

CONFIDENTIAL

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Editorial Staff of JAMA

FROM: George D. ~~Frederick~~ *[Signature]* berg, M.D.

DATE: September 7, 1982

SUBJECT: Particularly Sensitive Political Issues

In a recent meeting, Doctor James Sammons and Mr. Thomas Hannon pointed out the existence of some particularly sensitive political questions and urged that we exercise appropriate caution in our JAMA publication on these subjects. They are:

- tobacco and control of tobacco use,
- nuclear war,
- abortion.

The cautions do not involve science since we are, as always, completely free to publish properly refereed scientific information with no restraints save our own editorial judgment. However, when the subjects are political, we should be careful. The kinds of steps we can consider when weighing such include: peer review, consultation among ourselves, and consultation with the Office of General Counsel of AMA, the Division of Library and Archival Services regarding official AMA policies and statements, and the Office of the Executive Vice President as needed.

It is important to note that no criticism was being made, but merely preventive advice. It also appears that sensitivities here are particularly high prior to the meetings of the Board of Trustees and the Annual and Interim Meetings of the House of Delegates.

GDL/ml