

The CRI carries out activities in support of the WHO's public health programs and is an internationally renowned teaching institution. MacKenzie and Collin's study suggests Walk used the connections he made to influence the study and teaching of environmental toxicology -- the study of how chemicals in the environment, including tobacco smoke, can injure human health -- at the institute. The scientist's hidden agenda? To advance the interests of Philip Morris within Thailand and across Asia.

The newly discovered link between Philip Morris and the CRI discussed in their PLoS Medicine paper raises suspicions that the tobacco industry is influencing medical research at the institution. This is especially troubling because of the CSI's WHO affiliation, the researchers point out. Article 5.3 of the international treaty called the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control asserts public health policies must be protected from the vested interests of tobacco companies.

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