

FILE
APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

RM



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

4 June, 1982

IN VITRO FERTILISATION: ENQUIRY INTO MEDICAL
ETHICS

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 3 June. She is content for him to appoint Mrs Mary Warnock to chair this enquiry.

I am copying this letter to Muir Russell (Scottish Office), Adam Peat (Welsh Office), Mike Hopkins (Northern Ireland Office), Imogen Wilde (Department of Education and Science), Michael Collon (Lord Chancellor's Office) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

W. F. S. RICKETT

Brendan O'Gorman, Esq
Department of Health and Social Security

PRIME MINISTER

IN VITRO FERTILISATION: ENQUIRY INTO MEDICAL ETHICS

The Home Secretary in his letter of 29 April gave H Committee's approval to the setting up of an enquiry on the implications of developments in the field of human fertilisation.

I have been giving urgent thought to the Chairmanship of this enquiry, which will be important and intellectually difficult, raising complex social and moral issues. Four other enquiries have been set up by various medical bodies, including the BMA. I have reached the view that Mrs Mary Warnock would be the most suitable person to chair our enquiry. She is an experienced and capable Chairman of proven ability and we think that that is an important attribute where such a breadth of interests and complexity of issues will need to be resolved. I feel that Mrs Warnock has the capacity to steer the enquiry to a successful conclusion. I attach a note which summarises her background. Mrs Warnock's name has been cleared with Sir Robert Armstrong and with interested colleagues in the usual way.

Other names that we considered on our short list were:-

Mr James Sutherland (62) Solicitor. Former Vice-Chairman of the Glasgow Eastern Health Council.

Lady Wagner (54) Chairman of Barnardo's.

Sir Norman Lindop (61) Ex-Director of Hatfield Polytechnic and Ex-Chairman of Council for Professions Supplementary to Medicine and Data Protection Committee.

Prime Minister 1
Content for Mr Fowler to
appoint Mrs Warnock to
chair this enquiry?
Yes

Wm
3/6



If you are content with Mrs Warnock as Chairman, I shall approach her to see whether she is willing to take on this task. I am copying this minute to George Younger, Nick Edwards, Jim Prior, Keith Joseph and to the Lord Chancellor.

3 JUN 1982

N F

Mrs Mary Warnock (58)

Philosopher Senior Research Fellow,
St Hugh's College, Oxford. Former
Headmistress of Oxford High School
1966-72. A former Tutor in Philosophy,
she published a History of Moral
Philosophy. A member of the Royal
Commission on Environmental Pollution
1974-78 and former member of the IBA.
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on
Animal Experiments and of Committee
of Inquiry into Special Education
1974-78. Has 5 children.