

Non-Smokers' Rights Association
L'Association pour les droits des non-fumeurs

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PRESS RELEASE

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**SUBJECT: THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY'S DESPERATE ATTEMPT
TO REMAKE ITSELF**

MONTREAL – JTI-Macdonald Corp. is just one of many tobacco companies that is attempting to remake itself in the image of a responsible corporation, just fighting for its share of the market, it claims.

With the health community digging out industry documents that would make sociopaths blush and Health Canada's decision to zero in on the industry's dishonesty in its latest anti-tobacco advertising campaign, the "born again" projects have reached a new sense of urgency.

"The latest gambit is Michel Poirier's address today to the Canadian Club of Montreal," said Francois Damphousse, head of the Montreal office of the Non-Smokers' Rights Association. "The JTI-Macdonald desperation index has reached a point where M. Poirier is prepared to mix the concept of 'ethics' in with his company's name and track record.

"This is, after all, the same company that is being sued in the United States under the *Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organizations Act* by the federal government for \$1 billion for the company's alleged orchestration of tobacco smuggling," said Mr. Damphousse. "This is the same company that has lied about tobacco risks, about tobacco addiction and about predatory marketing directed at children."

The Non-Smokers' Rights Association and the Quebec Coalition for Tobacco Control expect that one of the subjects on Mr. Poirier's mind for his address today will be tobacco industry denormalization, a new strategy being endorsed by a increasing number of health organizations that is causing tobacco industry executives to squirm. The health groups expect that Mr. Poirier will spin his company's usual lines that this strategy aims to unfairly vilifies the industry or that it is somehow an attack on smokers.

“Nothing could be further from the truth,” said Louis Gauvin of the Quebec Coalition for Tobacco Control. “Tobacco industry denormalization is a country-wide health strategy that transfers the responsibility for the tobacco epidemic from the victims of the industry to the industrial cause of the epidemic. With over 80 national, provincial and local health and community organizations across Canada calling for industry denormalization campaigns, tobacco executives are desperately trying to reposition their companies.”

At the conclusion of Mr. Poirier’s Canadian Club of Montreal address, a spokesperson for the health groups will respond to Mr. Poirier’s talk.

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