

Mr Peterson.

1. This is a copy. The original has been extracted and closed, 60 years.

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The former Minister accepts the arrangements for his reception which as they affect him. Can you shed any light on his comment

PRIME MINISTER

or the end of my remarks? I did not know she had been asked to go to London. JMS 4xii

THE POPE'S VISIT

When you saw Mr Peterson's minute below, which indicated that, \* ~~~~~ \*, the planning of the Pope's visit was going awry, you agreed that I should have a word with Lord Hunt in an attempt to get things back on the rails.

I have now had three conversations with him over the past two or three weeks. He took my point entirely that if the Pope's programme went ahead on the lines which the Catholic authorities appeared to be contemplating there was a real risk that he might be appearing to snub The Queen and to be giving his meeting with you a lesser priority than would be expected by the British public. Following my first conversation with him, he has spoken a number of times to his brother-in-law, the Cardinal. The present position, which he reported to me today, is that it now seems more probable that the Pope will seek to pay a formal call on The Queen rather than have lunch with her. Cardinal Hume has throughout been personally in favour of a lunch at the Palace rather than a call by the Pope, but Vatican officials have taken the line that the Pope and his predecessors have never been entertained to a meal by another head of state and that it would therefore be impossible for The Queen to give him lunch. There were indications a fortnight ago that the Pope would come down on the side of Cardinal Hume and of Archbishop Heim, who shares the Cardinal's views on this matter, and decide to ignore tradition. But Lord Hunt told me this morning that it now looks as though protocol will triumph and that although the Cardinal is still fighting hard for a lunch, the Pope will seek to meet The Queen by calling on her during the first afternoon of his visit.

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As regards your own involvement in the Pope's visit, the Cardinal has told Lord Hunt that because the Pope's programme

\* ~ \* Passages deleted and closed, 60 years, under FOI Exemptions. @Wayland 18 October 2011

is so very crowded, he would find it difficult to call on you at No 10 and that those planning the visit would find it very helpful if you would agree to meet him, as has already been suggested, at the reception which is being given for him at the Archbishop's House in the evening of Saturday 29 May. We had at first feared that it would in practice be very difficult for you to have an adequate meeting with the Pope in the margins of a conventional reception; but Lord Hunt has now established that the occasion will be rather different from an ordinary reception. What will happen is that the great majority of the guests will be in one large room, and the Pope will process through them, blessing them and stopping for the occasional brief word. He will then go immediately to a small side room where he will see you alone for fifteen or twenty minutes. Thereafter he will have similar separate meetings but with groups such as representatives of other churches.

I think that this arrangement should mean that your meeting with the Pope will be set up appropriately and will be given the right priority by the church authorities. May I say that you are content to go ahead on this basis? Earlier on you said that you would like to be at Gatwick airport when the Pope arrives. I have not taken the advice of the Home Office and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on this but I wonder whether it would be right for you to meet the Pope in this way. His visit is a wholly pastoral one, and he is not a guest of the Government. It is, I know, true that President Giscard went to meet him when he arrived in Paris, but France is of course a Catholic country (however nominally). Here, on the other hand, it might be misunderstood in some quarters if you not only called upon the Pope at Archbishop's House but went to the lengths of going all the way to Gatwick to meet him on arrival. Do you wish to pursue this idea? If you do, I will seek advice.

1 December 1981

JAW.

Not at all -

I was asked  
to do it.!

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