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Prime Minister



Foreign and Commonwealth Office CDP.
London SW1A 2AH 6/7.

Temporarily retained, (Wayland,

6 July 1984

25/8/16

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OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

Dear Charles,

Call on the Prime Minister by the New Canadian Prime
Minister: 7 July

Mr Turner's office have told us that he sees his meeting with the Prime Minister essentially as an opportunity for the two of them to get acquainted. Mr Turner is due to have an audience with The Queen at Windsor on Saturday evening.

At present Mr Turner's overwhelming preoccupation is to decide on a date for a general election in Canada, at which he will also be seeking a Parliamentary seat for himself. Many in the Liberal Party are pressing for an early election, which they think they could win, but this presents Mr Turner with a real difficulty. The Queen is due to be in Canada from 14 to 27 July and the Pope will visit from 9 to 19 September. Under Canadian law an election period must last for 50 days and cannot therefore be fitted in between the two visits. Buckingham Palace have made clear that The Queen would not visit Canada while an election was in progress, and it is assumed that the Vatican take a similar view. For Mr Turner to cause the Royal Visit to be cancelled by calling an early election would be very unpopular, particularly in Ontario where the visit is intended to enable The Queen to take part in the Province's bicentennial celebrations.

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I enclose a biographical note on Mr Turner, together with a copy of Ottawa telegram No 339 which provides an assessment of the Canadian scene in the first days of Mr Turner's Ministry. Mr Turner is very well-disposed to Britain (he was born in England

and there is every reason to think that co-operation with Canada will continue to develop under his leadership.

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Although there is a number of outstanding bilateral problems between the two countries, as well as difficulties between Canada and the European Communities, none of them is important enough for the Prime Minister to raise at this first meeting. It is just possible that Mr Turner might mention the continuing plight of British pensioners in Canada, which has aroused some political attention in both countries, and a separate brief is enclosed on that subject. I attach a checklist of bilateral points in case they do come up.

On international affairs we have as yet little information about Mr Turner's views. He has stated that he will seek to improve Canada's relations with the Americans, and he can generally be expected to play a more conventional and constructive role in the Western Alliance than Mr Trudeau. Mr Turner has however promised that he will follow up Mr Trudeau's recent attempts 'to mobilise public opinion across the world towards nuclear disarmament', although it is not known whether he will persist with any of the individual items in Mr Trudeau's recent initiative. He may be interested to hear the Prime Minister's assessment of Sir Geoffrey Howe's visit to Moscow.

Yours ever,

Len Appleyard

(L V Appleyard)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
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TURNER, THE RT HON JOHN NAPIER PC QC

Prime Minister.

Born in Richmond, England in 1929. Of mixed English and Canadian parentage.

Educated at Universities of British Columbia, Oxford (Rhodes Scholar) and Paris.

Practised law in Montreal 1954-62; lectured at Sir George Williams University (now Concordia) 1956-68 and wrote a book on the Canadian Senate. Elected Liberal MP for St Lawrence, St George (Quebec) 1962 and Ottawa-Carleton in 1968. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1963-65. Minister without Portfolio, assisting the Minister of Transport, 1965-67. Registrar General, and later Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, 1967-68. Succeeded Mr Trudeau as Minister of Justice and Attorney General in 1968. Minister of Finance 1972-75.

Stood unsuccessfully for the leadership of the Liberal Party in 1968, taking third place. His support, like Mr Trudeau's came from younger members. Declined an offer to take over the leadership of the British Columbia Liberal Party in 1968.

He was the dominant English Canadian in Mr Trudeau's Cabinet and was regarded by many as a natural successor to the leadership. His political ambition was well-known and probably affected his relationship with Mr Trudeau which was strained. He succeeded in the difficult portfolio of Finance for several years. He proved a successful Chairman of the IMF Interim Committee. Mr Turner resigned from the Government in 1975 and returned to law practice in Toronto.

Shortly after Mr Trudeau announced in February 1984 his intention to resign as Leader of the Liberal Party, Mr Turner announced his candidacy. At a leadership convention in Ottawa on 16 June 1984, Mr Turner was elected on the second ballot to succeed Mr Trudeau (by 1,862 votes to Mr Jean Chretien's 1,368 votes). He was sworn in as Prime Minister on 30 June.

Mr Turner is to the right of the Liberal Party but had to modify his position more to the centre in order to win the leadership. He has not yet enunciated his policies, but has said he would get rid of the federal deficit, while preserving Canada's social policies and fulfilling Canada's defence commitments.

He is expected to be better disposed to Britain, less maverick, more serious and systematic about consultation and about Canada's Alliance commitments. He has said he will build on Mr Trudeau's East/West initiative.

He is reported to be a close friend of United States Secretary of State Shultz. He has said he will negotiate with the Americans on mutual problems as friends, trading partners and "co-tenants of a continent", and that better relations with the US will make more credible Canada's efforts to promote peace and nuclear disarmament.

In contrast to Mr Trudeau's autocratic style, Mr Turner is expected to work for reconciliation of the different interests at party and Governmental level in Canada.

He has a confident and breezy manner. Some maintain that he lacks depth and conviction.

Often referred to as "old blue eyes".

Married. Three children.