

CM-

PRIME MINISTER

Meeting with Vice-President of Nicaragua

Vice-President Ramirez calls on you at 1030 tomorrow. He will be accompanied by the Ambassador.

His purpose is to gain understanding and sympathy for the Sandinista regime. You will want to leave him in no doubt that our view of them will be coloured by the extent to which they establish a pluralist democracy, and that we are far from impressed by progress so far. (The attached despatch by our Ambassador about the elections has a lot of useful ammunition.) You will also want to take him up on Nicaraguan support for subversion in El Salvador, their slavish adherence to the Soviet and Cuban line on international issues and their distended armed forces.

You will probably want to send President Reagan a short message after the meeting giving an account of what you said. The Americans are rather twitchy about Nicaraguan efforts to pick up support in Europe.

Card attached.

CD?

C.D. Powell

6 February 1985

At the back of the folder is an account of Sir G. Howe's talk with him yesterday. Ramirez speaks at the Oxford Union tonight.

CDP 7/2.



with compliments

MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA DEPT.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

S.W.1. 8/2 1985 .

Carolyn Ryder .

Number 10 .



DR NORA ASTORGA

Nicaraguan Second Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs (responsibility for Western Europe).

Born 1948 in Managua of middle class background, Astorga studied law and received her doctorate at the Catholic University of Managua (1967-71). In 72/73 she had periods of study in Italy and the US. Joined Legal Department of an Engineering Company 73-78.

In 78 she allegedly lured the National Guard General Perez Vega to her house where he was assassinated by FSLN guerrillas. She fled to the FSLN, having joined the organisation earlier in the 70s.

On the overthrow of Somoza in 1979 she was appointed Director of Finance of the Sandinista army and later Legal Attorney from December 79 to February 81. She came to her present post in February 81 and has represented Nicaragua at numerous international conferences including Contadora meetings.

Astorga was nominated as Nicaraguan Ambassador to Washington in mid-1984 but the leakage of this news caused considerable public controversy in the USA and agrément was eventually refused even though the initial State Department private reaction had been favourable.

Attractive and articulate, she is divorced and has four children. Speaks fluent English.



CPD

CENTRAL AMERICA: THE CONTADORA INITIATIVE

1. The serious instability in Central America led four countries of the region - Venezuela, Colombia, Mexico and Panama - to form the Contadora Group which launched a peace initiative in January 1983. In September 1983 the Contadora and Central American Foreign Ministers agreed on a Statement of Objectives. These include the establishment of pluralist democratic political systems, respect for human rights, promotion of national reconciliation, abstention from the threat of use of force, prohibition of intervention or subversion, peaceful settlement of disputes and measures to control arms levels and military activities. The agreement is to be subject to verification and control. A copy of the / "Document of Objectives" is attached.

2. Following negotiations with the Central American countries on the basis of those objectives, the Contadora Foreign Ministers handed over a draft 'Act of Contadora for Peace and Development in Central America' to the Central American Foreign Ministers in June 1984. A further draft of the Act was produced in September 1984 which was accepted by Nicaragua. However at the suggestion of the US Government, El Salvador, Honduras and Costa Rica have proposed further substantial amendments which are currently under consideration. They are primarily designed to improve measures for verification and control of an agreement. The next meeting of the countries concerned is due on 13/14 February in Panama City.

Annex

Document of Objectives

Considering:

The situation prevailing in Central America, which is characterized by an atmosphere of tension that threatens security and peaceful coexistence in the region, and which requires, for its solution, observance of the principles of international law governing the actions of States, especially:

The self-determination of peoples;

Non-intervention;

The sovereign equality of States;

The peaceful settlement of disputes;

Refraining from the threat or use of force;

Respect for the territorial integrity of States;

Pluralism in its various manifestations;

Full support for democratic institutions;

The promotion of social justice;

International co-operation for development;

Respect for and promotion of human rights;

The prohibition of terrorism and subversion;

