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## Transcript

Station: 2SM Date: 26/07/2000  
Program: JASON MORRISON Time: 05:41 PM  
Compere: JASON MORRISON Summary ID: S00001712371  
Item: MORRISON DISCUSSES THE DECISION BY PHILIP MORRIS TO PUT ADDITIVES IN TOBACCO TO MAKE SMOKING MORE ATTRACTIVE.

INTERVIEWEES: ERIC WINDHOLZ, PHILIP MORRIS.

Demographics:	Male 18+ 11300	Female 18+ 8300	All people 19600	ABs 4000	GBs 9600
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JASON MORRISON: When it comes to understanding, love and understanding, I think you've got to be understanding to come to terms with this latest development in the tobacco industry.

OK, here we have Philip Morris, one of the biggest tobacco companies in the world, if not the biggest tobacco company in the world, that it has come to light it has changed its recipes in cigarettes.

According to people who are from the anti-smoking lobby, this is all about attracting more customers, making it tastier or, in fact, perhaps, perhaps even making it better for younger smokers, children, to take up the habit.

In fact, one of the big anti-smoking messages used to be that the damned things just don't taste too

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good. That used to be what it was about but nowadays it would appear that Philip Morris has changed its ingredients to give a sweeter taste to one's cigarette, or are we being a little bit over the top.

I'll declare my interest. I am a non-smoker and I don't particular like, not necessarily smokers, but smoking. I don't like people that blow smoke in my face, so there you go. You've got me up front with that.

Eric Windholz is from Philip Morris, the company, the cigarette manufacturer, he's been good enough to join us. G'day Eric.

ERIC WINDHOLZ: Hi Jason, how are you?

MORRISON: Is that the case? I'm well. Have you changed your recipe to make it nicer so kids will take up the habit?

WINDHOLZ: Absolutely not. First, let me just correct, I think, a misstatement there. We haven't changed our recipes. What we have done is made a very comprehensive disclosure to the Federal Government which the Federal Government has placed on its web site.

The ingredients we use in our products are there for everyone to see, we haven't changed them, we

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haven't changed them to make them more palatable to children, we categorically deny that and reject that outright.

MORRISON:

So how hold is this current recipe that we have?

WINDHOLZ:

I don't know how old the current recipe is. I'm not privy to that. That is in the hands of the people responsible for doing the blending of the products and the development of the products but they haven't been changed for that purpose, I can categorically reject that.

MORRISON:

OK, well I'm just reading through some of the things that have been attributed to be in there, a taste to give a similar sensation of eating liquorice, to having sugar and honey in the scent, in the taste of a cigarette. Surely, though, knowing what the marketing of cigarettes is all about, you're trying to make the things taste nicer when quite clearly the concept of putting something in your mouth and smoking it, sucking in smoke, is not the nicest thing at all.

WINDHOLZ:

Adults today make the decision to smoke with knowledge of the overwhelming medical and scientific consensus, is that cigarette smoking causes lung cancer, heart disease and other serious diseases in smokers.

Now if, with knowledge of those health implications, adults continue to make the informed

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decision to smoke then we believe they're entitled to receive, and we are in the business of providing, high quality cigarettes that provide them with a taste, flavour and aroma they seek.

MORRISON:

But Eric, you know, like I do, that the arguments always are that the cigarette companies try to hook in the kids and when we find out that cigarettes have got elements in it to make it taste a particular way, that make them taste sweeter, and let's face it, it is often assumed that children are attracted to sweet things, that surely, surely it could be seen that that is what in fact you're targeting through doing this.

WINDHOLZ:

But adults also can be attracted to sweet things.

MORRISON:

Yes, but I'm talking about younger people, I'm talking about new smokers.

WINDHOLZ:

We don't design our products for young people and we don't design our products for new smokers, for people under the age of 18. We don't want kids to smoke. We are very strong about that, we are very categorical about that.

We run programmes with retailers designed to help retailers not sell cigarettes to kids, we run, though independent education experts, programmes designed to help kids deal with the peer pressures that influence them to smoke but adults—

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MORRISON:

I accept that but you know the commercial reality is your company does not not want children to smoke because that will mean that there will be a definite point where if your company continues in its position of not wanting children to smoke that it will make itself extinct.

WINDHOLZ:

If that is the natural consequence of children not smoking then so be it and that will be the result. The reality is though that we do have a commercial interest in kids not smoking because every regulation imposed on our industry, every restriction imposed on our industry, is premised on youth smoking. We have a very direct and very real commercial interest to prevent that.

But let me just say, the people who are calling for the prohibition of the use of ingredients that enable us to provide adult consumers, who have made an informed decision to smoke, with high quality cigarettes are, in effect, calling for the prohibition of cigarettes generally.

MORRISON:

I appreciate you've got to bolt. Just before you go. Could I ask you, do you smoke?

WINDHOLZ:

No, I don't.

MORRISON:

You don't. Are you in the minority in your company of people that smoke?

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WINDHOLZ:

I would expect that our company is probably no different to, as a cross-section of the community, and we probably have somewhere between 20% and 25% of people who smoke as in the general community. We're just people like everyone else.

MORRISON:

Yes, I'll ask you this question and whether you choose to answer it or not is up to you, but do you actually find it difficult to be, for want of a better phrase, selling the message for something that you know probably is not good to be selling?

WINDHOLZ:

I know that cigarettes have risks and so does each and every person who smokes the product. What I do know also is that I work for a group of people who are very committed about trying to address issues of tobacco in our society in a constructive, reasonable, balanced and sensible manner. We are very genuine in our commitment to try to work with the Government and with the public health community to address tobacco issues.

The disclosure we made to the Federal Government of our ingredient information is a tangible example of that willingness and we hope that it can provide a platform from which we can continue to work with the Government and the public health community to address tobacco issues constructively, sensibly and in a balanced manner.

MORRISON:

OK, Eric, thank you for that. I appreciate you giving us time.

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WINDHOLZ:

It's a pleasure, Jason.

MORRISON:

Eric Windholz who is from the company Philip Morris. I've actually always wanted to ask a bloke who works in one of those environments that particular question.

Listening on the line as we were talking to him is a bloke called Ron Borland who is from the Victoria Health Centre for Tobacco Control. He's the Director.

\* \* END \* \*

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