

CONFIDENTIALMEMORANDUM

March 8, 1977

TO: WILLIAM CONLON  
FRED BRANDING

FROM: SAMUEL K. SKINNER  
United States Attorney

As I have begun preliminary discussions with the law firm of Sidley & Austin, which firm also represents the G. D. Searle Company, I think it is inappropriate for me to make any decision in that matter while I remain in this office.

It is my understanding from our conversation that you will do any preliminary work that you think is necessary during the next several weeks, and upon Mr. Sullivan's appointment as United States Attorney you will present whatever material you think is appropriate to him for his decision as to whether or not a grand jury investigation should be conducted.

In the meantime, if it is necessary for you to consult with someone above your level, Mr. Kocoras will serve as United States Attorney in this matter. I have advised the counsel for the G. D. Searle Company of my decision to recuse myself in this matter, but I would appreciate it if you would keep the fact of my preliminary discussions confidential to avoid any undue embarrassment upon the firm of Sidley & Austin.

cc: Charles P. Kocoras  
Howard J. Trienens  
Thomas P. Sullivan (to be held until his confirmation  
by the Senate)