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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SECURITY
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From the Joint Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

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General Secretary
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Dear Mr. Jenkins,

02 Mar 1984

Thank you for your letter of 14 February in which you raise further matters about the supply of blood plasma and the facilities at the Protein Fractionation Centre (PFC) at Liberton, Edinburgh.

The detailed points you make about the PFC are matters for the Secretary of State for Scotland, and I have forwarded copies of your letter and our previous correspondence to the Scottish Office.

You raised some more general points about the supply of plasma needed for the manufacture of blood products. In 1982, when we decided to increase UK based production so as to make the UK self-sufficient in blood products, various options in the ways of achieving the necessary production capacity were considered. It was decided to build a new production unit at BPL, Elstree, with a capacity to meet the needs of England and Wales, and to have PFC, Liberton concentrate on the needs of Scotland and Northern Ireland. The construction of the new BPL unit is now well under way.

We are aware of the need for an increased supply of plasma from the National Blood Transfusion Service to feed the new BPL unit, and Regional Health Authorities have been set increased plasma production targets. I recognise this has resource implications for Health Authorities in the short term, but the longer term returns will benefit the whole NHS. The Secretary of State recently decided that income from the handling charges for blood and blood derivatives supplies to non-NHS hospitals should be used specifically to help fund the collection of more plasma.

Yours sincerely

GRO-C

THE LORD GLENARTHUR