAO's studies and an updated version of Tobacco in the Developing World¹¹⁰ "Respond robustly to the World Bank report and

nespond robustly to the World Balik reports similar WHO-inspired reports with independent comment and analysis"³ Prepared CTE critique and participation

in the ITGA "Roadshow" 95,96,98

Hiring Academics

PM used academics to critique *CTE*. In May 1999, Ingo Walter, Director of the Global Business Institute at the Stern School of Business at New York University, who had been working with PM on economics issues in tobacco control at least since the 1980s, $^{61-63}$ prepared critiques of Barnum's, 1994 article and CTE^{64} for PM. On May 7, 1999, Walter faxed the critique of Barnum's article to Dan Martz of PM in which he favorably described Draft 4 of CTE^{65} as a "competent piece of work." PM does not appear to have promoted Walter's conclusion.

BAT also used academics to critique *CTE*. BAT's general strategy to counter the FCTC was "to publicize through academics and think tanks, the implications of global governance for world trade and national sovereignty." BAT hired an academic (Deepak Lal) who teamed up with other academics affiliated with the Institute of Economic

Affairs in London and Liberty Institute in New Delhi to critique the CTE..

By December 1999, Lal, Coleman Professor of Economics at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), had been paid £55,526 under BAT's "WTO/World Bank project" to critique "Economics of Tobacco Control in Developing Countries," which probably refers to a 1998 World Bank paper 14 (Table 1), and "Evaluate World Bank report [CTE] on Cost Benefit Analysis." Subsequently, Lal worked with Roger Scruton, a philosopher and novelist living in England, to write *War on Tobacco: At What Costs*" in May 2000, published by the Liberty Institute, 67 criticizing CTE. 68,69 Scruton, a staunch critic of the FCTC, Brundtland and CTE on the argument that tobacco regulations infringe individual rights and national sovereignty, 67,70,71 was receiving US\$6,300 monthly from JTI to place articles favorable to the tobacco industry's points of view in the media. 72

Lal also wrote the preface to *Smoked Out: Anti-Tobacco Activism at the World Bank* by Richard Tren and Hugh High (who had received past industry funding⁷³) of South Africa,⁷⁴ a critique of *CTE* published by the Institute for Economic Affairs⁷⁵ seems to embrace the industry's position.

BAT's Millson urged BAT officials and managers around the world to use the Tren and High critique in meetings with government officials and other bodies. ^{76,77} Millson pointed out that that Tren and High had highlighted inconsistencies and problems with *CTE*'s proposals and asserted that the studies it was based on were conducted in an unprofessional manner. ⁷⁶ The critique also became a key document in BAT's media advocacy against the FCTC. ^{78–82} BAT officials circulating the Tran and High critique around the world did not indicate that BAT has paid the author of the preface, Professor Lal, to work on *CTE* related issues.

Another person who played a significant role in the tobacco companies efforts against *CTE* was Pierre Lemieux, cochairman of Canada's Group for Research Economics and Liberty, who had collaborated with BAT against Bank analyses of tobacco economics since at least the late 1990s. ^{83–86} In 1997, Lemieux collaborated with SIRES Inc. of Montreal, Canada, to critique the Bank's economic analysis of tobacco for BAT. ^{83,84} By August 1999, BAT had paid SIRES Inc. US\$6,250 and £3,865 under its "WTO/World Bank" project (Table 1). ³⁴

There is evidence that suggests that Philip Morris commissioned Lemieux to place articles in the context of action which was being coordinated by the tobacco companies against *CTE*. An April 2000 memo by BAT's CORA Manager for Southern Europe on industry FCTC activities in France indicates that PM "commissioned" Lemieux to write a paper to "start building up arguments against [*CTE*]" and perhaps place articles on his view of *CTE* in the media. ⁸⁷ In January 1999, Lemieux published a critique of the social costs argument for tobacco control that the World Bank policy on tobacco in *The National Post* of Canada, ^{88,89} but it is unclear whether this article was commissioned by the industry as it pre-dates the memo.

The international tobacco growers' association (ITGA)

The ITGA presents itself as representative of tobacco farmers around the world.⁹⁰ As of November 2007, the ITGA's public website did not mention its relationship with PM, BAT and JTI, despite its having been an important front group for the companies in international tobacco control issues for many years^{21,91,92} (WHO, 2000; Yach & Bettcher, 2000). The companies saw the ITGA as the most promising vehicle to discredit *CTE* (Table 1).

