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Prime Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Can you throw any light on 'A' below?

Do you agree with 'B' overleaf? 5 May 1981

And s/s

Overleaf we should not be sure but think we should support him not

Dear Michael,

United Nations Secretary-Generalship

Mr Waldheim's second term expires on 31 December. Lord Carrington has been considering how we should approach the election, which is likely to take place in December.

The Secretary-General is appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council. The Charter does not lay down a fixed term, but five years has become normal. There have been four Secretaries-General: Mr Lie (Norway) from 1946 to 1953; Mr Hammarskjold (Sweden) from 1953 to 1961; U Thant (Burma) from 1961 to 1971; and Mr Waldheim.

The five Permanent Members hold the key and within the five it is the attitudes of the Americans and the Russians that are crucial. We ourselves could hardly maintain a veto on a candidate acceptable to the rest of the Council or force through a candidate of our own. The preliminary view of officials in the new American Administration is that it would be unwise to risk a change. The Russians are likely to want to stick to Waldheim. Third World sentiment, which the Chinese would probably champion, would be strongly in favour of a Third World Secretary-General if a change were made, but we expect that the developing countries would acquiesce in a further term for Mr Waldheim, who has cultivated them assiduously.

Waldheim himself seems anxious to secure a third term, but if strongly challenged and unsure of support from the major powers would probably withdraw rather than engage in a protracted campaign. He appears to be under the impression that he already has a promise of support from the Prime Minister following a conversation over dinner during his official visit in May last year. We have no proper record of that conversation. I do not know whether you can shed any light on the episode.

/Politically

On withdrawal - A. Yes. We discussed the matter previously. I should reach Peter here to carry on with present matter or ul. present matter to go to on withdrawal. not



Politically, Waldheim has not been very impressive. But the Secretary-General's room for manoeuvre is limited. A strong personality would in practice be unable to do more than marginally better, but might make difficulties for us in a number of ways. Waldheim is at least susceptible to influence and his cautious approach often suits us.

Waldheim is a bad manager and the Secretariat has now been neglected - or worse - for twenty years. It is doubtful whether much can now be done about the situation (or whether anyone with a chance of obtaining Waldheim's job has the necessary talent or interest). It is also doubtful whether it matters directly to the United Kingdom what happens to the Secretariat as a whole.

What we do attach importance to is the special political unit, which handles the most delicate political questions and is jointly headed by Brian Urquhart. As the result of pressure from the Prime Minister, Waldheim has now promised that he will look to us to provide a successor to Urquhart if he is Secretary-General when Urquhart retires. A Third World Secretary-General would be unlikely to want a Briton as his key political adviser.

A number of other names are being bandied about. Ramphal, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, has come closer to declaring his candidacy than anyone but is not well known in UN circles. The candidate most talked of is Salim, the Tanzanian Foreign Minister. We would have considerable reservations about either. A number of Latin Americans are talked of (most of them unacceptable to the Russians) as are some senior UN officials. But a NATO national has no chance. Nor is it likely that the Secretary-Generalship could go a second time to Sweden (or a third time to Scandinavia - or indeed a fourth time to Europe).

Addition: 6/5/81  
 "The names of  
 Trudeau and  
 Palme are also  
 mentioned."  
 (Michael Hall, Fco.)

Lord Carrington's conclusions are that:

- B.
- Push letter*
- (a) we should not be over-active in the coming months but should watch developments and maintain discreet contact with the French and Americans; and
  - (b) the continuation in office of Mr Waldheim is likely to suit us better than a change.

He would be glad to know whether the Prime Minister agrees.

*yours ever*  
*Roderic Lyne*  
 (R M J Lyne)  
 Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
 10 Downing St



5-MAY-1981



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

6 May 1981

UN Secretary-Generalship

The Prime Minister has seen your letter to me of 5 May about Mr. Waldheim's third term.

The Prime Minister agrees with the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary that Mr. Waldheim's continuation in office is likely to suit us better than a change. She also agrees that we should avoid being over-active in the coming months. Nonetheless it should be clear that we support Mr. Waldheim.

As regards what was said by the Prime Minister to Mr. Waldheim in May last year, her own recollection is that she gave Mr. Waldheim an indication, but no more, that she would prefer him to carry on.

M. P. D. ALCANTARA

R.M.J. Lyne, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

20 October 1981

*Dear Michael,*

Election for the Secretary-Generalship  
of the United Nations

Mr Waldheim will be at Cancun and will no doubt be lobbying intensively for support in the election for the Secretary-Generalship which is now to take place on 27 October.

There are only two declared candidates, Waldheim and Salim, the Foreign Minister of Tanzania, who now has the endorsement of the Non-Aligned Foreign Ministers as well as the OAU and the League of Arab States. Two people have notified the President of the Security Council that they will be candidates in the event of a deadlock between Waldheim and Salim. These are Ortiz, the Argentine Ambassador in London, who stood in 1971 and came close to success, and Perez de Cuellar, the Peruvian who was until recently an Under Secretary-General in New York and is still Waldheim's personal representative for Afghanistan. Both have good qualities. Other names may emerge, including possibly that of Sonny Ramphal.

Mr Waldheim is clearly becoming increasingly concerned. He knows that the Chinese will veto him at least once and is afraid that Salim may be vetoed only by the Russians. At Cancun he may press us to undertake to veto Salim also and to refrain from voting in favour of anyone else.

The procedure in the election is likely to permit members of the Security Council to vote in favour of more than one candidate in each round. Ministers having told Waldheim that they support him, it follows that we shall not vote for anyone else in the first round. But if there is a deadlock, we would wish to retain our freedom to start voting for other candidates even if Waldheim's hat is still formally in the ring. As for the veto, the Prime Minister has already endorsed Lord Carrington's view that we should not veto Salim.

/Lord Carrington

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Lord Carrington therefore suggests that if approached by Waldheim at Cancun the Prime Minister should refuse to be drawn beyond confirming that we shall be voting for Waldheim.

As for the other Permanent Members, Haig has told Lord Carrington in confidence that the Americans will vote for Waldheim but we do not know whether they will veto Salim. The French seem still to be torn between Waldheim and Salim, but are most unlikely to veto either. We believe that the Russians will favour Waldheim and are quite likely to veto Salim. It seems certain that the Chinese will begin by vetoing Waldheim; in general they will want to please the Third World, but this group is not unanimous in its support of Salim.

*yours ever*  
*Roderic Lyne*

(R M J Lyne)  
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street

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21 OCT 1981

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26 October 1981

Election for the Secretary-Generalship  
of the United Nations

The Prime Minister has seen your letter to me of 20 October. Despite a number of efforts on his part, Dr. Waldheim failed to find an opportunity to lobby the Prime Minister at Cancun. The Prime Minister limited her exchanges with him to wishing him "good luck" when they took leave of each other at the end of the Conference.

MA

CS

Roderic Lyne, Esq.†  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.