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PRIME MINISTER

Yes not

DDRB SECOND SUPPLEMENT TO NINTH REPORT  
PRACTICE EXPENSES OF GENERAL MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS

You asked for advice on the Second Supplement to the Ninth Report of the Doctors' and Dentists' Review Body submitted to you on 29 November.

The Report recommends an increase in the average practice expenses of general medical practitioners (GPs) from £5000 to £5400 with effect from 1 April 1979. This is not a further salary increase - the Review Body only wants to ensure that the average net remuneration of GPs recommended in their Ninth Report (£12,327) is not unduly eroded by the exceptional circumstances which have made their earlier estimate of practice expenses significantly too low. We accepted the Ninth Report in June.

I consulted John Biffen and other members of E Committee in my letter of 13 December. In his reply, dated 18 December John makes the point, with which I fully agree, that mid-year reports of this kind must not become a regular feature (they have not been in the past) and that we must make it clear publicly and to the Review Body that we regard the circumstances of this report as wholly exceptional. I will see that this is done. I accept also his comment that we cannot accept any report just because the Review Body chooses to make it. However he agrees with me that we should accept this Supplementary Report, and I know that George Younger and Nicholas Edwards strongly share my view. John accepts that the cost (£10 million) will have to be included as an addition to the Spring Supplementary Estimates.

Prime Minister

The Chief Secretary has reluctantly agreed that the extra £10 million must be provided.

Agree publication of report and Draft written Answer at Flag A?

TL

19/12

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I recommend accordingly that the Government should accept the report. If you agree it would be most desirable to announce our decision and to publish the report on Friday 21 December, (a draft Parliamentary Written Answer is attached). If we cannot meet this timetable it would in my view be better to delay publication until the New Year.

I am sending copies of this minute to members of E Committee, George Younger and Nicholas Edwards and Sir Robert Armstrong.

PJ

19 December 1979

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DRAFT

PQ ANNOUNCING PUBLICATION OF SECOND SUPPLEMENT TO DDRB NINTH REPORT

Q UESTION: Has the Prime Minister received a further report from the Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists Remuneration.

Answer: The Review Body, at the request of the profession, has reviewed the practice expenses which form part of the remuneration of general medical practitioners. They have recommended, in a second Supplement to their Ninth Report, an increase of £400 for this year, 1979/80, to take account of exceptional changes in the costs of providing services to National Health Service patients. This increase does not alter the intended net average remuneration of GPs. The Government is prepared to accept the Review Body's recommendation and the Supplement is published to-day as Cmnd 7790, copies have been placed in the library.

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