The desire to reconstruct the Central American homeland through progressive integration of its economic, legal and social institutions;

The need for economic co-operation among the States of Central America so as to make a fundamental contribution to the development of their peoples and the strengthening of their independence;

The undertaking to establish, promote or revitalize representative, democratic systems in all the countries of the region;

The unjust economic, social and political structures which exacerbate the conflicts in Central America;

The urgent need to put an end to the tensions and lay the foundations for understanding and solidarity among the countries of the area;

The arms race and the growing arms traffic in Central America, which aggravate political relations in the region and divert economic resources that could be used for development;

The presence of foreign advisers and other forms of foreign military interference in the zone;

The risks that the territory of Central American States may be used for the purpose of conducting military operations and pursuing policies of destabilization against others,

The need for concerted political efforts in order to encourage dialogue and understanding in Central America, avert the danger of a general spreading of the conflicts, and set in motion the machinery needed to ensure the peaceful coexistence and security of their peoples;

Declare their intention of achieving the following objectives:

To promote détente and put an end to situations of conflict in the area, refraining from taking any action that might jeopardize political confidence or prevent the achievement of peace, security and stability in the region;

To ensure strict compliance with the aforementioned principles of international law, whose violators will be held accountable;

To respect and ensure the exercise of human, political, civil, economic, social, religious and cultural rights;

To adopt measures conducive to the establishment and, where appropriate, improvement of democratic, representative and pluralistic systems that will guarantee effective popular participation in the decision-making process and ensure that the various currents of opinion have free access to fair and regular elections based on the full observance of citizens' rights;

To promote national reconciliation efforts wherever deep divisions have taken place within society, with a view to fostering participation in democratic political processes in accordance with the law;

To create political conditions intended to ensure the international security, integrity and sovereignty of the States of the region;

To stop the arms race in all its forms and begin negotiations for the control and reduction of current stocks of weapons and on the number of armed troops;

To prevent the installation on their territory of foreign military bases or any other type of foreign military interference;

To conclude agreements to reduce the presence of foreign military advisers and other foreign elements involved in military and security activities, with a view to their elimination;

To establish internal control machinery to prevent the traffic in arms from the territory of any country in the region to the territory of another;

To eliminate the traffic in arms, whether within the region or from outside it, intended for persons, organizations or groups seeking to destabilize the Governments of Central American countries;

To prevent the use of their own territory by persons, organizations or groups seeking to destabilize the Governments of Central American countries and to refuse to provide them with or permit them to receive military or logistical support;

To refrain from inciting or supporting acts of terrorism, subversion or sabotage in the countries in the area;

To establish and co-ordinate direct communication systems with a view to preventing or, where appropriate, settling incidents between States of the region;

To continue humanitarian aid aimed at helping Central American refugees who have been displaced from their countries of origin, and to create suitable conditions for the voluntary repatriation of such refugees, in consultation with or with the co-operation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other international agencies deemed appropriate;

To undertake economic and social development programmes with the aim of promoting well being and an equitable distribution of wealth;

To revitalize and restore economic integration machinery in order to attain sustained development on the basis of solidarity and mutual advantage;

To negotiate the provision of external monetary resources which will provide additional means of financing the resumption of intra-regional trade, meet the serious balance-of-payments problems, attract funds for working capital, support programmes to extend and restructure production systems and promote medium- and long-term investment projects;

To negotiate better and broader access to international markets in order to increase the volume of trade between the countries of Central America and the rest of the world, particularly the industrialized countries; by means of a revision of trade practices, the elimination of tariff and other barriers, and the achievement of price stability at a profitable and fair level for the products exported by the countries of the region;

To establish technical co-operation machinery for the planning, programming and implementation of multi-sectoral investment and trade promotion projects.

