



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY

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From the Secretary of State for ~~Social Services~~ Health

Prime Minister?

CRS 15/8

Stephen Catling Esq
Private Secretary to the
Lord President of the Council
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A J McKeon Reading as shown
15 August 1989

The P-M has seen a copy of yr letter on a nursing stat-bod.

She has commented that she thinks that the wording proposed in yr proposal for a yr para 3 for the consultation document will lead to accusations that the Gov has made up its mind regardless of consultation.

Dear Steve

NURSING STATUTORY BODIES: POSSIBLE FUTURE NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Copy as per

In 1988 Health Ministers commissioned a review of the statutory bodies responsible for nursing standards and training, the United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting and the four National Boards. These bodies were established under the Nurses, Midwives and Health Visitors Act 1979, one of the last Acts of the Labour administration. The Act was passed in a great hurry, and has never worked satisfactorily.

The review was carried out by Peat, Marwick, McLintock whose report we intend to publish for consultation next week. Their recommendations include a radical reconstruction of the statutory machinery. There are other recommendations concerning the management of schools of nursing and the day to day functioning of the statutory bodies.

At present part of the membership of the National Boards is elected by the professions and part is appointed by Ministers. The members of the UKCC are all appointees, some of them by the National Boards. The Peat, Marwick, McLintock proposal is that the UKCC should become a part-elected, part-appointed body and the National Boards should be wholly appointed by and accountable to Ministers. We propose to consult on the basis that "Ministers are inclined to accept the restructuring recommendations, subject to further consideration of points of detail".

Opinion here is divided about the likely response to consultation on the principle of the proposals. There is likely to be controversy later about detail which the present report does not cover, eg the precise constitution of the UKCC.

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E.R.

The change would require primary legislation. Health Ministers rejected the possibility of including the necessary provision in the forthcoming Bill giving effect to the NHS White Paper reforms. They may wish to bid for a Bill in the 1990/91 Session. Meanwhile our draft consultation letter says:

"Changing the structure of the Council and Boards would require main legislation. The Government will consider the timing of any such legislation in the light of the outcome of consultation".

I hope you will feel that this formulation does not need the personal approval of the Lord President. Please let me know as soon as possible if you think it does, since in that case we shall need either to redraft or to review our plans for publication to fit in with his availability.

I am copying this letter to Paul Gray (No 10), Carys Evans (Treasury), David Crawley (Scotland), Stephen Williams (Wales) and Stephen Leach (Northern Ireland).



Yours

Andy

A J MCKEON
Private Secretary