

U.S. could learn lesson from illegal gas import

OUR OPINION: CFC shipments from India make dilemma for the nation

The Willamette Valley's high humidity will soon mix with even higher temperatures as the season advances through spring and tiptoes into the warmer summer months.

For some commuters, the higher mercury readings and combined elements can mean a sweaty drive between home, school and work, on those longer trips up or down the interstate, or during one of those journeys across town. But for many other drivers, the bothersome heat can be defeated by a single push or tweak of a dashboard button or two.

Air conditioning — that manufactured, cool air that soothes the sweltering.

The stuff is a gas called chlorofluorocarbon-12, also known as Freon, and its production has been banned in the U.S. because the substance has the nasty effect of depleting the Earth's protective ozone layer.

As an example of America's illegality to the double-standard, Freon production is banned here, but the selling of the harmful gas is not — and it is expensive.

Several years ago, the U.S. slapped heavy taxes and import tariffs on Freon to play its part in forcing other nations to wean themselves from CFC-12 production and to stay on schedule with the Montreal Protocol of 1987 — a treaty that has tried to get the world community to use different chemicals for coolant production.

India, which still produces the gas legally, has

been making a profit by smuggling CFC-12 by the ton into this country, where American markets are buying it and allowing U.S. citizens to keep cool on the cheap.

The black market trade is so bad, the U.S. Customs Service considers it to be as big a problem as illegal drugs.

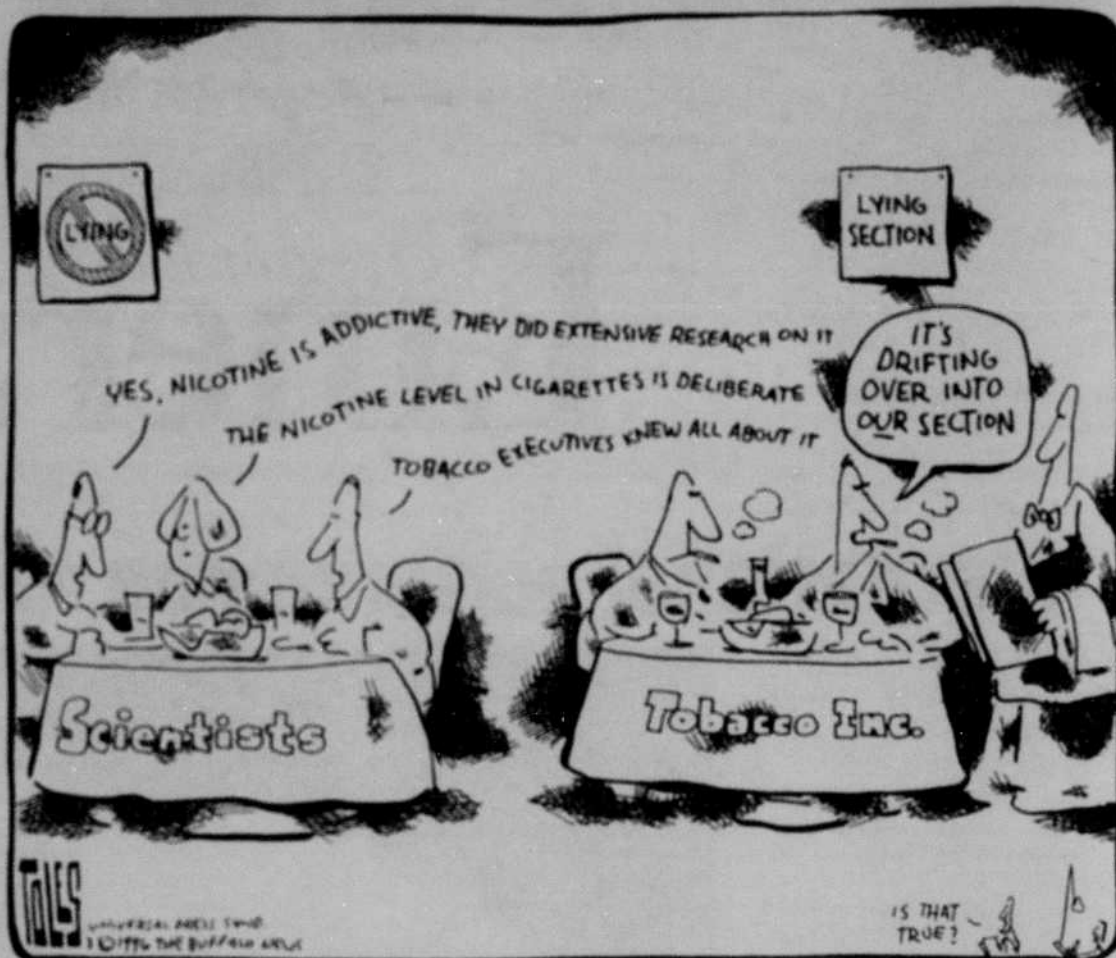
Most of us have heard the old saying, "what goes around comes around." With the current CFC situation, the U.S. is getting a taste of its own medicine.

