

*CE/C*



No

(i) re Prime Minister (i)

consult with U.S. State Dept.

(ii) I would agree recommendation in

Prime Minister

President's

para 4?

Costa Rica made it clear that

NICARAGUAN ELECTIONS that there are not guaranteed elections

1. This year, as in 1982, we sent two official observers to the elections in El Salvador. Our aim in doing so was to establish an impartial and well-informed view of the way in which the elections were conducted; and in both cases the presence of the observers was helpful to us in both political and presentational terms.

and we should think

very carefully about any request to us

2. The Nicaraguan Government have now invited us to send observers to their Presidential and Legislative Assembly elections due to be held on 4 November. They have also invited a number of other European governments including at least four of the Ten; so far the Dutch and the Greeks seem disposed to accept, and the Italians might do so. The IDU and Socialist International have also been invited; both intend to send observers.

observers. In view of

Ortega's comment - it seems that will not be

3. In view of the precedent set by the Salvadorean elections and the IDU's decision to send observers to Nicaragua it would be difficult for us not to do so. We would be accused - not least in Parliament - of a lack of even-handedness, even though it is doubtful whether international attention of this sort will have much effect on whether the Sandinistas hold the election fairly. Ortega has as you know been reported as saying that the elections would not put their power at risk. If, as we expect, the elections are flawed (one of the main opposition groups has refused to register) it will be valuable to have an impartial account of the proceedings. The Americans have said that they see this as a good reason for accepting the Nicaraguan

elections what that

can be seen

from the

output

it is not

invitation

to view what comes

to could be unfair

election - it can't be



invitation, and I think it important not to pass up the opportunity with which we have been presented.

4. None of the observers we sent to El Salvador would be good choices for Nicaragua. The field of acceptable candidates is small; if we are to identify suitable alternatives we shall need to start work now. I therefore propose to accept the Nicaraguan invitation in principle, subject to confirmation that the observers will be given the necessary freedom of movement, including access to opposition parties and polling stations, to allow them to do their job properly.

5. Copies of this minute go to other members of OD and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*S. C. Eldon.*

8 August 1984

*for Baroness Young  
(Approved by Lady Young  
and signed in her absence)*

*Michaela*

- 8 AUG 1984



file  
cc PC ✓

BM



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

8 August 1984

NICARAGUAN ELECTIONS

The Prime Minister has considered Lady Young's minute of today's date in which she proposes to accept in principle the Nicaraguan invitation to send observers to their Presidential and Legislative Assembly elections.

The Prime Minister feels strongly that it would be premature to indicate any such acceptance. It is in her view necessary first to consult the United States and our EC partners. The Prime Minister is mindful also that both Senhor Duarte and the President of Costa Rica made it clear to her that in their view these would not be genuine elections, and that we should therefore think very carefully about any request to send observers. She believes that Ortega's comment, as reported in paragraph 3 of Lady Young's minute, casts considerable doubt on the proposition that these elections ever could be fair.

(David Barclay)

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

NR

CONFIDENTIAL



JE vsc  
cpc.

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

4 October 1984

Dear Len,

Nicaragua: Elections

The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary had a brief discussion this evening of whether the United Kingdom should send observers to the Nicaraguan elections. It was decided not to do so.

Yours sincerely,  
Chris Powell

C.D. POWELL

L.V. Appleyard, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

SC