

I hope it will not
be attended by too much
publicity.

PRIME MINISTER *ms*

Prime Minister

Agree to see them?

Yes ms

ms 29/4

The Royal College of Nursing have asked for a meeting with you about the detailed arrangements for the new Review Body, and in particular about what to them is the crucially important question of whether it should deal with unqualified as well as qualified staff.

The arguments for and against your seeing them are fairly evenly balanced. On the one hand, it would be a mistake to create the impression that any trade union, even one like the Royal College of Nursing whose hand we should like to strengthen vis-a-vis the affiliated Trade Unions, has automatic right of access to you whenever they wish. It is also questionable whether the issue is sufficiently intrinsically important to justify your personal involvement.

On the other hand, such a meeting would follow naturally from your meeting with all the nursing organisations in December 1981, and could I think be turned to some advantage. You could point out that no other Government has been prepared to give the nurses the improved system of pay determination which they have been seeking for so many years. The new Review Body is for them a benefit the extent of which it is difficult to overstate, and for which they have to thank this Government. But the commitment which you repeated in December 1981 was to the Staff Side as a whole. No one at the time raised any objections relating to the inclusion of unqualified staff, and it would now be unreasonable for the Royal College of Nursing to expect the Government to renege on its commitment. There is the further consideration that it is in the Government's interest that the Review Body should make a good start, and for that the cooperation of the Royal College of Nursing is a sine qua non. Your involvement at this stage offers the best assurance that that cooperation will be forthcoming.

Weighing these considerations against one another, I believe that the balance of advantage lies in your agreeing to see the Royal College of Nursing, even if quite briefly, when your diary permits.

26 April 1983

Ref: N F



~~BT~~

10 DOWNING STREET

CR

Ray Lane been
offered 1030 on
the 16th of May.

Spoke to JHAI
again today but
no answer as
yet from them.

Will copy.

CF.

1/5 check with TF
Cancelled due to
Election Campaign.
13.5.83.