

THE SMOGGY REPUBLIC: Tobacco lobbying in France during 5 years of Chirac presidency and 5 years of Sarkozy presidency : from the best to the worst

Author : Bertrand Dautzenberg

Preface : Gérard Dubois

Contributor : Pascal Diethelm

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Over the last decade, French politicians at the highest level of the State have demonstrated their power and influence on tobacco control policies, alternating the best and the worst decisions, leading economical, social and sanitary consequences.

Both presidents, Jacques Chirac and Nicolas Sarkozy are from the same political side; they have had the same majority in National Assemblies, and they have had, to some extent, the same ministry of Health. The only difference between them, in terms of tobacco control, is that one president has closed the door to tobacco lobbyists, while the second left the same door open in violation of the article 5.3 of WHO Framework Convention for Tobacco Control (FCTC).

More specifically, from 2002 to 2007, during the five-year term of Jacques Chirac, France has experienced one of the best improvements ever seen in the world, as far as tobacco control is concerned. These changes happened without any clash, excepted a few minor events generated by the tobacconists, more or less controlled by the tobacco industry, while overall revenues of these tobacconists did not stop increasing. In any case, these results led to a significant drop from 82 to 54 billion of cigarettes sold within 18 months, a 76% decrease in daily smoking rate in Paris 12-15 year old schoolchildren, a 23% reduction in smoking among 17 year old adolescents according the *Escapad* national survey, a decline by 4% of daily smokers in adults according to *Inpes*, an estimate of 20 000 lives saved, according the leaders of the National Medecin Academy and fresh air for all after the total smoking ban in public places and at work decided in November 2006. During this period the tobacco lobbyists have tried to act against price increases and total ban as in some other countries, but president Jacques Chirac (who had officially declared war to tobacco in March 2003) has increased taxes

by 39% in 18 months increasing at the same time the price of the most popular packs by 1,4€ and closed them the door.

In total opposition to this policy, during Nicolas Sarkozy's term, between 2007 and 2012, France has not known any significant benefit in tobacco control. Anybody concerned by the question is able to notice the stability in cigarette sales at more or less 54 billions per year. Among 12-15 years old schoolchildren smoking rate has increased by 35% between 2006 and 2011. The National Survey *Escapad* on 17 years old adolescents confirms an increase of 9% between 2008 and 2011. Adult smoking rate has shown a relative increase of 7% according to *Inpes*. Thus, this catastrophic policy in terms of tobacco control led to disastrous results with 10 000 lives of smokers not saved. At the same time, the tobacconists have collected, between 2007 and 2011, a cumulative additional amount of revenues of 1.055 billion euros, despite the same number of cigarettes sold during the period. Within the same period, the tobacco industry got 562 million euros more revenues. The increase of the price of most popular cigarettes brands has been then of 1.2 € and was planned to increase up to 1.6 € by small 6% steps organized by the tobacco industry. This "open door policy" to the tobacco industry has led president Nicolas Sarkozy to compete with the Dutch minister of Health, Edith Schippers (who run a shameful promotion of tobacco in the Netherlands) for receiving the "Dirty European Ashtray". This gives a distressing caricature of the submission of France to the desiderata of tobacco lobbyists.

This new book, a difficult inquiry into the tobacco lobby world, will be published on April 4th 2012, a few weeks before the French elections. The author, Pr. Bertrand Dautzenberg is a university pulmonary physician who has been involved in tobacco control for 30 years. He wrote this book not through resentment of the past, but to show how political power has a major role on today tobacco control and can produce rapid results for the population hoping this book will encourage the French new president to restart tobacco control. His first mission will be to close the door again to the tobacco industry lobbyists.

LA RÉPUBLIQUE ENFUMÉE

Les lobbies du tabac sous Chirac et Sarkozy : du meilleur au pire


Traiter les malades et les aider à guérir est un devoir absolu pour tous les médecins. Protéger les populations en amont - notamment les plus fragiles - contre les maladies est celui des hommes et des femmes politiques et de leurs conseillers qui ont la charge de la santé publique, au premier chef le président de la République.

Avec plus de 73 000 morts par an en France, le tabagisme est la première cause de mortalité évitable dans notre pays. Pour permettre aux profits engendrés par cette drogue de ne pas se tarir et malgré l'hécatombe, l'industrie du tabac continue à recruter en toute impunité ses futures victimes, avec cynisme, au vu et au su de tous, par des méthodes marketing subtiles, mais machiavéliques, parmi nos enfants dès leur jeune âge et auprès des populations fragiles. Une fois leurs cibles accrochées, la drogue fait le reste.

