

vinced that the recommendations of the Executive Group of our [AMSOC] Committee are sound, and I am glad to transmit them to you herewith.

At this point, then, Hedberg, as chairman of the group which had originated Mohole, regarded the project as a broad and unrestricted two-ship drilling program, a program which seemingly had the endorsement of the National Academy of Sciences. Brown & Root, on the other hand, was working under a contract which directed it to devise a means for drilling to the mantle—and no more. And NSF, as author of the contract, presumably shared this conception, although, in theory, AMSOC was NSF's scientific adviser on the project. Meanwhile, as this confusion of purposes was building up, members of the Senate, egged on by disappointed constituent firms, were blasting away at NSF for the manner in which it had awarded the contract. Clearly, the engineering problems of Mohole were formidable, but they were beginning to pale alongside the organizational and political problems.

—D. S. GREENBERG

*(This is the second in a series on Project Mohole.)*

### **Tobacco Report: PHS Study Group, after 14-Month Survey, Agrees That Smoking Is Indeed Harmful**

The Public Health Service's advisory committee on smoking and health produced its long-awaited report last week, and about the only good news it had to offer was that "cigarette smoking does not appear to cause asthma."

Otherwise, it condemned the cigarette as the cause or an associative element in a variety of misfortunes ranging from lung cancer to fires in the home. And, in conclusion, it stated, "Cigarette smoking is a health hazard of sufficient importance in the United States to warrant appropriate remedial action." The 387-page study, titled *Smoking and Health*, was released by Surgeon General Luther L. Terry with the observation that it is "an excellent report." Terry added that he would favor additional research, but he made it clear that he has no quibble with the report's conclusions. In fact, he acknowledged that he had switched to a pipe.

Just what action may result from the study is not at all clear at this point. The report, according to plan, was no more than a survey of previously conducted research, and contained no recommendations. These will come from a second study which is now being planned by the Public Health Service.

Nevertheless, the emphatic tone of the advisory committee's conclusions does strengthen the case for government action of some sort, particularly by the Federal Trade Commission. The FTC, which has jurisdiction over advertising, several years ago knocked the health claims out of cigarette advertising. It refrained, however, from going beyond that point, on the grounds that it lacked a definitive statement from the PHS to defend its position if the tobacco industry chose to contest its action in court. And it defended this choice on the grounds that it would be better not to try than to risk the possibility that a court decision would provide the industry with a decisive and well-publicized legal victory. Clearly, it now has such a statement, and pressure will be on it to carry through with a long-discussed plan—namely, to label all cigarette packs with a warning to the effect that continued or excessive use may be detrimental to health.

Meanwhile, the tobacco industry has responded to the PHS report with a well-worn call for more "research." In a statement issued shortly after the report's release, George V. Allen, president of the Tobacco Institute, stated in part:

I endorse wholeheartedly and without any reservation Surgeon General Terry's call . . . not for less but for more research by the Public Health Service, the American Medical Association, and other public and private groups of scientists who are seeking the scientific facts we so urgently need.

Allen did not say whether he likewise endorsed Terry's observation that, as a physician, he would advise young people not to start smoking and would advise those who now smoke to recognize the lethal implications of their habit.

On the congressional scene, the tobacco situation is extremely complex. As an \$8-billion-a-year industry that is a key economic interest in some half-dozen southern states, tobacco has demonstrated that it can look after its

own interests on Capitol Hill. (Congress, which has a proclivity for investigating anything, took one stab 6 years ago at looking into the health hazards of tobacco, but before the investigation had gone very far it was quietly dropped.) The release of the report was followed by an announcement by Lister Hill (D-Ala.), who is the Senate's chief benefactor of medical research, that he would confer with Terry on the tobacco report. And Representative Harold D. Cooley (D-N.C.), who is chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, said he would offer a bill to provide \$5 million for research to "accomplish maximum assurances of health in the smoking and enjoyment of tobacco."

Another ingredient in the tobacco picture is the curious role of the American Medical Association. When the PHS committee was established last year, the AMA dropped its own plans for a tobacco study. Last month, however, it announced that it would conduct a "comprehensive program of research on tobacco and health," a move that has led to speculation that the politically sensitive AMA, in its struggles against the administration's medical care proposals, is latching on to tobacco as a way to strengthen friendships with the southern delegations in Congress.

In any case, whatever does result from the report will take place against a background of a seemingly irreversible and almost universal affection for tobacco. The PHS report did not say a thing that has not been said repeatedly over the past half dozen years by the American Cancer Society and other voluntary health organizations. Nevertheless, cigarette sales—with an occasional fluctuation—have continued to rise on a per capita and an absolute basis. And in England, where the government took up arms against tobacco after a devastating report 2 years ago by the Royal College of Physicians, the sales curves are similarly upward.

Incidentally, the advertising industry is yet to respond formally to the report, but early reports are that its inclination is toward increased advertising.

(The report, *Public Health Service Publication 1103*, is available for \$1.25 from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 20402.)

—D.S.G.