

The Tenor of a Question Concerning Tobacco Sales Policy

-- Submitted on July 31, 1982.  
Question No. 20

Mr. Hajime Fukuda, President of the House of Representatives, Japan  
I, Shozo Kusakawa, submit the following tenor of a question on July  
31, 1982.

Shozo Kusakawa

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The Tenor of a Question Concerning Tobacco Sales Policy

As a result of U.S.-Japanese negotiations on tobacco trade, the government is planning to allow stepped-up advertisement activities for imported cigarettes and increase the number of retailers handling imported tobacco.

On the other hand, the government is stepping up the sales of new brands of domestically-produced tobacco and a shrewd advertising drive for them through various media in order to increase the revenues from the Japan Tobacco and Salt Public Corporation (JTS).

I have repeatedly pointed out at meetings of related committees that such government moves will result in an increase in the number of smokers among youngsters and women who are most

susceptible to the harmful effects of smoking and therefore injure their health. But since the government has not responded to my contention, I submit the following inquiry on the occasion of the sale of a new brand of tobacco.

1. It has been said that "Nova," a new brand of tobacco to be put on sale by the JTS on August 1 is aimed at the younger generation and was developed with the aim of increasing the number of women smokers, and the public relations office of the JTS has been saying so. But does the government think this does not run counter to the 1975 WHO recommendation urging "Not to let the youth smoke"?
2. It has been pointed out that additives (flavorers) used in cigarettes are carcinogenic.
  - a. How many kinds of flavoring additives are in use now?
  - b. Has the Health and Welfare Ministry confirmed they are not carcinogenic and ascertained the safety of them?
  - c. The JTS does not make public what flavoring additives it has been using claiming that they are trade secrets. How has the safety of the additives been ascertained?
3. A research paper made public in the United States found that the radioactive element polonium contained in cigarette smoke was harmful to the human body. What is the government's appraisal on the report that how is the government going to cope with it?

4. It was reconfirmed at the third international conference on lung cancer held in May this year that cigarette smoking is hazardous to the health and causes cancer. What is the government's view on the harmful, cancer-causing effects of cigarette smoking?
5. How much money have the state and the JTS actually spent for research on the harmful effects of cigarette smoking in the past 10 years? Do you think such research should be done by the state with the Health and Welfare Ministry taking the lead?
6. The 1975 WHO recommendations included restrictions on tobacco advertisements. What is the government's view on the recommendation and specifically what steps has it taken in response to it?
7. Tobacco commercials on radio and television are banned in the United States and advanced nations in Western Europe. Why are such commercials permitted in Japan? And also, how have the JTS' advertising expenses changed in the past 10 years?
8. The number of smokers among the youth has been growing every year and smoking often leads youngsters to commit misdemeanors. Under these circumstances, does the government consider it necessary to conduct a survey on smoking by the youth such as the ratio of smokers in the total number?

9. The government every year sets aside part of its budget for public relations propagating various government policies to the people. Does the government think it necessary to step up measures and public relations activities to prevent the younger generation from smoking?