



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

4 December 1981

Prime Minister

You will wish to note.

WHL 4/12

Dear John,

Election of UN Secretary-General

The new (Ugandan) President of the Security Council has started his month of office in an unexpectedly business-like way. A Chinese proposal (which we oppose) that the normal 5-year term should be split in two with Salim taking over from Waldheim in the middle of 1984 seems to have been pushed aside. Waldheim withdrew last night, though he doubtless hopes that the Council will eventually have to turn to him again. Salim may follow suit and there is now a good prospect that the Council will soon start voting on third candidates.

Lord Carrington has accordingly been giving further thought to how we should vote on the third candidates who we expect to emerge. The instructions he has already issued, with the Prime Minister's concurrence, imply that we would vote in favour of Perez de Cuellar, the Peruvian diplomat who is Waldheim's Special Representative on Afghanistan. Lord Carrington thinks we should also vote in favour of Sadruddin Aga Khan, the former UN High Commissioner for Refugees, whose administrative capacity and political judgement are at least equal to those of any other likely candidate. It has already been agreed that we would abstain on Castaneda (Mexican Foreign Minister) and for the time being on Ramphal, the Commonwealth Secretary General, and Ortiz de Rosas (Argentine Ambassador in London). Lord Carrington considers that in certain circumstances we might eventually vote for Ramphal and/or Ortiz.

/A number of

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A number of entirely unsuitable candidates have tentatively put themselves forward including certain Permanent Representatives in New York and Geneva. Lord Carrington thinks that as a Permanent Member we must be prepared to play our part in preventing the accidental success of such a candidate and should be ready to use the veto if there is any risk of one of them getting the required nine positive votes (while attempting to share this duty with the Americans and French). But he is asking Sir A Parsons to consult us before vetoing, if time permits.

yours ever,

Roderic Lyne

(R M J Lyne)
Private Secretary

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File

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ELECTION OF THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL

The Prime Minister has seen and noted the contents of your letter of 4 December.

A. J. COLES

Roderic Lyne, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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