

Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers International Union

10401 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, KENSINGTON, MARYLAND 20795 301-933-8600

JOHN DeCONCINI
INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

December 7, 1983

Mr. John J. Sweeney
President
Service Employees Intl. Union
2020 K. St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Brother Sweeney:

As the president of a union which represents some 25,000 workers employed in the tobacco industry, I was particularly concerned to see the article, "Healthy, Wealthy...Research Burns Holes in Smokers' Addiction" in the October/November issue of your newspaper.

I was especially concerned with your mention of workplace smoking restrictions -- a policy question that appears easy to solve but, in reality, could generate some serious inequities for rank and file union members.

As a basic proposition, it is obvious that restrictions on smoking in certain workplaces are entirely appropriate. No reasonable person could argue that many areas in health care facilities -- workplaces in which many of your members are employed -- should be off limits to smoking.

At the same time, attempts to ban smoking from all workplaces open up a whole set of problems that unions can frankly live without.

Forcing employers to set up special areas just for smoking is costly. Introducing the issue of negotiating specific smoking breaks into collective bargaining process would be a nightmare and could well serve to generate unnecessary divisiveness among members in what is already a difficult bargaining environment.

Finally, it is ironic to note that workplace smoking bans do not apply to individuals who work in their own private offices. Thus, while management and high-paid professionals

03737359

can decide for themselves whether and when to smoke, the blue collar and clerical workforce will have this decision imposed on them.

Once again, public policy which sounds perfectly reasonable at first glance strikes a blow for upper-income, white males and leaves the overwhelming majority of women and minorities in the workforce to foot the bill.

For your information, I am enclosing background material on "The Other Side of the Smoking Worker Controversy," which you may find of interest.

With best wishes, I am

Fraternally yours,

John Deconcini
International President

JDeC:bkp
Enclosure

03737360