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Central American countries, with the participation of the countries in the Contadora Group, have begun negotiations with the aim of preparing for the conclusion of the agreements and the establishment of the machinery necessary to formalize and develop the objectives contained in this document, and to bring about the establishment of appropriate verification and monitoring systems. To that end, account will be taken of the initiatives put forward at the meetings convened by the Contadora Group.

Panama City, 9 September 1983

Informed Protocol
6/2/85.



10 DOWNING STREET

Charles, ^{yes} con.

Protocol would
like to know whether
you agree to Mrs V.
Anderson as the
interpreter for the PM's
meeting with Nicaraguan
Vice-President (His English
is not very good). She
has worked for the PM
before, but in French.

SUE
6/2/85.

CONFIDENTIAL



8/2
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

1 February, 1985

Dear Charles,

Call on the Prime Minister by Vice President Ramirez of Nicaragua

/ I enclose briefing for the Prime Minister for the call by Vice President Ramirez of Nicaragua on 8 February at 10.30 am. Senor Ramirez will be accompanied by Senor Francisco D'Escoto, the Nicaraguan Ambassador who is the brother of the Foreign Minister.

We understand that Vice President Ramirez may present to the Prime Minister a copy of a novel he wrote about Nicaragua under Somoza entitled "To Bury our Fathers" which has just been translated and published in English.

Yr ever,
Peter Ricketts

(P. F. Ricketts)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL



CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER BY VICE PRESIDENT RAMIREZ OF NICARAGUA

Our objectives

1. To make clear that our attitude to Nicaragua will depend on their establishment of a genuine pluralist democracy and on the nature of their relationship with the Soviet bloc.

Arguments

2. We want to see peace and stability in Central America and pluralist democracy operating there. We are deeply concerned at the course of events since your Government came to power. We think the Contadora process holds out best hope.

2. How can you claim election was fair when opposition parties were harrassed by mobs which Minister of Interior described as 'divine mobs' (turbas divinas)?

3. How can you justify having armed forces as large as those of all the other Central American countries put together? Spending 40% of budget on defence grossly wasteful.

4. How can you claim to be non-aligned when Nicaragua automatically adopts the Soviet line on everything from Afghanistan to the Olympic Games?

5. Identification of Sandinista Party with the State appears to follow the system prevailing in Soviet bloc and Cuba. Is this the aim of your Government? If so cannot expect Western democracies to support you.

His Objectives

6. To gain understanding for Nicaragua's policies and possibly request aid.

7. To seek British support against US military interference in Nicaragua (either direct or by contra activity).



8. Possibly to seek continuing British support for closer relations between the Ten and Central America (the San José conference).

Your Response

9. Our attitude will depend on establishment of genuine democracy and your relations with Soviet bloc. No question of more aid while Nicaragua appears headed towards becoming one party Marxist State.

10. (If raised) You complain of outside interference in Nicaragua and the right to seek outside help for your defence. But Nicaragua interferes by helping Salvadorean guerrillas against an elected Government and proclaims its intention to spread the international revolution. Cannot be surprised if your neighbours believe your threats and seek outside help in their turn from the US. Britain against all violence and interference in neighbour's affairs.

11. (If raised) Will continue to support follow-up to San José meeting. But that is designed to support Contadora peace process. Extra EC aid should follow Contadora Agreement.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

