

Conspiracy theorists suspect a plot

Is John Major secretly controlling the planet? And if so, why is nobody interested? John Ezard wrestles with some intractable mysteries

AFTER a cliff-hanger meeting in London yesterday, a couple decided to hire the grand hall at Wembley for a conference this weekend aimed at exposing a conspiracy to take over the world by the year 2000.

Mary Seal and Keith Mears, from Walsall, will risk their life savings to warn the world. "Stand by for John Major to be exposed as an all-powerful controller of the planet," said Mrs Seal.

But when they announced the plan, the couple came to suspect there was a conspir-

acy to thwart them. They first booked the 12,000-seat Wembley Arena at £100,000 for two days.

By December the public had bought only 15 tickets. "I think you will agree with me, Richard, that even a village hall event would by now have sold more tickets. What is going on?", Mrs Seal wrote to Richard Knight, stadium events manager.

In a separate letter, Mrs Seal, aged 46, a former public relations officer, complained. "We have had no advertising published in

Unidentified Flying Object magazines. Their printing machines have broken down. All of them."

But sales of the £20 tickets have risen to about 240, helped by a Guardian diary item which other newspapers followed up. Fears of a conspiracy to silence the event have abated. After talks at Wembley, the couple decided to transfer from the arena to the 2,000-seat grand hall, which costs £10,000.

They expect to spend £50,000 — raised from the sale of Mr Mears's house and insurance policies — on a 24-hour synthesis of conspiracy theories from around the world. Conspirators likely to be named include the philosopher Bertrand Russell, accused of pioneering the creation of Aids as a device to control world population, the CIA, the Catholic Church, Zionism and the medical profession. These allegedly come under a 300-strong ruling elite called the Illuminati.

Speakers, whose air fares the couple are paying, include the American far-rightist Eustace Mullins, who maintains that "Have a nice day is a code heralding an imminent Zionist pogrom against Gentiles, and Dr Vladimir Terziski, a Bulgarian physicist who believes Britain discovered anti-gravity

and built bases on the moon and south pole a century ago.

Professor Eileen Barker of the London School of Economics, a specialist in fringe beliefs, said: "I think we can expect a growth in these ideas as we approach the year 2000."

Steve Duffy, a researcher in the subject, said: "These things always happen during times of upheaval. The idea of the Illuminati conspiracy first arose during the American and French revolutions."

Mrs Seal forecasts takeover by a New World Order by 1995 and "something spectacular" — possibly involving aliens — by 2000.

She and Mr Mears are trying to buck a trend of rufured prophecies over the last 10 years. Christ did not reappear as an Asian in east London in the 1980s as expected by Benjamin Creme. Volcanoes failed to erupt worldwide last summer, as forecast by the former sports commentator David Icke.

The world did not end on November 28, as expected by 20,000 members of a South Korean sect who had given away their homes, abandoned their families and resigned their jobs.

But Mrs Seal says that merely by holding the conference "we will have achieved something incredible".



Mary Seal, who forecasts "something spectacular" — possibly involving aliens — by the year 2000

PHOTOGRAPH BY JANE COLE