

"Flue-cured tobacco growers had only just recoiled from having tobacco prices plummet -- coinciding pointedly with publicity generated by Senator Robert Kennedy's cigarette restriction bills -- and having their market turned upside down by increased demand for low nicotine tobacco, presumably generated by government activities, when Surgeon General William Stewart visited tobacco country.

"In North Carolina to dedicate a 500-acre tract in the Research Triangle, the Surgeon General seated flatly he felt the tobacco economy of North Carolina of little consequence compared with lives 'lost' because of cigarette smoking. It is 'no longer debatable,' he said to the North Carolina audience, whether a connection exists between smoking and health. Tobacco growers are furious.

"Among the proposals currently being discussed on unofficial and some official levels is a major saturation public relations and advertising campaign to re-establish the smoking and health controversy. This campaign may be backed up with the most extensive research campaign ever undertaken by the industry. Among initial efforts in this campaign...[is] the advertisement run by [The] Tobacco Institute, reprinting a lead article recently published by Barron's magazine...

"This was the second paid 'institutional' advertisement ever run by the industry. [The first was run when the Council for Tobacco Research was set up \[in 1954\].](#)" [Curator's note: [another such advertisement by The Tobacco Institute was published in 1959.](#)]

"Manufacturers of cigarettes are now faced with more than 13 bills in Congress that would restrict cigarette sales and advertising, and a great likelihood of Congressional hearings in the spring. Legislative climate appears to be changing and, although restrictive legislation may be avoided in the coming year, prospects for 1969, when the moratorium on Federal Trade Commission requirement of the warning label in advertising expires, look far less optimistic. Manufacturers are deeply concerned...

"Distributors and retailers are beginning to complain that cigarette sales appear to be falling off in some areas of the U. S. 'People are believing the wild statistical claims the Public Health Service and the American Cancer Society are making,' one distributor points out. Some jobbers, particularly those heavily represented in cigarettes, are starting to worry.

"...A shift within the industry to a more aggressive stand on the health issues may involve a shift away from the attorneys as the final censor on industry efforts to executive management of the companies. Apparently one reason the tobacco industry has previously held back many of the ideas proposed by its public relations advisors

and others has been the heavy hand of the legal departments; another reason has probably been indecision as to what direction such an effort should take.

"...Industry executives apparently are giving some thought to a variety of kinds of paid advertising. One suggestion is that some of the advertisements considered by the [Tobacco] Institute in 1964 -- for example one ad would have listed 25 major questions that have still not been answered by the people who would say the controversy is ended. Although the ad was written in 1964, apparently the questions are still valid. Another area of thought involves reprint of a number of articles in the press that treat the tobacco industry's side of the issue fairly.

"...As for content of the campaign, some feel the tobacco industry should go all the way, including attacking personally anti-tobacco spokesmen who make comments that the industry believes to be erroneous. Others feel this might jeopardize efforts to work on joint discussions with Health, Education and Welfare and other government agencies concerned with smoking..."