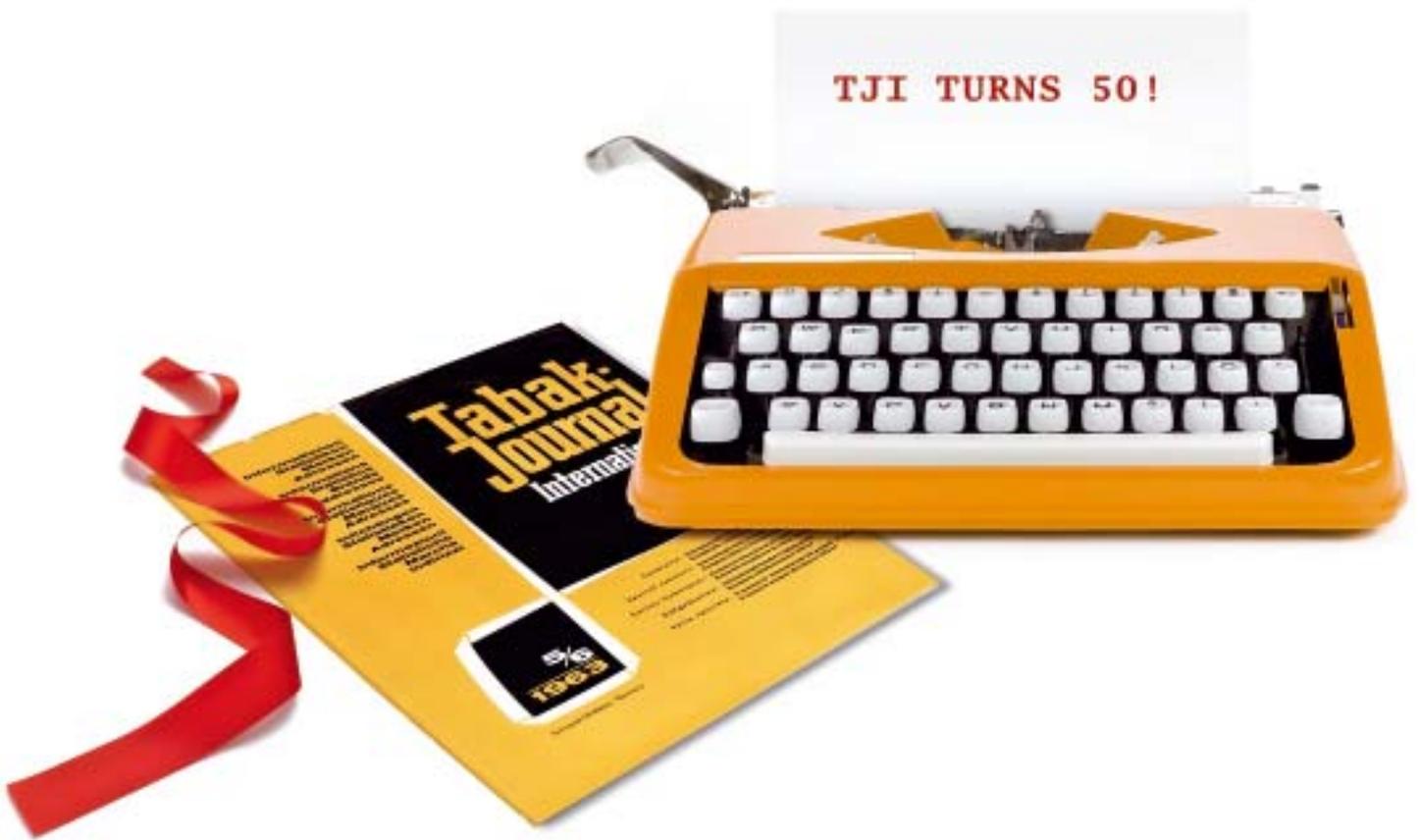


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World Tobacco Turkey 2013 – of mice and men

Originally a poem written by the famous Scottish writer Robert Burns in 1786 entitled "To a mouse" and followed in 1937 by John Steinbeck's novel "Of mice and men", the meaning of mice and men is "even the most carefully prepared plans may go wrong".

And wrong they went, but due to no fault of the organisers, World Tobacco. Quite the contrary. What promised to be a fantastic trade show – booked out months in advance – turned out to be a nightmare for organisers, exhibitors and visitors alike, and also for us at TJI as printing partners of the catalogue. Months of hard work down the drain. Only to be told a fortnight before the event that the exhibition is cancelled.

"order" had come from high up, very high up. Only days later did the truth finally trickle out – Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan had decided to hold a speech on 31 May (coinciding with the last day of the planned tobacco exhibition) which included his ambition to more or less ban smoking in Turkey. So, a quick goodbye to anything remotely connected to tobacco, especially a tobacco industry trade show at

to save a major park from property development, a demonstration which has since turned into a nationwide protest against the autocratic style of government. In a lead column entitled "Tear gas instead of cigarette smoke", the DTZ (German Tobacco Newspaper) also picked up on this topic. While the demonstrations had nothing to do with smoking, they did coincide with the planned exhibition date. As Taksim Square, which is quite close to the exhibition centre, is at the centre of the demonstrations in Istanbul, one can only speculate on what experiences might have been in store for visitors to the trade show.

So, how safe can planning trade shows be? The message from Hamburg for the World Tobacco Europe 2013 from 12-14 November 2013 is clear: "In Germany we honour contracts."

Munich and Prague – again?

In November 2012, World Tobacco announced their next Asian industrial trade show: to be held on Bali, Indonesia, in late 2014. It came as quite a surprise this week when Inter-tabac announced that instead of holding their annual exhibition on the Philippines as usual, they would be moving their tobacco trade exhibition in 2014 to Bali – six months after WT's announcement. That in itself would not have presented a problem as Inter-tabac is targeted at tobacco consumables, were it not for the Protobex add-on, which is an industrial trade show and direct competitor. Two industrial tobacco trade shows within the space of a few months at the same location?! Following the Munich and Prague exhibitions held in the same year, the message from industry was abundantly clear: no more repeats please, to put it politely. And here we go again – what an unnecessary provocation, especially as the Protobex organisers must have been aware that the World Tobacco exhibition was taking place in Bali. So much for respecting industry's wishes. TJI is in contact with Inter-tabac and will keep you informed.

William McEwen



Photo: ICEC

What had happened? The Lufti Kirdar Convention & Exhibition Centre informed World Tobacco at short notice that they regret having to cancel the exhibition for fear of reprisals by the government. Reprisals? What reprisals? Everything had been checked and double-checked by World Tobacco, contracts signed and sealed. And yet, no further explanation came forth from the Lufti Kirdar Convention & Exhibition Centre, other than the feeling that the

the same time. The speech held by the Turkish prime minister went considerably further, not only mentioning a ban on smoking, but also alcohol and Caesarean sections and a call for Turkish families to father at least three children.

Tear gas versus cigarette smoke

Istanbul has been front page news since 27 May with demonstrations sparked off