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want prohibition," he said. "They won't stand up and say they want to ban cigarettes, so they'll sneak up on it by banning advertising."

A ban, however, may be unnecessary in newspapers, where cigarettes advertising has already dropped sharply.

According to Advertising Age, cigarettes advertising in local newspapers plummeted from \$12.8 million in 1991 to \$6.6 million in 1992, the last year for which figures were available.

Minority-owned newspapers, many of which relied heavily on tobacco advertising, have been hard hit by these cutbacks. In 1993, only \$1 million in tobacco advertising was placed through Amalgamated Publishers Inc., a New York-based advertising rep firm representing 153 black newspaper across the nation. That was down from \$2.5 million in 1992 when tobacco companies' expenditures with black newspapers peaked.

"Budget cuts stem from more competition in the industry," said John Singleton, manager of corporate communications at Reynolds. "Philip Morris reduced Marlboro's prices by 40 cents a pack last year."

This set off industrywide belt-tightening and led to layoffs at Reynolds. Robert Bogle, president of the National Newspaper Publisher Association, a trade group representing black-owned newspapers said that "at no time" has the relationship between blacks' cigarette consumption and advertising spending been commensurate.

According to Advertising Age, cigarette companies spent \$369.8 million on advertising in 1992. Tobacco companies' acquisition of non-tobacco companies in the 1980s raised black publishers' hope that their ad budgets would also expand. In most cases, however, that did not happen.

"Philip Morris has demonstrated that they want a relationship with the black press, not just for cigarettes, but for all their products," Bogle said. "RJR Nabisco did not expand anywhere in the depth and proportion that Philip Morris did."

Philip Morris, whose \$2 billion ad budget makes it the nation's second-biggest advertiser, spends about \$4 million with black newspapers. RJR Nabisco began to advertise some non-tobacco products in black newspapers, cigarette advertising still represented significant chunk of the paper's business, until recently.

No cigarette ads now run in the Afro-American newspapers, a chain serving Baltimore, Washington and Richmond.

"It started disappearing about three or four years ago," said Publisher John Oliver. "Cigarette advertisers had simply ceased advertising in any noticeable fashion in black

newspapers."

John Bustamante, chairman of The Call & Post, which publishes editions in Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati in Ohio, recounts a similar story.

"We haven't received any [cigarette ads] in the last two years," he said. "It was a revenue steam we lost."

Although anti-smoking lobbyists might say, "Good riddance," some black publishers sorely miss those profits generated by cigarette ads.

The relationship between black newspapers and the tobacco industry has been an amiable and fruitful one.

According to Bogle, cigarette manufacturers were among the first consumer-product companies to patronize black newspapers. Tobacco advertising, he explains, appeared in black newspapers, "long before tobacco ads were banned from TV, when cigarette smoking was fashionable."

"They were with black newspapers before black radio or magazine, before there was a question of whether smoking was injurious to health," he said.

Dr. Leonard E. Lawrence, president of the National Medical Association, which represents 17,000 minority physicians, said: "We've asked some of our brother and sister organizations to take a look at the financial support they received from tobacco corporations."

Unapologetic, NNPA's Bogle says, "Tobacco companies were [black newspapers'] friends before no one else was. Groups have condemned us from taking those ads. For many of our newspapers, though, it's been economic survival."

"It's legal to grow it [tobacco], manufacture it, sell it, and use it to raise tax revenues," he said.

Tobacco is legal, but considering its toll on the black community, there has been scant coverage in black newspaper of smoking-related health issues. According to the American Medical Association, nearly 45,000 African Americans died of smoking-related diseases in 1992. Each year, more African Americans die from smoking-related diseases than die from AIDS, drug abuse, car accidents and homicide combined. Black males not only smoke at higher rates, but are less successful at quitting than white males.

A 1990 survey by the California Department of Health Service showed strong anti-smoking senti-

ments among blacks in the state. Six out of 10 respondents favored a ban on tobacco advertising. In view of such findings, black newspapers seem oddly out of touch with popular opinion.

Although some black papers have historically postured themselves as liberators, most have done little to free readers from slavery to nicotine, a stimulant now believed to be addictive. Lack of knowledge of smoking's health dangers may actually increase advertising's influence on first-risk groups from starting smoking. In that regard black newspapers have definitely failed their communities.

"We do not need to encourage people to smoke if it is injurious to our health," Bogle said.

Tobacco companies' recent advertising cutbacks may actually help resolve black publishers' seeming moral dilemma. RJR's Singleton reports that more resources are going to point-of-sale advertising.

"From a pure business perspective, we get better impact where we have good point-of-purchase," he said.

While tobacco companies have shifted advertising dollars to in-store displays, black newspapers are also reassessing their position.

"The relationship we have had with most but not all cigarette companies has deteriorated," Bogle said. "If they can revisit their relationship and say they don't need us any more in view of who we're speaking to, we may need to revisit our relationship."

Any shift in policy, however, will require much deliberation by NNPA members.

"We've been discussing for the last year and a half what our position should be," Bogle said. "Every day there's some new revelation about the health hazards of smoking."

Bogle stresses, however, that anti-smoking forces should not only press tobacco companies but press the U.S. government, which subsidizes tobacco farming and benefits from cigarette-tax revenues.



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Front row (l to r): Pamela Wagner, Barbara Bennett, Constance Carlton, Norma Guthrie and Rosalind Redd. Back row: Stacey Murrill, Patsy Murrill and Elizabeth Newton.

## Deltas Raise Money for Team Walk

The Winston-Salem Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. participated in the March of Dimes Team Walk on April 30. The team, which was composed of Barbara Bennett, Constance Carlton, Norma Guthrie,

Patsy Murrill, Stacey Murrill, Elizabeth Newton, Rosalind Redd and Pam Wagner, raised nearly \$1,500 for the fight against birth defects.

Newton, chairperson of the Physical and Mental Health Committee, coordinated the team. The

Physical and Mental Health Committee promotes activities which encourage health awareness and maintenance.

The president of the alumnae chapter is Louise Smith.

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