

RA

PRIME MINISTER

NHS REVIEW WORK PROGRAMME

You expressed concern earlier this week about the shortness of time available for the NHS review meetings. I have now had a further look at the schedule in the run-up to the recess, and Tessa has done some re-jigging of the diary.

The programme of meetings we now envisage is:

- (1) Next meeting on Thursday 30 June, from 1630-1815. If you need to give a statement that afternoon following the European Council, the start may be delayed a bit, but there should be a good hour and a half for the meeting. (Your next engagement that day is a reception for the WRVS at 18.30.) For this meeting there will be a number of detailed papers, including the follow-up to this week's meeting and the promised Chief Secretary paper on topping-up for hospitals.
- (2) You wondered about the possibility of a full day session. Given the intense pressures on the diary in July, that looks very difficult. But Tessa has managed to re-organise things so that on Friday 8 July we can have a session starting at 0930 and running on through lunch. The session might then break up at about 1430, which, I would have thought, gives long enough for an intensive session. We have picked this for the long meeting, since this is the session when we hope to have papers pulling together the overall emerging picture. ✓
- (3) A final pre-recess meeting, hopefully for two hours, in the week beginning 25 July. ✓

There is also the question of when to involve the territorial Ministers. Before the last meeting, you said you would be content for Mr. Rifkind to join in immediately. I apologise

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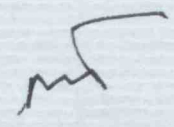
that, because of a muddle in the Private Office, this message did not get through to Mr. Rifkind, so, as you know, he did not attend. You might now like to consider further when best to bring your territorial colleagues in. Although Mr. Rifkind has the strongest interest, I am a bit worried about the implications of inviting him into the group before Messrs. Walker and King, both of whom are also Health Ministers in their own right. This would point to bringing all three in together. I would not suggest bringing them in for the 30 June meeting, when we will have a number of detailed papers. If you agree with that, the question then is whether to bring them in for the long session on 8 July, or to keep that for the smaller group to clarify its thinking, and then bring the territorial Ministers in for the final meeting in the last week of July.

- (a) Content with the programme of meetings set out above?
- (b) Content to bring in the three territorial Ministers together, or would you still wish to bring Mr. Rifkind in first?
- (c) At what point do you want the territorial Ministers to join the group?

*Yes - but I think we should start to brief Mr. Rifkind*

*Should prefer to keep him in as soon as possible.*

*for July meetings.*



*Prcc6.*

PAUL GRAY

10 June 1988

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