In April 1999, before *CTE* was released, Millson emailed BAT CORA managers instructing them to use a BAT analysis⁹³ of "Draft 4"⁶⁵ of *CTE* to contact ITGA members in their countries and help them write local ministries and follow through ITGA's initiative to lobby governments in a globally orchestrated effort to oppose the FCTC.²

In 1999, Hallmark PR, a UK-based public relations firm BAT employed to manage ITGA activities (Must, 2001), developed a £30,000 plan for ITGA for July to December 1999 to respond to "new industry-wide issues," which included the need to

Respond robustly to the World Bank report and similar WHO-inspired reports with independent comment and analysis.... Prepare independent economic responses to key WHO and World Bank publications in order to demonstrate their flaws and partiality in relation to the tobacco crop. Publicize these by briefing documents, academic papers, and a campaign for growers to lobby national governments.³

In May 1999, Hallmark outlined ideas for an ITGA "PR Program for 2000" to oppose the FCTC and claimed "there is no support from honest economists" for the *CTE*. 94

The £220,400 "Grower Public Relations Plan and Budget Proposal for 2000," which approved at a meeting in New York City in October 1999 to undermine *CTE* and weaken governments' support for the FCTC was apparently partly funded by BAT and that there are indications that other tobacco companies may have paid the balance. ⁹⁵ £95,000 of the budget was to "Organise a 'Roadshow' of briefings on the World Bank report and WHO activity in London, Africa, Asia and Latin America [to] get major messages to opinion leaders directly, in a year when FCTC is under intensive development. This will be the major PR action in 2000." There was a review meeting with the growers involving BAT, PM, and JTI in London on September 21, 2000.

Reza Daniels' critique and the "Roadshow"

In late 1999, ITGA commissioned Reza Daniels, 96,97 a managing member of the "Advisory Services for Economic Research" and senior researcher at the Development Policy Research Unit of the University of Cape Town, South Africa, to produce a critique of CTE most probably financed from the grower public relations budget 95,96,98 (Table 1). On February 7, 2000, Hallmark sent a memo to PM, BAT and JTI that ITGA was printing the "independent review" in March 2000 and asked, "to whom externally you would like the ITGA to distribute copies of the report?" 99 On March 6, 2000, ITGA published Daniels' critique of CTE. 100 A subsequent ITGA news release called on governments not to act on CTE policy recommendations until "a fully-inclusive consultation process has taken place – one that involves all those nations that will feel the impacts of the proposals." 101 Neither the press releases nor the report⁹⁸ disclosed that the tobacco companies financed the critique. A "Grower Public Relations Program" in BAT's files reports that Daniels submitted a version of his critique to the Review of African Political Economy, 102 which did not publish it.

With funding from the tobacco companies, ⁹⁶ ITGA embarked on a "Roadshow" between March 4 and 16, 2000, to brief policy-makers in India, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa and Zimbabwe^{97,103} and a "mini-Roadshow" in Argentina and Brazil. ⁹⁶ The Roadshow sought, among other things, to oppose the FCTC, to "review the findings of a published review of the World Bank's Report 'Curbing the Epidemic: The Economics of Tobacco Control' by the Advisory Services for Economic Research [Daniels]." ⁹⁷

Impact of the "Roadshow"

ITGA's report on the Roadshow claimed it had a positive impact on policy-makers. ¹⁰³ One news report on the

Roadshow indicated that Chris Obure, Kenya's Agriculture Minister called on the World Bank and WHO not to implement the proposed FCTC until the views of all stakeholders had been taken into account when he addressed an ITGA meeting in January, 2000. ^{104,105}

The ITGA considered an important outcome of its Roadshow the decision by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) to conduct studies on tobacco in certain economies. 59,96 Following FAO's announcement in March 2000 that it was launching a study on "How government policies toward tobacco impact on the world tobacco economy" and tobacco producers' "access to economically attractive alternatives,"106 ITGA issued a press release claiming that the FAO's decision was in response to Daniels' CTE critique and complained that WHO and its UN allies had not contacted any tobacco farmers' organizations. 107 BAT saw the FAO study as an opportunity to slow the FCTC and worked to influence the study's outcome. 108,109 A BAT Draft Budget for the 2001 Grower Public Relations Program¹¹⁰ for ITGA allocated £30,000 to "Prepare economic and agronomic information for the FAO study into the impact of tobacco control on grower economies" because "FAO study appears to be of major importance to the FCTC content."¹¹⁰

In 2003, FAO published a two-volume report on the importance of tobacco to national economies (FAO, 2003a, 2003b) concluding that, "while it is clearly the case that some people in some countries may suffer, the impact of any moderate contraction in the tobacco market, particularly if it were to occur slowly, might have only a limited impact on most tobacco producing countries" (FAO, 2003b).