While public opinion and legislation continues to pound down the doors of the tobacco industry, the nation continues to inhale the second-hand smoke of hypocrisy by allowing tobacco products to be exported to the rest of the world in an uninterrupted trade of death. We should at least require tobacco companies to send coffins with each of their cigarette shipments.

Another example of exporting death, the U.S. is undoubtedly the world's largest weapons exporter. Any nation or international cause (legitimate or not) that wants to, can get as many pieces of war-making items in as many different forms as possible — as long as they can pay the bill.

The U.S. also exports oppression. Thanks to companies like Nike (in Indonesia) and many other corporations that have chosen to maximize their profits by investing in slave-labor, we can all wear our favorite fashions thanks to the blood, sweat and tears of impoverished workers who make next to nothing for their efforts.

Is it getting warm in here?



Scientists study evidence of life on Mars

The next time you're out stargazing, see if you can find the planet Mars and consider this: There is a definite possibility that some or all of our ancient ancestors came from there.

On March 21, a group of scientists and engineers held a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. to announce that they may have found evidence of large artificial structures on the moon. Given the stature of the people holding the conference, the media were polite, but they quickly dismissed the report as ridiculous.

To understand the link between the ridiculed report and the possibility that we may be the descendants of Martians, we have to go back 20 years to the summer of 1976. NASA was beginning to receive close-up photos of Mars from its Viking spacecraft, and journalists from all over the world camped out at the Jet Propulsion Laboratories in Pasadena, Calif., to feed on the photos in the JPL press releases.

The photos showed vast wastelands occasionally punctuated by craggy mountains, volcanoes and deep canyons. The dramatic geology heightened the excitement of seeing the surface of Mars for the first time. And then someone noticed that one of the rock formations looked almost like a human face. The JPL press agent said the scientists had noticed it, but dismissed it as a trick of lighting. He said that the "face" didn't show up on photos from later passes. He was wrong.

There was a second photo that showed the "face" even more clearly, but it would never have come to light except for the curiosity of one man: Richard Hoagland.

Hoagland was a consultant to NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, and he found the "face" so intriguing that he started looking closely at all of the photos taken of that area. Months of painstakingly checking thousands of photos, most of which had not been released to the public, finally paid off with the second photo. It had been taken in better light at a different angle, and it showed the "face" more clearly. NASA again dismissed it as a trick of light.

Unsatisfied with NASA's dismissal, Hoagland decided to do some serious analysis of the two photos. He gathered together a network of experts who applied to the photos the most sophisticated digital image processing available. What they found was more than a face. They found what may be the remains of an entire civilization.

These experts are not your garden-variety UFO fanatics. Hoagland received the Angstrom Medal for excellence in science in 1993 and, in addition to working for NASA, has been a science museum curator and science consultant to CBS news and Walter Cronkite. Others include Dr. Mark Carlotto, a Ph.D. from Carnegie Mellon

University and the author of more than 40 peer-reviewed papers on image processing, and Stanley McDaniel, professor emeritus and past department chairman at Sonoma State University.

So what has this got to do with structures on the moon and Martian ancestors? Hoagland was the person who organized the press conference on March 21. He is also the author of the book "The Monuments of Mars: A City on the Edge of Forever." In his book, Hoagland detailed the network's investigation of the photos. At the end, he speculated about the origin of the structures on Mars.



Larry Haft

as he can, so maybe the University will get a copy of the book one of these days.

Hoagland's hypothesis suggests the possibility that "colonists" from Mars might come to Earth, but that for several reasons they would most likely establish a colony on the moon first. Hence there may be structures on the moon.

It would be easy to dismiss this entire subject except for two points. The first is that NASA, in the face of mounting pressure, has decided to extensively photograph the areas identified by Hoagland (et. al.) with the Mars mission that will be launched later this year. The second point is consideration of what might happen if we actually did find the ruins of an ancient civilization on the moon or on Mars.

On Dec. 14, 1960, the Brookings Institution delivered a report to NASA that said, "Discovery of life on other worlds could cause the earth's civilizations to collapse." This report is cited as one possible reason why NASA continues to dismiss the possibility of an ancient civilization on Mars even as they plan to photograph it.

When you consider the sparks that fly between creationists and evolutionists, it's no wonder NASA would be concerned. Imagine what would happen if there were tangible proof that human intelligence is not native to earth, but an import.

All of this is still speculation, but if you want to dig a bit deeper I suggest you read Hoagland's book and check out the following web sites. <http://www.artbell.com/art/hoagland.html> <http://www.planetarymysteries.com>

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