

PRIME MINISTER

*P.S. A minister
chiefly responsible
should not become a
patron of an organization
with his own responsibility
O'Brien all right
not.*

Hugh Rossi has been invited to become Vice President of
a Charitable Trust for the Handicapped and Disabled.

We told his office that, on the basis of "Questions of
Procedure", this seemed unwise. But he claims that Alf Morris
accepted a similar role when in office. He is therefore
reluctant to say no.

I attach Cabinet Office advice, together with Mr. Rossi's
letter and the relevant extract from "Questions of Procedure".
Agree that we must ask him to turn down the invitation?

(I recall your agreeing to allow one or two Ministers to
accept honorary positions with local branches of charities like
"Gingerbread". But Mr. Rossi's position is different, as the
Minister responsible nationally for services which the charity
may present as inadequate.)

MAJ

*I wonder if
we should continue with
this advice. I think
as a patron of a number of
charities which relate to
government - how do we
I think he could accept provided
he wrote a letter making his position
clear as "Minister" in charge not*

3 February 1982



10 DOWNING STREET

He B
Minister.

e. Cabot

From the Private Secretary

4 March 1982

Thank you for your letter of 25 January, about the invitation to Mr. Rossi from PHAB to become a Vice-President.

I am sorry that we have taken so long to reply, but we have discussed this on the telephone several times.

As you know, the relevant section of "Questions of Procedure for Ministers" suggests that this kind of invitation needs to be treated with great caution. The Prime Minister has carefully considered the circumstances in this case, but has concluded that the normal guidance must apply; that is that a Minister directly responsible for a particular area of work should not become a patron of an organisation within his own sphere of responsibility.

It may be worth recording that we can trace no record of clearance for Mr. Morris to accept a similar invitation. If this becomes an issue with the organisation, you might find it helpful to check whether DHSS papers throw any light on the way the matter was handled at the time.

M. A. PATTISON

Ms Melanie Smith,
Department of Health and Social Security.

MS

Ref. A07048

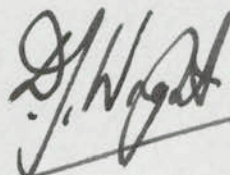
MR PATTISON

In your minute of 26th January, you asked for advice on whether the Minister of State for Social Security and the Disabled, Mr Hugh Rossi, might accept an invitation to become a Vice-President of the charitable trust PHAB (Physically Handicapped and the Disabled).

2. Mr Rossi's Private Secretary has correctly pointed out in her letter of 25th January that the guidance to Ministers in Questions of Procedure is clear that Ministers should decline such invitations as that which Mr Rossi has received. PHAB is a pressure group which works to advance the interests of the physically handicapped. Mr Rossi's Vice-Presidency would involve the risk of a conflict of interest arising at some stage in the future between the Government's policies and the views which PHAB might urge upon it. With a President as actively engaged in the advancement of the interests and welfare of the physically disabled as Mr Jimmy Savile, Mr Rossi could find himself subjected to considerable pressure within PHAB and consequently risk being himself embarrassed and causing embarrassment to the Government. Sir Robert Armstrong, whom I have consulted about this, takes the view that the established criteria and precedents point towards Mr Rossi declining the invitation.

3. Mr Rossi's Private Secretary has, however, suggested that her Minister would not wish to imply that he is less concerned about the plight of the disabled than one of his predecessors, Mr Alf Morris MP, who according to the Director of PHAB accepted a similar invitation to that now extended to Mr Rossi. I have consulted both the Cabinet Office Precedent Book and the relevant files for the period when Mr Morris held Ministerial office and can find no reference either to his acceptance of a Vice-Presidency or to the Cabinet Office being consulted about such an invitation being extended to Mr Morris. Had the Cabinet Office been consulted about such an invitation, it is almost certain that we would have advised Mr Morris to decline. The principle embodied in the advice contained in Questions of Procedure has been common to successive administrations.

4. I recommend, therefore, that you should advise Ms Smith that Mr Rossi should decline the invitation for the reasons given in both Questions of Procedure and in paragraph 2 above. You might also point out that the Cabinet Office has no reference to a similar invitation being extended to or accepted by Mr Morris. Ms Smith might think it prudent to have the previous administration's files in the DHSS examined to establish the accuracy of the statement made by the Director of PHAB to Mr Rossi. If the files reveal that Mr Morris accepted such an invitation and Mr Rossi were asked why he was unwilling to accept a Vice-Presidency as Mr Morris had done, Mr Rossi could say that the practices and policies of a previous administration or Minister are not of course his concern, but that it was an established policy of successive administrations that Ministers should not accept non-governmental positions in which there might be a risk of a conflict between the interests of such an organisation and the policies being pursued by the government of which the Minister is a member.



D J WRIGHT

2nd February 1982

the Prime Minister before continuing a connection with Lloyds, however nominal, which they had established before appointment or establishing any such connection during their term of appointment. Before granting permission, the Prime Minister will need to be satisfied that the conditions indicated above will be met.

Nominations for International Awards, etc.

75. From time to time, the personal support of Ministers is requested for nominations being made for international prizes and awards, e.g., the annual Nobel prizes. Ministers should not sponsor individual nominations for any awards, since it would be inevitable that some people would assume that the Government was itself thereby giving its sponsorship.

Pressure Groups

76. Ministers are frequently asked to associate themselves with pressure groups, for example by becoming signatories of open letters or appeals or by attending a rally or other function to which publicity is to be given. Such invitations should normally be declined since Ministerial association with pressure groups can give rise to misunderstanding about the Government's position. Any Minister who wishes to accept an invitation from a pressure group should consult the Prime Minister.