Economic studies of individual countries

The preparation of industry-sponsored economic impact studies has been a strategy of the transnational tobacco companies to undermine tobacco control, particularly at the national and local levels (Warner, 2000). PM believed that such economic analysis "could be useful in moderating the WHO Secretariat and in encouraging other affected interests (e.g., growers) to become more engaged in WHO policy development." 111 PM procured economic impact studies in 1999 designed to highlight the benefits of tobacco in up to 20 countries at a total cost of US\$400,000.⁵⁵ PM's economic impact study of tobacco in the Czech Republic¹¹² prepared by Arthur D. Little International, which concluded that tobacco is good for the country's economy because tobacco smokers die early, attracted public criticism. 113 We do not know if PM continued the economic impact studies project after the Czech report.

BAT, which used economic impact studies of tobacco during the 1980s and early 1990s to convince governments of tobacco's economic importance, ^{17,21,114} commissioned the PriceWaterhouseCoopers accounting firm to produce studies of Argentina, Brazil, China, Germany, Hungary, India, Malawi, Malaysia, Russia and Zimbabwe ¹¹⁵ to counterbalance *CTE*. ^{116–118} BAT integrated these studies into its CORA general FCTC plan. ^{117–119} In Malaysia, for example, PriceWaterhouseCoopers made a presentation to

polic-ymakers and other stakeholders on the importance of to bacco. $^{\rm 120}$

Even though both internal BAT documents^{121,122} and BAT's website acknowledged that the reports¹¹⁵ were collaborative work between BAT and PriceWaterhouseCoopers, the reports themselves did not acknowledge that. It seems from a July 5, 2000, BAT CORA meeting that BAT's London headquarters coordinated public relations activities around the reports through Shandwick, a UK-based public relations firm.¹¹⁹

Lobbying World Bank officials

BAT tried to personally approach World Bank President James Wolfensohn in 2000. In preparation for BAT CEO Martin Broughton's attendance at breakfast briefing by Wolfensohn, BAT's Political Affairs Manager sent a memo to Broughton in November 2000 reminding him of the Bank's strong influence in many developing world markets, its anti-tobacco policies and its work with WHO to generate an economic argument that the costs of tobacco to these economies outweighs the benefits and attached points Broughton should raise if he had an opportunity to talk with Wolfensohn.¹²³

Following the briefing, Broughton sent Wolfensohn a letter seeking common ground with the Bank and WHO on tobacco policy.¹²⁴ In January 2001, the Director of the Bank's Health, Nutrition and Population sector responded on Wolfensohn's behalf:

Although there may indeed be some points of commonality, there are also very wide differences between the missions of our two organizations. Our work in the World Bank has a very strong focus on improving the health and lives of the poor people. On the other hand, smoking puts the health and lives of millions of people in the world, particularly in the developing countries at serious risk. This is why the Bank attaches such high priority to tobacco control in developing countries.¹²⁵

JTI also failed to influence the Bank's stand on tobacco, despite many attempts by its consultants to obtain information and influence. 126,127

Discussion

It has been suggested by Assunta and Chapman (2006) and Otanez, Mamudu, and Glantz (in press) that during the FCTC negotiation tobacco companies covertly and overtly worked to undermine and weaken the FCTC through states such as Japan and Malawi respectively. Also, it has been suggested by Carter and Simpson (2002) and Mamudu and Glantz (in press) that tobacco companies tried to weaken civil society support for the FCTC by infiltrating tobacco control organizations to create discord among them. Other research works suggest that tobacco companies used corporate social responsibility programs (Hirschhorn, 2004) such as "youth smoking prevention" (Landman et al, 2002; Mandel et al., 2006; Sebrie & Glantz, 2007), media campaigns, (Metzler, 2001; Szczypaka et al., 2007) and voluntary codes (Pollay, 1994; Richards, Tye, & Fischer,

