

MR RICKETT

cc Mr Scholar ✓
Mr Ingham
Mr Mount

QUESTIONS: "NURSES TO BE OFFERED 12%"

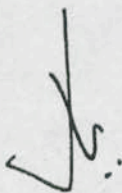
The continuation of this story is highly damaging: it raises expectations in the NHS, making it more difficult to settle with them; and it probably helps Mr Scargill by appearing to legitimise his claim for more than 8.2%. Bernard has repeatedly denied it in the Lobby, but it can probably be laid permanently to rest only by the Prime Minister.

I hope she can make two points:

(i) If the 4% offered for next year is added to the 7½% offered for this year, the deal must run until April 1984, no matter when it takes effect; and

(ii) Nurses' earnings in relation to women's earnings generally have not much changed over the last ten years, save for the Halsbury and Clegg awards. So the nurses' leaders have no grievance.

I attach figures illustrating the second point, which we have obtained from the Department of Employment; and a suggested speaking note.



19 October 1982

NURSES' PAY

	Av. weekly earnings of full-time nurses	Av. weekly pay of all full-time women	Nurses as % of all women
(April) 1971	£20.7	£18.3	113%
1972	£23.1	£20.1	115%
1973	£24.2	£23.1	105%
1974	£26.3	£26.9	98%
1975	£45.7 (Halsbury)	£37.4	122%
1976	£53.9	£46.2	117%
1977	£57.5	£51.0	113%
1978	£58.2	£56.4	103%
1979	£66.1	£63.0	105%
1980	£87.4 (Clegg)	£78.8	111%
1981	£98.4	£91.4	108%
1982	£105.3 ¹	£99.0 ²	106%

¹ Assumes 7½% for 1982, offset by slightly fewer hours worked.

² Not published until 21 October.

(i) As my RHF the Secretary of State repeatedly made clear yesterday, our decision on resources available for NHS pay this year is final, and would allow pay increases of between 6% and 7½%. Higher figures could be obtained only by adding in the resources available for next year. If that is done, the deal must run until April 1984, no matter when it takes effect.

(ii) As for the nurses, let me make one point about which there is I think still some misunderstanding. Nurses have not fallen behind. Nurses' earnings in relation to women's earnings generally have not much changed over the last ten years, save for the Halsbury and Clegg awards. So whatever is motivating the nurses' leaders, it cannot be genuine grievance.