



Prime Minister (2) ✓ J V

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Prime Minister

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE PAY DISPUTE

There are two developments which I should report to colleagues following my minute of 19 May.

The decision at yesterday's meeting of the TUC Health Services Committee was to call for two further national stoppages lasting for twenty-four hours on 4 June and 8 June. By the latter date we shall know the outcome of the ballot being undertaken by the Royal College of Nursing and therefore substantive negotiations in the Nurses and Midwives Whitley Council should have been resumed. Once again the intention is to try to stop all but accident and emergency admissions. We can expect local action to continue to restrict services in some areas between now and 4 June.

Our detailed assessment of the action on Wednesday shows that whilst the effect was uneven the intensive activity in some places meant that despite the claims of the unions emergency cover could not always be guaranteed. My statement on the announcement of further stoppages underlined the threat to patient safety of such action as well as the general distress and discomfort caused.

I have reminded health authorities of the need to stand firm, maintain services as far as possible and ensure that those who do not work do not get paid. Discussions on contingency arrangements to provide emergency cover are being initiated.

I am copying this to all Cabinet colleagues, the Chief Whip and Sir Robert Armstrong.

NF

21 May 1982



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20 MAY 1982



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