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FROM B-W CORP. COMM.

TO PRIDEAUX-COURLEY

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# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Louisville, KY ... Brown & Williamson today released studies that correct erroneous reports about nicotine research attributed to the company.

These studies -- commissioned by the British-American Tobacco Co. -- do not conclude that nicotine is addictive, contrary to recent press reports. The studies released today are the actual reports upon which speculation has been based that Brown & Williamson research had concluded nicotine was addictive.

At the same time, the company sought and was granted a court order requiring Subcommittee Chairman Henry A. Waxman, D-Calif., to allow Brown & Williamson to review company documents in his possession that he said were "evidently stolen." The court order would also extend to Congressman Ron Wyden, D-Oregon, and various news media. The documents at issue were stolen from the company by a former law firm paralegal and are currently protected by a court-issued injunction.

The disclosure of the so-called *Hippo* nicotine studies and the action taken in Jefferson County Circuit Court represent an effort on the company's part to correct inaccurate and misleading news reports alleging that B&W was concealing information about nicotine.

Despite formal requests by the company, Congressman Waxman refused to show B&W the documents on which he was basing his claims regarding company activities and policies.

In a letter to Congressman Waxman, Griffin Bell, counsel to B&W and former Attorney General and U.S. Court of Appeals Judge, protested Waxman's refusal to allow B&W to review the documents.

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"Any research, and any contemporaneous statements by individuals concerning the import of that research, should be viewed within the framework of other available research," said Judge Bell. "Further, in fairness, any phrases or sentences quoted from the reports should be considered within the entire context of those reports.

"Finally, Brown & Williamson's corporate position should not be based on isolated remarks made by individuals in 30-year-old documents and taken out of their proper context."

*Hippo* was the project name for a series of studies relating to nicotine. The research was conducted by Battelle Memorial Institute, Geneva, in the early 1960's. Contrary to news reports, the research was commissioned by Brown & Williamson's sister company, British-American Tobacco Co., Ltd.

The purpose of the studies was not to establish or refute any claim that cigarette smoking or nicotine is or is not addictive. Thus, there is no conclusion reached in the reports that nicotine is addictive. The media has inaccurately reported that such conclusions were reached.

Meanwhile, on Saturday, May 14, Merrell Williams, the former law firm paralegal, violated a court order by not appearing at a deposition to answer questions about providing the documents to Congressman Waxman.

Williams had said earlier that he would invoke the Fifth Amendment to any questions about his compliance with a court order that prohibited him from copying and distributing stolen attorney-client privilege documents.

Brown & Williamson believes the wholesale marketing of these stolen documents to certain members of Congress and the media suggests that an individual is attempting to deliberately damage the company in addition to violating Constitutional rights which protect attorney-client privilege.

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