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From the Principal Private Secretary

20 March 1996

CABINET OFFICE
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20 MAR 1996
FILE NO. 17/38

Dear Frank

BSE: STATEMENT

There are two points the Prime Minister would want to see brought out in any statement made today.

The first is that there is no *proven* link between BSE and CJD. This is a point Professor Pattison and others made yesterday. All that has happened is that the balance of probabilities has now shifted in the light of new evidence. The Prime Minister feels it is important to emphasise this so as to explain earlier statements about there being no scientific evidence of such a link.

The second is that any statement should name those giving the medical, scientific and veterinary advice on which the Government's action is based. The Prime Minister feels that simply to say "we are advised" will sound very weak when there will be other scientists prominently saying "we told you so."

I am copying this letter to Clare Moriarty (Department of Health) and to Jan Polley (Cabinet Office).

ALEX ALLAN

Frank Strang, Esq.  
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

96/03.20/38.1

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