

Topic: TAXATION - Trade unions/Revenue allocation  
Title: "Labor condemns tagging tobacco tax for Medicare"  
Source: BC&T News (October, 1984) 6: (10) p.1 (U.S.A.)  
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Document: 1-page article (English; reference T 84/12/2/1)

Three U.S. labour unions\* have written to a government committee to express their opposition to the earmarking of increased alcohol and tobacco excise taxes to fund Medicare\*\*, the article states. The unions submitted their statement to the Health Subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee which was holding hearings on the subject.

The three unions said they opposed the regressive nature of the tax plan, the article continues. They also pointed out that excise taxes were an unstable source of revenue.

A statement issued by the International President of the Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers International Union (BC&T), John DeConcini, noted that alcohol and tobacco are already two of the most highly taxed commodities in the United States. DeConcini added: "There is a limit to the tax burden these industries can face."

Calling Medicare "one of the most important social programs in our nation's history", DeConcini stressed that "it would be neither fair nor wise to finance such essential efforts with unstable revenues provided by excise taxes".

DeConcini added that, as trade unionists, BC&T members would find it "unconscionable" to support excise taxes as they are regressive taxes which disproportionately affect low-income and working people.

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\* The Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers International Union, the AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor/Congress of Industrial Organizations) and the Allied Service Trades Department.

\*\* A public health care programme for the elderly.