

Prime Minister

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APs + Associates

Since I wrote this I have spoken to you and you decided that

Ref. A09071 you will see him

MR WHITMORE

for five minutes with no photography.

the 22nd

Unfortunate. But I do not see how we cancel the meeting at this late hour. Agree to keep it to five minutes; to confine the conversation to Royal Opera House matter; and to have no photocall?
 All 22nd

In your minute of 30th June you told me that the Prime Minister would be ready to see Mr Herbert W Armstrong briefly. That meeting was arranged for Friday 23rd July at 10.15 am.

2. Mr Herbert Armstrong has given £100,000 to the Royal Opera House Development Appeal, and the Appeal organisers clearly hope that he may come up with a further contribution, once he has seen the Prime Minister. * ~ ~ ~ ~ *

3. Mr Herbert W Armstrong is 90 in a week's time. You will see from the attached biography and brochure that he is "the Pastor General of the Worldwide Church of God, and Founder and Chancellor of Ambassador College".

4. You will also have seen Washington telegram No. 2473 of 19th July. The Worldwide Church of God is clearly a controversial organisation in the United States. It regards itself as the "true Church" re-established by God in 1933 to prepare for the end of the world; and it appears to have some pretty fundamentalist dogmas. I also attach some FCO correspondence suggesting "strong caution".

5. If I had known about this when the possibility of Mr Armstrong seeing the Prime Minister was raised with me, I should have declined to ask the Prime Minister to consider it.

6. The Prime Minister may think that she would prefer not to get involved at all. In that case perhaps she could send a brief letter on the lines of the draft attached.

7. If that is thought to be too embarrassing, * ~ ~ ~ ~ * and the call is to go ahead, I suggest that

* ~ ~ * Passages deleted and closed, 40 years, under FOI Exemption. 1.

Wayland,
25 September 2012

the Prime Minister should confine herself rigorously to the affairs of the Royal Opera House, thanking Mr Armstrong for his great generosity (which has got his name engraved on a plaque in the foyer of the Royal Opera House), and head off any attempt by Mr Armstrong to interest her in the affairs of the Worldwide Church of God.

RA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

22nd July 1982



DRAFT LETTER FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO MR HERBERT W ARMSTRONG

I am very sorry to have to say that my official programme of engagements tomorrow is now such that it will not be possible for me after all to meet you. I had hoped to have an opportunity of expressing to you my appreciation of the generosity of your contribution to the Royal Opera House Development Appeal, which has made possible major improvements to the conditions of those who work at the Royal Opera House for the Royal Opera and Royal Ballet Companies. Since I cannot now do this in person, I am happy to do so in this letter.