Après plus de trente ans de lutte contre le tabac et ses conséquences dramatiques, le professeur Bertrand Dautzenberg nous dévoile, au terme d'une enquête difficile dans les arcanes opaques des milieux où intérêts industriels, financiers et politiques se confondent trop souvent, les aspects positifs et négatifs des deux derniers quinquennats, celui de Jacques Chirac qui avait « déclaré la guerre au tabac » et celui de Nicolas Sarkozy qui a laissé faire.

Ce livre apporte un éclairage sans concession sur dix années de politique dans l'espoir que soit relancée au plus vite la démarche de santé publique destinée à réduire l'usage du tabac et ses conséquences dramatiques, comme le souhaitent très majoritairement les Français.

Bertrand Dautzenberg est professeur de pneumologie à l'UPMC, université Paris VI, et au Groupe Hospitalier Pitié-Salpêtrière. Il préside l'Office français de prévention du tabagisme (OFT), Paris Sans Tabac et est membre de l'Executive Board de l'European Network of Smoking Prevention (ENSP). Il a reçu en 2005 la médaille de l'Organisation mondiale de la santé pour son action sur le contrôle du tabac. Il est l'auteur de dix ouvrages sur le tabac et la prise en charge de l'arrêt, et a signé un rapport sur le tabagisme passif pour le Gouvernement.



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* anticipation 2012

**estimation Pr Gérard Dubois

		Jacques Chirac Presidency mandate 2002-2007		Nicolas Sarkozy Presidency mandate 2007-2012	
	Price of most popular cigarettes packs	↗↗	3,50 € → 5,00 € +1,50 € (taxe increase) +39 % (relative increases)	↗↗	5,00 € → 6,20 € (6,70€*) +1,2€ (1,70€*) (only price increase) +24% (relative increase) (+34%*)
	Cigarettes annuel sales	↓↓↓	82 Md € → 54 Md € -28 Md € -32 %	→	54 Md € → 54 Md € No change 0%*
	Daily smoking rate in 12-15 year-old Parisian schoolchildren (source :Paris sans tabac)	↓↓↓ ↓	2002-2007 11,9% → 3,1% -76 % (relative decrease)	↗↗	2007-2011 3,1% → 4,1% +35 % (relative decrease)
	Daily smoking rate in 16-19 year-old Parisian schoolchildren (source :Paris sans tabac)	↓↓↓	2002-2007 38,7% → 23,1% -23 % (relative decrease)	↗	2007-2011 23,1% → 23,3% +1 % (relative increase)
	Daily smoker at 17 year old (Source Escapad, National)	↓↓↓	2002-2008 39,5% → 28,9% -27 % (relative decrease)	↗	2008-2011 28,5% → 31,5% +9 % (relative increase)
	Daily smokers in General population (Baromètre Inpes)	↓	2000-2005 28,3% → 27,3% -4 % (relative decrease)	↗↗	2005-2010 27,3% → 29,1% +7 % (relative increase)
	Life preserved or not (estimation from National academy of medicine representant)	↗↗↗ ↗	20 000 lives saved**	↓↓↓	10 000 lives not saved**
	Indoor PM2.5 pollution > 15 µg/m³	↓↓↓ ↓	-80%	↗	Trend to increase but no suffisant datas
	Tobacco industry profits	↗	2001-2007 5 Mds €* (estimation)	↗↗ ↗	2006-2012* 6 Mds €* (estimation)
	Variation of income of tobacco industry	↓↓↓	2001-2007 -1 826 million €	↗↗	2006-2011 (2006-2012*) +562 M € (+1 Md €*)
	Variation of income of dealers of Tobacco	↗	2006-2012 +40 million €	↗↗ ↗	2006-2011 (2006-2012*) +624 million € (+1,024 Md €*)
	Governmental plan to sustain dealers of tobacco	↗	2003-2007 +150 million €	↗↗ ↗	2008-2011 (2011-2016*)/tear +650 million € (+70 M €/year*)
	Cumul of profit of tobacco dealers	↗	2006-2012 +180 million €	↗↗ ↗	2006-2011 (2006-2012*) +1,055 million € (+1,370 Md €*)