1 February 1985

MAOACN



CALL ON PRIME MINISTER BY NICARAGUA VICE-PRESIDENT RAMIREZ

BACKGROUND

1. Little prospect of change towards Western style democracy. FSLN have majority of 61-35 in National Assembly. November elections seen by most international observers (including Dutch Government observers, an American group including a US Congressman and ex Ambassador) as reasonably fair in the circumstances despite some shortcomings.
2. War waged by the US-supported contras continues to damage the economy and results in civilian as well as military deaths. Presents no real threat to the régime but atrocities by the contras provide Nicaragua with good propaganda weapon.
3. Economic crisis and military service causing discontent but no sign that Sandinistas have lost their majority support. Censorship again strict.
4. On 14 January at inauguration President Ortega made a conciliatory speech committing his Government to a pluralist democracy, mixed economy, better relations with neighbours, agreements on disarmament and a negotiated agreement with the United States. The inauguration was attended by Mr Kinnock.
5. Nicaragua's external policy is directed very largely by its strong anti-US attitude. Due to bitterness of struggle against Somoza who was installed and supported in power by the US from 1932-79.
6. US suspended on 18 January bilateral talks with Nicaragua. Next Contadora meeting is due on 14/15 February although Honduras, El Salvador and Costa Rica have threatened not to attend. Nicaragua is the only State which has accepted the draft Contadora Agreement of September 1984: its provisions on implementation and verification regarded as insufficient. US have resumed ~~on~~ military exercises in neighbouring Honduras and off the coasts and are seeking to secure Congressional funds to strengthen the contras.

7. US announced on 18 January withdrawal from further participation in the case brought before the International Court of Justice against them by Nicaragua following the US mining of Nicaraguan waters in April. The British Government publicly disapproved of the mining.

8. Nicaraguan armed forces comprise 25,000 regulars, 25,000 reservists, 50-60,000 militia (of mixed quality). Soviet arms are being delivered at an increasing rate. US estimates of Cuban military support personnel at 2,500-3,000, and about 100 Russians, Bulgarians etc.

9. Total current bilateral UK aid to Nicaragua (including joint funding with voluntary agencies) now runs at about £25,000 p.a. but will decline.

10. Nicaragua seriously in arrears with IMF and IBRD.

MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA DEPARTMENT

1 February 1985

MANACO



RAMIREZ Mercado, Sergio

Vice President of Nicaragua since 10 January 1985.

Member of the Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction (JGRN) 1979-1985.

Born 5 August 1942 in Masatepe, Masaya.

In 1959 Ramirez moved to Leon to study law at the National University. He took an active role in the student protest movements and in 1962 was a founder member of the Student Revolutionary Front. The following year he was elected President of the Second National Congress of Students.

After his graduation as a lawyer in 1964 (best student of his year), Ramirez went to Costa Rica where he joined the Supreme University Council of Central America and was elected Secretary General of his organisation in 1969.

In 1973 Ramirez went to West Germany on a scholarship as the guest of resident writers in West Berlin. It was there, during his two-year stay that he completed his project of collecting together the writings of Sandino. 'El Pensamiento Vivo de Sandino' was published in 1974. Ramirez has now published more than twelve books, some of them novels.

Ramirez returned to Nicaragua in 1975. He joined the FSLN (Sandinista Front) and assumed responsibility within the FSLN for the solidarity

/committees



committees. Two years later he was involved in the formation of the Group of Twelve, a group of professionals and intellectuals formed to support the revolution. During the period of the insurrection he travelled throughout Latin America, in a propaganda role, visiting chiefs of state and political leaders. Ramírez was also director of Radio Sandino, a clandestine radio station, until the end of May 1978. Elected by the Dirección Nacional to join the Junta which was formed when the Sandinistas took over power in July 1979.

Elected Vice-President in November 1984 elections. Inaugurated together with President Ortega on 10 January 1985.

Ramírez has made official visit to several countries in Western Europe and Asia and to several communist countries.

Married with 3 children. Speaks English.



H.E. SEÑOR LIC. FRANCISCO JOSE D'ESCOTO BROCKMANN
NICARAGUAN AMBASSADOR

Born 8 December 1938 in Managua.

Educated Nicaragua, Italy and the US where he received a BSc (Economics). He also attended the Diplomatic School in Madrid where he received a diploma. Señor d'Escoto held a number of diplomatic posts until he was dismissed from the Foreign Service for denouncing President Somoza in 1977. He arrived in the UK on 3 August 1981 accompanied by his wife Joanna. They have five children. Senor d'Escoto is the brother of Father Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, the Nicaraguan Foreign Minister. Their father Conde d'Escoto was Ambassador to both London and Paris.