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Commission of Inquiry
on the Blood System in Canada



Commission d'enquête
sur l'approvisionnement en sang au Canada

Commissioner
The Honourable Mr. Justice Horace Krever

Counsel
Ms. Marlys Edwardh
Ms. Céline Lamontagne

Principal Adviser
George E. Connell, OC, Ph.D.

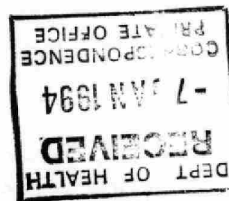
Commissaire
L'honorable juge Horace Krever

Conseillères juridiques
M^e Marlys Edwardh
M^e Céline Lamontagne

Conseiller principal
George E. Connell, OC, Ph.D.
Reply to: Toronto Office

3/1582/213
December 21, 1993

The Right Honourable Virginia Bottomley
Secretary of State and Chairman
of the NHS Policy Board
Department of Health
United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland
Richmond House, 79 Whitehall
London SW1A 2NS, England



Dear Madam Minister:

I have been appointed Commissioner of a Royal Commission inquiring into the blood system in Canada. The Inquiry was established by the Government of Canada to review and report on the safety, organization, management, operations, financing and regulation of the blood system in Canada. The Commission is a national public inquiry which will conduct hearings and receive submissions from across Canada. For your information, I am enclosing a copy of the executive order containing my authority and my terms of reference or mandate.

As you will note from the terms of reference, I am required to examine the structures and experiences of other countries. Accordingly, I am writing to seek your cooperation in providing any information which may be of assistance to me in discharging this part of my obligation.

Of great interest to me are documents detailing measures which were implemented in England to control the contamination of the blood supply with the HIV virus during the early 1980's, including, for example, the introduction of donor screening, HIV testing of blood and blood products, heat-treated blood products, replacement therapies, trace-back systems and the recall of contaminated blood products.

I am also interested in learning what I can about the organization of the blood system in England, particularly the management, operation, financing and regulation of the system. I would welcome receiving material relating to the roles, responsibilities and relationships of the individual partners, be they government agencies, blood collectors, or manufacturers of blood products.

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I would very much appreciate any assistance your department may be able to provide in facilitating the identification and cooperation of its various agencies and other sources of information related to the blood system in England. It is my hope that you can provide me with the name of a person in your office with whom I may correspond for assistance and information.

Yours sincerely,

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Encl.