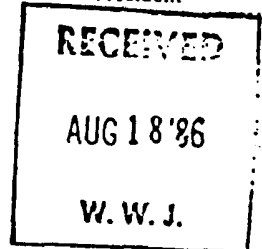


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SAMUEL D. CHILCOTE, JR.
President



August 15, 1986

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Executive Committee
FROM: Samuel D. Chilcote, Jr. *Sam*

GIN
W.W.J.
into R.J. Reynolds
FYI
Rob

As expected, the National Academy of Sciences committee on aircraft cabin air quality Wednesday recommended a ban on smoking on all domestic commercial aircraft.

The report was greeted with much skepticism from the airline industry, organized labor and, in many cases, the news media. These results were achieved in close cooperation with staff at R.J. Reynolds.

As reported previously, Institute staff has been aware for some time that the committee would recommend a smoking ban. Late last week we learned of the committee's plan for a press conference, and took immediate steps to ensure that the report was greeted with sufficient controversy to prevent acceptance by policy makers (e.g., Senator Hatch and the Department of Transportation) at face value.

Our strategy was two-fold. First, to maximize coverage of the industry's position, raising legitimate and necessary questions as to the validity of the report's recommendations. Early intelligence enabled us to proceed with a pre-emptive press conference on August 12, the day before the NAS event, to announce results of R.J. Reynolds' in-flight air quality tests and to reaffirm public support for current regulations.

The second prong of our strategy was to ensure little support for the recommendation among airline management and organized labor.

Both strategies were successful.

Our news conference -- which attracted 25 reporters from all major networks, wire services and newspapers -- enabled us, armed with a summary, to break the news of the report on our terms. The NAS recommendation was, as anticipated, a major news event.

But most news reports were written the day before the report's official release, and before anyone else had seen a copy of the report.

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While some news accounts and headlines were unhelpful, much of the coverage raised serious questions about the N.A.S study.

Airline management and unions -- asked for comment before they had reviewed the report -- also expressed cautious opposition to a ban. Flight attendant unions have, in the past, supported smoking bans. We believe we have succeeded in turning that support to opposition, at least among most of the major unions.

The news value of the story was gone by the time the academy panel held its news conference August 13. Reporters at that conference, many of them the same ones who had attended The Institute's briefing the day before, were obviously skeptical of the NAS recommendation, asking specific questions about in-flight testing, consumer attitudes and other issues raised the previous day. Many noted that the NAS committee admitted to no data and had reached few conclusions about air quality issues other than smoking.

The hostility toward the panel continued into an afternoon briefing for the public, as airlines and unions pressed for answers about ventilation, humidification and radiation concerns.

Coverage of the academy's press conference was limited to a single story (the Washington Post) in the major print media, and follow-up debates between Institute spokesmen and anti-smokers or NAS committee members on morning and evening news-talk shows.

On the other hand, our news conference, breaking the ice, so to speak, and reflecting our views, was covered in all major print and broadcast media. Our press kit was sent to you earlier this week.

We are continuing our efforts with airline management and unions to ensure opposition is communicated to the Department of Transportation and to lawmakers and will report.

I would like to thank R.J. Reynolds for its excellent technical support and congratulate staff involved in this successful venture.

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