

Dear Sir

I have recently received three issues of your publication and have enjoyed the content although I haven't yet finished reading all the items.

I am currently attending a management course in an international environment with representatives from 15 countries. A major topic of our course is strategic management and leadership. I would like to request, if I may, that a future issue of the Journal includes an article on this subject. To me, this appears to be an increasingly important topic in our customs environments and will be at the forefront of our thinking for future changes in our services.

Thanks, in advance!

Craig Chitty

New Zealand Customs Service

Dear Sir

As well as congratulating you and your contributors on an excellent professional journal for the international customs community, I would like to ask you to consider a section for those interested in the history of customs organisations. In addition to the excellent work being undertaken by individual amateur and professional historians in many customs services, I would like to draw your attention to the project undertaken by the University of Bristol in the United Kingdom into the Chinese Maritime Customs.

The Chinese Maritime Customs was unusual in that it was an expatriate-managed customs service operating in the Treaty Ports of China between 1854 and 1949. The People's Republic of China has preserved in commendable conditions (principally at the 2nd Historical Archive of China in Nanjing) the records of the service during that period. The majority of the collection is in English and includes a wide range of material of interest to customs, social, economic and family historians. The staff of the Chinese Maritime Customs included nationals of China, the United Kingdom, Japan, USA, Sweden, France, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Russia, and other nations.

Links to staff and other records together with a large archive of photographs are to be found at the University of Bristol website: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/history/customs/>.

Should any of your readers have any questions relating to using the site or wish to exchange information on the Chinese Maritime Customs I would be very happy to try and be of assistance to them.

Best wishes

Jim Williams

Editor's note: Interested readers may contact Mr Williams at: jimwcw@msn.com

Dear Sir

An investigative report of six articles from the Center for Public Integrity (CPI) was released on 20 October 2008 on the illicit trafficking of tobacco. One article of particular interest reveals at least US\$1 billion worth of Russian cigarettes – created solely for smuggling – are flooding Europe. The report on Jin Ling cigarettes helps demonstrate the massive global problem of the illicit tobacco trade, which undermines efforts to reduce tobacco use and save lives, helps fund organised crime and terrorist organisations, and costs governments billions in revenue.

The report is being released by CPI as more than 600 delegates from 160 countries meet in Geneva, Switzerland to continue negotiations on an international treaty to combat the illicit trade in tobacco products.

A Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids' statement on the new CPI reports is available (http://tobaccofreecenter.org/resources/illicit_trade_smuggling/), as well as a comprehensive backgrounder on the illicit tobacco trade (<http://www.tobaccofreecenter.org/files/pdfs/ILL-Overview-oct08-v4.pdf>).

Thank you.

Marina Carter
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

Editor's note: Ms Carter can be contacted at: MCarter@TobaccoFreeKids.org