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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

14 May 1981

Dear Sir Robert,

Thank you very much for your letter of 8 May.

You may like to know that the Eleventh Report of the Doctors' and Dentists' Review Body will be published on Friday, 15 May 1981. This provides an appropriate opportunity for me to thank you and your colleagues formally for the time and effort which you have put into preparing this Report. I appreciate that this is an arduous and complex task, and it has been undertaken most efficiently.

On the same day, I shall announce the Government's response: as I explained at our recent meeting, we are unable to accept your recommendations in full. I do, indeed, appreciate the difficulties this will cause you and I am particularly grateful for your constructive and helpful response to our decision.

Like you, we attach a very high priority to preserving the Review Body system and the independence of the Review Body, and I fully understand why you do not wish to be associated with the Government's decision. Any request to you for further advice in connection with this year's pay settlement will therefore be made only after publication and only if the professions feel this is the best way to proceed. As I believe Patrick Jenkin has indicated to you, this possibility seems most likely to arise in connection with the recalculation of fees and allowances for general medical practitioners.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

Sir Robert Clark, DSC

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