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Subject: INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY - ARTICLE ON LR1b

Marty/Gerry

Thanks for your help on Friday. As promised, when I spoke to Marty yesterday, I am writing to let you know what the newspaper printed in the end. For those who don't know, the journalist phoned round the US plasma centres after speaking to the Department and was put in touch with Gerry who took her through the issues.

The article is headlined - "NHS firm shipped contaminated plasma".
Here are some extracts:

"A private American blood bank bought last week by the Department of Health to ensure contamination-free supplies to the NHS has repeatedly had to recall its products. In one case, it shipped blood that has not been tested for viruses such as HIV, and in another, it distributed plasma that was hepatitis C positive.

The Department bought Life Resources for £50m.....Life Resources owns 24 plasma supply firms in the US. However, there have been five instances in the past five years when its companies have recalled plasma. These include incidents in 2000, when plasma was taken from a donor who was at increased risk of CJD; and in 1998 when a batch included material from an "unsuitable donor".

In 1996 one of the subsidiaries, DCI Biologicals Inc, New Mexico, received a warning from the US regulator, the FDA, that rules had been breached after a shipment of plasma was found to be positive for hepatitis C and had not been tested for HIV.

Gerald Matlin, the firm's chief operating officer said that the firm had called in the FDA after it had found an anomaly in its records. He added that the manager in charge has left, staff had been re-trained and a "fail-safe" computer system had been installed.

"You do everything in your power to ensure that product is safe, then if you find it might not be, you take steps to recall the product", he said.

The DoH said all plasma was checked for viruses in the UK, and was also heat treated to inactivate any viruses. The DoH said that all the companies' facilities had been inspected prior to purchase."

The remainder of the article argues that these events add weight to the case for recombinant clotting factors for haemophiliacs.

There is likely to be other press interest following this story. We are likely to get some questions in Parliament. It would be helpful therefore if on Monday you could give me the

facts behind the specific recalls mentioned in the article. Gerry - I sent you on Friday the list of recalls provided by the Independent.

Give me a call if you want to discuss.

Charles