

From: The Rt. Hon. The Lord Archer of Sandwell, Q.C.

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House of Lords
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Mr Norman Lamb MP

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Thank you for your letter relating to Mrs GRO-A

I had already been provided with a copy of the letter to Mrs GRO-A signed by Morven Smith, of the DHSS.

I am wholly mystified by it. Our Inquiry has so far enjoyed a cordial relationship with officials in the DHSS. We met a group of them on 25 April, in order to explore the assistance which they could offer the Inquiry, and they were commendably forthcoming. At the end of the meeting, each side extended an invitation to the other to request a further meeting if and when the need arose. Since then, neither side has suggested such a meeting, although we had it in mind to request one when we had proceeded a little further with our inquiries. We have been informed that they are about to provide us with a substantial number of documents in the near future.

I agree that the clear implication of the letter is that they had been requesting a further meeting, and that the Inquiry had ignored it. If that is indeed what it was intended to convey, the kindest epithet which can be applied is that it is grossly misleading.

I have written to the Head of Blood Policy in the Department, and when I receive his reply I will write to you further. Meanwhile, I hope that we may remain in correspondence as to any further developments.