

(10)

Ms Bateman

THAMES BID ON AIDS

I copied you yesterday the bid from Thames TV for CMO to appear on their programme to discuss AIDS counselling, kit testing and the advice in Blue Booklet 2.

They have now decided that they would prefer to discuss the political side of the story, an announcement by NUPE that they regard Government funding for AIDS as totally inadequate and calling for at least £6m more. This, as I explained to them, is not something Dr Acheson could answer, and so they have transferred their bid to MS(H).

They have asked if they could interview him at Blackpool next week. They will have a team up there and would anticipate taking up no more than 15 minutes of his time.

If MS(H) is not available they would like to keep on file their bid for CMO to talk on the medical aspects.

Given the complexities of the subject, it will not be an easy interview for MS(H), and however good intentioned the programme may be originally, it is likely to stray towards the medical, I would have thought, at some stage.

Unless MS(H) particularly wishes to put over the points that an extra £6m means a lot of heart/cancer patients dying instead, it is probably wise to steer clear of the NUPE thrust and take the opportunity for further medical education of the type CMO has already done.

Could you let me know MS(H)'s views as early as possible on Monday so I can alert CMO.

I have spoken this afternoon to Dr Hunt who feels the subject is such an open one that until we know precisely what NUPE are going to say, it is unreasonable for CMO to respond. MS(H) may feel the same proviso applies to his possible appearance.

GRO-C

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GRO-C

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cc ~~Mr Bates~~ Dr Hunt
Dr Smithies
Mr Williams
Mr Murray
Mr Wilson
Mr Price