



12-15 19/7/83
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 July 1983

Dear John,

El Salvador: Visit of Ex-President José Napoleon Duarte

Ex-President Duarte is here today and tomorrow, 18 and 19 July, on a Category II sponsored visit. He is calling on Lady Young at noon and Mr Whitney is giving a luncheon in his honour. But he said on arrival that he was particularly anxious to see the Prime Minister.

Senor Duarte is the leader of the moderate Christian Democrat Party. He stands a good chance of winning the forthcoming Presidential elections in El Salvador and, if elected, would make a genuine effort to curb human rights abuses, press ahead with political reforms and try to make the Salvadorean military more effective. His candidature is strongly backed by the US and German Governments. He has been on a tour of European countries, largely organised by the German Christian Democrat Party. In Spain, he was received by Prime Minister Gonzalez, in Germany, by Chancellor Kohl and in Italy, by Prime Minister Fanfani. He was also received by the Pope.

Although we had not originally put forward a request for a call on the Prime Minister because Senor Duarte's visit was mounted at short notice, we would be grateful if the Prime Minister would consider the possibility of receiving him for a very brief call. The ideal timing would be either at 12 noon tomorrow morning, shortly before Senor Duarte is due to arrive at the House of Commons for lunch or possibly in the Prime Minister's room at the House immediately after Question Time tomorrow afternoon, 19 July.

John's ever,
[Signature]
(B J P Fall)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing St

COVERING CONFIDENTIAL



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London SW1A 2AH

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Dear John

I attach a brief and personality note for Ex-President Duarte's call on the Prime Minister at 12.15 tomorrow 19 July.

The Prime Minister may wish to avoid leading on the question of election observers (para 6 of the Points to Make in the brief), in order not to encourage at this stage a request for us to send observers as we did last time. Sir Geoffrey Howe has asked for an assessment to be made of the case for and against responding positively to such a request.

Yours ever

(B J P Fall)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing St

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EL SALVADOR

CALL BY EX-PRESIDENT JOSÉ NAPOLEÓN DUARTE : TUESDAY 19 JULY 1983

POINTS TO MAKE

General

1. Concerned at rising tensions in region. Fighting in El Salvador and threat of serious conflict between Nicaragua and Honduras affect stability of whole area.
2. Recognise region's problems deeply rooted in poverty, injustice and political inequality. No easy solutions.
3. Appalled by continuing human rights violations, particularly in El Salvador and Guatemala. Flow of refugees unabated.
4. How do you see Central American scene in, say, 5-10 years time?

El Salvador

5. Heartened that you have not abandoned hope of a political solution. But will be difficult against background of violence. How do you rate Army's chances against the guerrillas?

Elections

6. Understand have now been set for November 1983. Will your Government be asking again for international and national observer groups? What improvements could be made on 1981 arrangements?
7. No sign that guerrillas willing to take part in elections. Problem is how to demonstrate that their physical safety is not at risk. If FDR/FMLN did take part, what would be their chances?
8. Guerrillas have indicated desire for substantive negotiations without preconditions (ie ceasefire) with Government. Talks in such circumstances must risk giving political power to left-wing

/extremists

extremists who have little chance of gaining it through the ballot box. What are your views?

9. If you win, how will you tackle El Salvador's problems?

ESSENTIAL FACTS

El Salvador Elections

1. The Salvadorean Government have brought forward the Presidential Election due in March 1984 to November 1983 although rumours of a later date persist. They hope this will resolve the present political stalemate. In spite of a massive turnout, the March 1982 elections failed to give the moderate Christian Democrats an effective majority over the right-wing parties and the neutral interim President has been unable to exert full authority. Some reports suggest that the Salvadorean Government lack the funds and organisational ability to run the elections properly in November, but the US is prepared to provide US\$6.2 million to finance the Electoral Council's work and will provide computer and technical help.

2. The left are unlikely to take part in elections. They will claim (as they did in March 1982) that their lives would be at risk. But they also know they can probably count on little popular support from the electorate, while the more extreme do not want an electoral solution at all. However the FDR parties are free to participate and the Peace Commission has invited them to do so.

3. The US hope that the election will return a strong moderate Government (eg; under Napoleon Duarte) with a sufficient mandate to press ahead with reforms, stamp out human rights abuses and tackle the ineffectiveness of the Salvadorean military. This would help restore domestic and international credibility and strengthen the Government's hand in any negotiation with the guerrillas. But it may not work that way: the right-wing may win and even Duarte may not be able to impose his will as he and the US would wish if he is elected.

/International observers

International observers

4. It is likely that international observers will be invited to witness and, by virtue of their presence, to help ensure fair play at the elections, probably on the same basis as in March 1982. HMG sent two (Sir J Galsworthy and Prof David Bowett). Observers will probably include representatives from the OAS.

DUARTE JOSE NAPOLEON, INGENIERO

Ex-President of the Republic

In his early fifties. Duarte is the leading politician of the Christian Democratic Party. Educated in the United States, he is an ex-Mayor of San Salvador. He lost the 1972 Presidential elections which allegedly were rigged to favour the government candidate. He was subsequently arrested and beaten by the army. Exiled to Venezuela, he returned in the late seventies and participated in the coalition Junta of 1979 when reformist army officers overthrew the government of General Romero. When the more radical members left the Junta in 1980 to ally themselves with the guerrillas, he headed a Christian Democratic/army Junta from 1980-82. This government introduced sweeping if not fully implemented agrarian and financial reforms but failed to either defeat or reach agreement with the guerrillas. After the right wing parties won the 1982 elections, Duarte was forced to retire from office. He is now busy reorganising the Christian Democratic Party for the 1983 election.

A sincere, tenacious and ambitious politician dedicated to a better way of life for the Salvadorean people. Anathema to the right wing.

Speaks English. Married with children.