

January 7, 1981

Mr J MacGregor  
House of Commons  
London SW1 0AA

Dear John

Thank you for recent letters and for a most enjoyable, and for me, particularly interesting evening at the House of Commons in December. I very much appreciated the opportunity to sit close to Sir Keith Joseph, and despite his clearly very heavy programme, he was well acquainted with some of the specific problems of Travenol due to his contact with our people in the States and his interest in health and sterile products dating back to his period as Minister.

I am asking Susan Rule, my Administrative Assistant, to make special efforts with the help of your Secretary, to arrange a meeting to take place early in 1981, in London.

I am attaching some letters sent in the recent past to the Medicines Division relative to issues of enforcement of the Medicines Act. I really do object to foreign companies being allowed to import for use products which are not even labelled in accordance with the Medicines Act. German Blood Packs, if widely used here, would certainly result in problems of utilisation of the capacity of our new unit, opened by Roland Moyle a year and a half ago. Jobs are at risk, and running only one shift, we are more than coping with demand for supply of Blood Packs in the UK. We could increase our output substantially and by doing so, reduce costs. The Medicines Division acknowledged my letters, but Blood Packs continue to come into Britain for use in Transfusion Centres from Germany without product licence numbers printed on the labels. How can we be sure there are not other deficiencies in these products?

Another very serious matter has arisen which I must discuss with you. You may have seen, or heard about, a recent programme in the "World in Action" series, dealing with the Blood Products Laboratory at Elstree, which supplies treatment for Haemophilia and other products made from plasma collected from voluntary donors within the Blood Transfusion Service. The programme disclosed that recent visits of the Medicine Inspectors to Elstree have effectively condemned the buildings, some of the equipment and the procedures, and some of the statements made about the quality of the facility were horrifying. One must conclude that there is a significant

cont.....

Directors  
AW Barrill (Managing)  
BL Storr  
RG Emery

Directors  
WH Ganz (USA)  
C. Schewigel (USA)

Registered Office as above  
Registered in England No. 461400  
T Hopkins (Company Secretary)

No: 2  
Date: January 7, 1981

risk to patients in this country if the Blood Products Laboratory at Elstree is allowed to continue manufacturing (as is the case due to Crown Priviledge). The other side of the coin is, of course, that industry is subjected to the most rigorous standard by Medicines Inspectors and is, in many instances, forced to invest large sums of money even when it might not be easy to prove that further expenditure continues to improve the quality of the product. Failure to comply with the Medicines Act or requirements of a Manufacturers Licence and the end of business existence. It is absolutely clear, on evidence presented on the "World in Action" programme, that dual standards are being applied. I know, from my experience of other units operating within the Health Service making sterile solutions in hospitals, that Elstree is not a lone case.

I am tempted to write to Roland Moyne, since I met him when he opened our unit here, on these issues, because I feel he could be particularly sympathetic to the Blood Pack case, having come here and taken an interest in us when he was the Minister of Health. I have not done so for obvious reasons at this stage, and feel it best to wait and see what we can come up with during our meeting and through subsequent contact with Gerard Vaughn or others who you may recommend. However, I am concerned, John, since the livelihoods of some of our workers may be at stake.

I look forward to hearing from you, and to meeting you (hopefully) soon.

Yours sincerely  
TRAVENOL LABORATORIES LIMITED

GRO-C

A W Barrell

Encs

PS Since I dictated this letter, John, I have learned that the Cambridge Regional Transfusion Service actually have purchased 30,000 German Blood Packs. They certainly will not be permitted to use any of these during the donor sessions on site at Thetford! I have to handle the Cambridge issue with sensitivity, but your advice on whether or not you feel it might be useful to involve the Cambridge MP Rhodes James would be helpful.