Participation in the Parliamentary Contributory Pension Fund

77. Under the terms of the Parliamentary and Other Pensions Act 1972, as amended by the Parliamentary Pensions Act 1978, Ministers, if paid, will be required to contribute to the Parliamentary Contributory Pension Fund in respect of their Ministerial salary (less, for Members of the House of Commons, the difference between their reduced salary as a Member and a Member's ordinary salary) but they may within 12 months of their appointment elect not to do so. Details of the contributions required, and of the rates of personal and family benefit which accrue from participation in the Fund, can be obtained from the Fees Office.

78. Ministers who have accrued pension rights in another pension scheme may, if they elect to participate in the Fund in respect of their Ministerial salary, and if the rules of the other scheme permit, also elect within twelve months of their appointment to have the value of those accrued rights transferred to the Fund. The Fees Office will advise on the additional benefits which will be secured by such a transfer payment.

Participation in other pension schemes

79. Ministers with accrued pension rights in another pension scheme who do not (or cannot) elect for a transfer payment may leave these as "frozen" rights in the other scheme, with no further contributions being payable during their tenure of office. Alternatively, if the rights are secured by an insurance policy (and assuming that the rules of the other scheme so permit) the policy could be transferred to them, either on a paid-up basis or with the right to continue payment of the premiums themselves.

80. Ministers who expect to resume their former employment on ceasing to hold Ministerial office and who elect not to participate in the Parliamentary Fund in respect of their Ministerial salary may remain in active membership (that is, with continued payment of contributions, and with their period of office counting as continued pensionable employment) of any pension scheme relating to that

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D. J. WRIGHT

D J WRIGHT

2nd February 1982

File



Minutes

RM

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

MR WRIGHT
CABINET OFFICE

Please see the attached letter from Mr Hugh Rossi's Office about an invitation he has received to be a Vice-President of PHAB.

Any organisation of this type seems likely to try to act as a pressure group demanding increased Government action. I believe we have occasionally allowed Ministers to become associated with constituency-related organisations of this nature, but to encourage the responsible Minister to be listed on the notepaper of a national organisation seems more dangerous.

B/E 4/2

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I should be grateful for advice.

MA

26 January, 1982

OS



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SECURITY

Alexander Fleming House, Elephant & Castle, London SE1 6BY

Telephone 01-407 5522

From the Minister of State for Social Security and the Disabled

Mr M Pattison
Private Secretary
Prime Minister's Office
10 Downing Street
London SW1

25 January 1982

Dear Mr Pattison

I have been asked to write to you on behalf of Mr Rossi who has been invited to become a Vice President of 'PHAB' ('Physically Handicapped and Able Bodied') a Charitable Trust which has the Rt Hon The Earl of Snowdon as its Patron and Jimmy Savile as President.

Shortly after receiving the invitation Mr Rossi met Mr Terry Thompson, the Director of PHAB, at an engagement and was told that Mr Alf Morris MP had accepted a similar invitation while holding Ministerial Office. However, on referring to the Cabinet Document on Questions of Procedure for Ministers Mr Rossi found that the advice is that "such invitations should normally be declined".

You may recall I telephoned you about the invitation earlier this week when you kindly advised that if Mr Rossi did accept then he would possibly be aligning himself with an organisation that may at some future stage oppose government policy. Mr Rossi has said that clearly this advice is sound but if Mr Morris accepted as a Minister he does not want to appear to be any less concerned than he was.

Mr Rossi has consequently asked me to write to you to seek the Prime Minister's advice on the matter as this is suggested in the 'Questions of Procedure' if the Minister is in some doubt because he wishes to accept.

I look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours sincerely

Melanie Smith

MELANIE SMITH(MS)
Assistant Private Secretary



C (F) PPS?

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Alexander Fleming House, Elephant & Castle, London SE1 6BY

Telephone 01-407 5522

From the Minister of State for Social Security and the Disabled

WR

Mr M Pattison
 Private Secretary
 Prime Ministers Office
 10 Downing Street
 London
 SW1

APC April 1982

Dear Miss

You kindly provided this office with advice recently on whether Mr Rossi should accept an invitation from a voluntary organisation working in the disablement field to become a patron of their group.

I am afraid I must write to you again about a similar matter but this time the invitation comes from a religious organisation. I should be grateful if you would consider the attached letter ^{attached} and let me have your view on whether, as SPIGA does not come immediately under Mr Rossi's own sphere of responsibility, he may accept this invitation. I would also appreciate your advice on whether I should approach the Foreign Office.

I look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours sincerely

Note

I have told Melanie Smith that if Mr Rossi is satisfied that his organisation does not fall within his responsibilities, and that he can defend this in public, then there is no reason why he should not accept this invitation.

Melanie

MS MELANIE SMITH
 Assistant
 Private Secretary

WR
 27/4

Received 16/4/82

S.P.I.C.M.A.



SPECIAL PROJECTS IN CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY AREAS

(Registered as a Charity with the Charity Commission, Reg. No. 270794)

Please reply to:

16 Grasmere Close,
Loughton, Essex.

H. Rossi, Esq., M.P.
House of Commons,
Westminster,
London, S. W. 1.

6th March, 1982.

Dear Hugh,

Since the inception of SPICMA you have always shown great interest in our work. My brother Michael, who is at present out of the country, and I have had discussions recently and as a result we should very much like you to become a Patron of SPICMA.

Perhaps you could consider this and let Michael or me know your decision. We both sincerely hope that you will find it possible.

I am very happy to inform you that SPICMA's shipment to Poland you saw in Echo has reached Poland safely and been distributed.

We are also happy to let you know that we have just completed sixty seven tons of medical and food for the missionaries and Bernard in Uganda.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Paddy'.

Paddy Phelan
Director