



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

15 May 1984

*Dear Mr. Day,*

Thank you for your letter of 8 May.

I can assure you that I am fully conscious of the importance which the Royal College attaches to the Nurses and Midwives Review Body. Norman Fowler has told me of the strength of feeling which was expressed when he addressed your Annual Congress at the end of April.

We do, of course, also recognise the need to deal with the report expeditiously. However, we have reports from four separate review bodies and it is appropriate that we should consider them all together. In doing so, we have to consider not only the amount recommended by the review bodies but also other issues including where the money will come from to meet whatever recommendations are made. That process of consideration is under way but, as I have said in the House, it is most unlikely that I will be in a position to announce the conclusions before the Whitsun Recess.

/The College



The College has presented its evidence to the Review Body which has taken it into account in making its recommendations. In these circumstances I do not think a meeting with the College is necessary.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

---

Trevor Clay, Esq.





file 811  
Aek'a 8/5

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

8 May, 1984

I enclose a copy of a letter which the Prime Minister has received from Mr. Trevor Clay, General Secretary of the Royal College of Nursing.

I should be grateful for advice and a draft reply which the Prime Minister might send to Mr. Clay by close of play on Friday, 11 May.

ANDREW TURNBULL

S. Godber, Esq.,  
Department of Health and Social Security

6



010

Patrons: Her Majesty the Queen  
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother  
Her Royal Highness the Princess Margaret  
Countess of Snowdon



20 Cavendish Square, London, W1M 0AB  
Tel: (01) 409 3333  
General Secretary: Trevor Clay, MPhil, SRN, RMN.

Royal College of Nursing  
of the United Kingdom

bcc: Mr Gregson  
(CO)

TC/JMS/ps

8th May 1984

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher MP,  
10 Downing Street,  
London SW1.

*Dear Prime Minister,*

I am writing to you on my return from Harrogate where the Royal College of Nursing Representative Body was meeting last week.

I am sure that you will have been informed of the reaction of that meeting when I advised members on Thursday afternoon of the reply which you had given earlier in the House of Commons as to when you might announce the government's decision in respect of the recommendations of the Nurses and Midwives Review Body. The College understands that it is necessary for you to consider the report in great depth and, in doing so, to have in mind reports from the other review bodies. Nevertheless, I am sure you will appreciate that the expectations of the nursing profession, and particularly of the Royal College of Nursing, have been raised as a result of your government's offer of new machinery to determine nurses' pay. The Review Body has, unfortunately, had to present its first report to you in a climate of increasing frustration being expressed by many groups in the public sector; nurses do, however, maintain the uniqueness of their case. I should be most grateful if you would let me know whether in the special circumstances which exist at the present time, it is possible for you to make an announcement before the Whitsun Recess. Members of the Representative Body were anxious that representatives of the College should seek a meeting with you in order to discuss the situation.

I am sure that I do not need to remind you that Rcn members have shown praiseworthy patience since 1982, when the notion was first raised that the system for determining their pay awards should be transferred from the Whitley machinery to an independent pay review body. The promise that this action gave came to be welcomed by the profession and nurses have been waiting in expectation that when your announcement is made it will reward that patience, as well as recognise their worth to society, by giving them justice in pay terms. Their disappointment at learning that this waiting period would last for at least another four weeks manifested itself into the anger and frustration to which I have referred above.

I look forward to hearing from you.

*Yours sincerely,*

*Trevor Clay*

Trevor Clay  
General Secretary