

Sir Nigel Crisp

From: Zubeda Seedat
 Date: 6 February 2006
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CORRESPONDENCE FROM LORD JENKIN OF RODING: CEOP055671

1. Lord Jenkin has written again about the issue of record management in the Department of Health and why papers on the issue of haemophilia patients infected with hepatitis C have been destroyed. Lord Jenkin has also asked when the report on self sufficiency in blood products in England and Wales will be published. A draft letter is attached at Annex A.

Background

As you know,

2. (Lord Jenkin has been seeking access to papers on the treatment of haemophilia patients and blood safety, which he would have had access to when he was the Secretary of State for Health and Social Security (DHSS), between 1979-1981. His request for access to papers was made following a letter he received from GRO-B GRO-B a haemophilia patient infected with Hepatitis C and HIV through blood products.

3. Lord Jenkin was informed that, many papers from the 1970's and 1980's were destroyed. During the HIV litigation in 1990 many papers from that period were recalled. Our understanding is that some of these papers were not adequately archived and were unfortunately destroyed in the early 1990's.

4. Following Lord Jenkin's enquiries, we established that a number of files, mostly papers and minutes of the Advisory Committee on Virological Safety of Blood were destroyed in the 1990's. During the discovery exercise for the Hepatitis C litigation in 2000 it emerged that a number of files were missing. A low key investigation was undertaken, by colleagues in Internal Audit to establish why files were destroyed. We managed to obtain a copy of the Internal Audit Report from colleagues in Solicitors Division.

5. In the reply to Lord Jenkin dated 1 December at Annex B, we made reference to the fact that, officials have discovered that further papers were destroyed. Lord Jenkin has passed this letter onto members of the haemophilia community. This has prompted accusations that the Department deliberately destroyed documents.

6. Lord Jenkin refers to the report on Self-Sufficiency in Blood Products in England and Wales. This relates to an informal review to clarify the facts surrounding the drive for UK Self Sufficiency in blood products in the 1970's and 1980's. This was commissioned in 2002. It has taken some time to complete this report, which is based on a review of papers that we do hold. The report will be published on 27 February.

Lord Jenkin has been informed, by Lord Warner's office that the report will be published at the end of February.

Zubeda Seedat

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Annex A

The Rt. Hon. The Lord Jenkin of Roding
House of Lords
Westminster
London SW1A 0PW

Thank you for your letter of 14 December.

When we met in April I explained that certain papers dating back to the 1970's and 1980's had been destroyed following the HIV litigation. Following your enquiries, officials established that a number of other files were also marked for destruction. As I said in my previous reply, I am very sorry that many papers have been destroyed.

You have asked about the publication date for the review of papers on Self Sufficiency in Blood Products. This review is based on documents that we do hold. I understand, that you have been informed that the report will be published at the end of February. Officials will of course ensure that you are sent a copy.

SIR NIGEL CRISP

~~* I understand that the Scottish Executive~~

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The Rt. Hon. The Lord Jenkin of Roding
House of Lords
Westminster
London
SW1A 0PW

Our Ref: CEOP055671

6 February 2006

Dear *Lord Jenkin*

Thank you for your letter of 14 December. I am sorry for the delay in responding to you.

When we met in April I explained that certain papers dating back to the 1970's and 1980's had been destroyed following the HIV litigation. Following your enquiries, officials established that a number of other files were also marked for destruction. As I said in my previous reply, I am very sorry that many papers have been destroyed.

You have asked about the publication date for the review of papers on Self Sufficiency in Blood Products. This review is based on documents that we do hold. I understand that you have been informed that the report will be published at the end of February. Officials will of course ensure that you are sent a copy.

Yours sincerely

GRO-C

NIGEL CRISP