

MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Lynn Eppard  
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**FROM:** Ogilvy & Mather  
Savarese and Associates

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Following our conversation, we have put together some ideas on how best to follow up on the September rally with a conference early next year. In addition to a preliminary discussion of the conference, we have included some thoughts on pre-conference activities that will help lay the groundwork for the event.

These are simply some preliminary ideas and recommendations for the conference designed to give us a framework for further discussion. Once you have had a chance to review this, we should meet again to talk about some of the ideas.

**CONFERENCE**

As we discussed, a conference on indoor air health hazards in government office buildings would help raise visibility on the issue and, as a result, step up pressure on management. Some preliminary ideas on the direction of the conference include:

Audience: Media, labor, government employees, congressional staff.

Message: Indoor air quality and other health hazards are becoming worse in government office buildings and increasingly threatening workers' health and safety. Measures are needed quickly to correct the problem and thus far management has been unresponsive.

Sponsorship: AFGE District 14, Local 1812 and the National Energy Management Institute (NEMI).

Timing: Late January or early February. Early enough to have an impact on the new Congress but not get lost in the hoopla surrounding the inauguration.

Format:

- One day event lasting from 10-4

- Held in Washington either in a hotel meeting room or possibly in a Hill meeting room.
- Welcome by John Sturdivant
- Panel discussions on the various aspects of the problem -- technical, political, health and labor's role. Possible speakers include:
  - Frank Powell, Director of Engineering at NEMI and an expert in ventilation and indoor air quality.
  - Gray Robertson, Founder of ACVA, the leading indoor air quality analysis firm in the country.
  - Health specialists who are industrial hygienists and toxicologists. This could include Drs. David Weeks and Jack Peterson.
  - Congressional staff involved in IAQ legislation or federal employee issues.
  - AFGE national and local officials.
- Luncheon with a "keynote" speech by a legislator involved in the issue or interested in the welfare of government employees. Based upon their interest in IAQ, Senator George Mitchell or Rep. Joe Kennedy might be possibilities.
- A series of workshops on what participants can and should do, how they can become involved, and what hazards they should look for.

Promotion: There should be promotion prior to the event among invitees and the media to assure a good turnout. Specific promotional activities should include:

- Develop a comprehensive invitation list drawn from the groups we hope to attract to the conference -- labor, congressional staff, targeted government employees, etc.
- Design and distribute an invitation and packet of information regarding the conference and the issues it will address.
- Distribute a press release in advance announcing the conference to the media.

- Develop a press kit to be distributed to local and national media in advance of the conference. In addition to the standard elements, the kit would include findings of research sponsored by AFGE on health hazards and their effects.
- Media from the area will be encouraged to attend and interview participants and attendees. Selecting appropriate union and employee spokespeople should be done in advance and some thought should be given to media training those selected.
- We will attempt to interest C-Span in covering the entire conference.
- Some thought should also be given to videotaping the conference. The tape could be edited and used as part of a video presentation on hazards in the workplace. Such a video could be a valuable resource for the union in its work on this issue.
- A report detailing the proceedings and conclusions of the conference should be produced and widely distributed. Such a report would provide a hook for follow-up media and could also prove a valuable tool with allies in Congress and the labor movement looking for ways to remedy the situation.

#### PRE-CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

The first step toward the conference is to develop more substantive information on the health hazards and their effects. This will give the conference focus and will help us promote it with the media, labor and the Hill.

Existing scientific information should be analyzed and more should be gathered on the hazards in the building and the threat to health. We may be able to help you find someone to work with one of your OSHA officials if it would be helpful. This information combined with existing data and new case studies will give us a package that can be an effective tool in pre-conference promotion and can be a central aspect of the conference.

Although media coverage of the rally was good, you will need to develop additional 'news hooks' to create more coverage. In general, a protest rally is a more attractive media event than a conference so unless there is new information, there may not be much follow-up media interest.

To successfully sell this story, you will need both quantitative and qualitative research. We have discussed a survey of building occupants as a first step toward gathering useful data on the hazards. An immediate next step should be to find someone qualified to develop and conduct such a survey.

The results of surveys you have already conducted will also help. The fact that so many surveys were returned shows a widespread problem.

Individual stories to show the human side of the problem are also needed to augment the quantitative evidence. Although there was much discussion earlier about individual cases, by the time of the rally, this was a weak area. It is crucial that we develop these individual stories if we are to be able to effectively create media interest.

The results of a survey as well as individual case studies may not garner widespread media attention but, they will help us open some important doors. We would use these hooks to set up interviews in advance of the conference with the Federal Times and Mike Causey of the Washington Post, both of whom expressed interest in the issue during the rally. We would also approach others who covered the rally and those who cover government employees for other local print and electronic outlets.

One additional area of attention could be the suburban papers, such as the Journal papers (as well as smaller shopper guides.) While these publications have limited circulation, they do reach a targeted Washington-area audience that included many government employees. They were contacted before the rally and have the previous press materials. The best method to reach these publications will be to offer them individual interviews with union officials and afflicted employees to help them develop in-depth stories.

Another potential avenue of media coverage is a targeted op-ed program. Op-eds focusing on the growing problem of health hazards in government office buildings signed by employees or union officials should be of interest to local publications. Again, the op-eds would have to be timely with discussions of specific problems and hazards.

One of your most effective tools in keeping pressure on management will be to mobilize your membership. This will require continuing communications on the issue with your members and then asking them to perform specific tasks.

Much of the communications aspect probably can be accomplished through existing channels such as your newsletter. You might also consider distributing a special update supplement on the issue to get your membership's attention. In addition, you might want to hold one or more briefings on current activities and concerns for interested members.

If you are able to involve a core group of members, they can participate in a variety of valuable activities including:

- writing letters to the editor of local papers
- calling and writing key legislators
- complaining to Donohoe and GSA
- participating in meetings and seminars on the issue
- offering their stories to the media

These activities will help step up pressure on management and will keep the issue alive for your members.

The campaign will be enhanced if we are able to develop interest and allies on Capitol Hill. There are many methods to bring this issue to the attention to members of Congress:

- letters to their local representatives from some of your membership.
- letters to key committee members (again, this is most effective if the letters come from constituents.)
- submissions in the Congressional Record (you can draft the statements and ask sympathetic members to insert them.)
- meetings with key staff members.

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