1996) to gain public credibility, have access to policymakers, and divert attention away from the public health problem caused by tobacco consumption. During the FCTC negotiations, PM, BAT, and JTI collaborated to internationalize these under "project Cerberus," and developed the 2001 International Tobacco Products Marketing Standards to serve as an alternative to the FCTC and undermine global tobacco control (Mamudu, Hammond, & Glantz, 2008). There are numerous published works that suggest that the industry has a history of disinformation through manipulating research (Barnes & Bero, 1996; Bero, 2005; Bero, Glantz, & Hong, 2005; Chapman, 2005; Malone & Bero, 2003; Ong & Glantz, 2000) and generating false controversies on the effects of tobacco use and secondhand smoke (Drope & Chapman, 2001; Glantz, Barnes, Bero, Hanauer, & Slade, 1995; Hirschhorn, 1999; Landman et al., 2008; Ong & Glantz, 2001; WHO, 2000). If the above is true, then the industry's activities to undercut CTE follow this pattern in that the companies rely on economic arguments. The companies rely on economic arguments of potential negative impacts of tobacco regulation on international trade and on national economies to convince governments, primarily in developing countries, against implementation of effective tobacco control measures. In contrast, independent economic analysis of tobacco since the early 1990s (Barnum, 1994) showed that tobacco was a burden on developing countries' economies.

The accumulated scientific evidence on the health dangers of tobacco use and its own economic analysis supporting tobacco control motivated the World Bank to shift its policy on tobacco from supporting tobacco production projects to supporting tobacco control^{6,7} (Ramin, 2006). The new economic paradigm for tobacco and tobacco control within the Bank led to CTE in 1999, which concluded that tobacco control is not only good for health, but also good for the economy. Tobacco companies correctly perceived CTE as a threat because it undermined their ability to use economic arguments to dissuade governments from supporting tobacco control and because of the Bank's global influence, especially on policy-making in developing countries. WHO used CTE as a technical document that provided economic justification for the FCTC and FCA used CTE to lobby national delegates.

Because of their realization of CTE's importance to the FCTC negotiations, the companies worked individually and collaboratively to discredit CTE's key arguments and conclusions to obstruct the FCTC. The industry identified and funded critics who did not disclose their sources of funding, but sought to have the media and policy-makers view all those critiques which supported their position (Bero, 2005; Bero et al., 2005; Landman et al., 2008; Malone & Bero, 2003). The companies also disseminated these critiques when they supported the industry's position. Even though PM hired Ingo Walter to critique CTE, it does not seem to have disseminated his conclusion that it was an innovative work. 64,128 PM did promote the Weinberg critique⁴⁸ that favored PM's position.⁵⁴ Similarly, BAT promoted Tren and High's critique⁷⁴ and economic impact studies PriceWaterhouseCoopers prepared for them, 115 and ITGA promoted the Daniels' critique98 that favored BAT positions.

The companies' activities failed to compromise the value of *CTE* during the FCTC negotiations because *CTE* was not only the product of the World Bank but also, as industry consultant Walter pointed out, it was a "competent piece of work." In addition, the fact that the Bank started to develop its new analytic work on the economics of tobacco and tobacco control in early 1990s gave the Bank's Health, Nutrition and Population sector team the opportunity to present its analytical framework and findings to academics and policy-makers for comments, criticisms and suggestions. By the time *CTE* was published, the ideas it contained had been well vetted.

The failure of the industry to undercut CTE reflects not only CTE's technical quality, but also the fact that the WHO leadership anticipated the industry's effort and was able to counter this effort. It also suggests that it is important for the Bank to continue its analytic work in the economics of tobacco control and support the development of tobacco control policies and programs around the world during the FCTC implementation phase. Tobacco consumption is not only linked to disease, but also to poverty and economic development (United Nations, 2000; Wagstaff & Claeson, 2004). Because the World Bank wields influence around the world, it can integrate tobacco control into the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, the main UN development program to cut poverty in half by 2015 (Magnusson, 2007; UN Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Task Force on Tobacco Control, 2004).

Conclusion

The tobacco companies' activities against *CTE* illustrate the extent to which transnational corporations in the global political economy will go to engage international political and legal processes perceived to be a threat to the realization of their economic motive of profit maximization. These activities are another illustration of the tobacco industry effort to manipulate science and undermine research whose conclusions do not favor the industry. The industry failure to undercut *CTE* suggests that good research work can withstand criticisms from the industry and the importance of the World Bank continuing its analytic work on the economics of tobacco control.

Appendix. Supplementary data

Supplementary references associated with this article are indicated with superscripts and can be found, in the online version, at doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2008.09.062.

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