

Prime Minister

Marginal.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Agree to see him at 1500

London SW1A 2AH

on 11 July

A.S.C. 24

23 June 1983

It will ~~do~~ ^{ask} for more money

Yes no

Dear John,

Visit of the Vanuatu Prime Minister

Father Walter Lini, Prime Minister of Vanuatu, will be visiting Britain from 9-13 July after attending a meeting in the Isle of Man of Law Officers from small Commonwealth countries.

Father Lini has been Prime Minister since Vanuatu gained independence in 1980 and the leading political figure in Vanuatu almost since politics started. The Prime Minister met him at the September 1981 CHGM in Melbourne, and also during his only other post-Independence visit to Britain in November 1981.

Vanuatu abstained in the UNGA vote over the Falklands on 4 November 1982, has recently joined the Non-Aligned Movement, and has agreed to establish - but taken no steps to implement - diplomatic relations with Cuba. The government is emerging as a principal sponsor of the pro-Independence groups in nearby New Caledonia and is the most outspoken opponent of French policies in the region. As a result, Vanuatu and Father Lini have acquired a reputation as the mavericks of the South Pacific. But our High Commissioner reports that Father Lini is well disposed towards Britain and believes, despite some opposition, that Father Lini will be re-elected as Prime Minister at the general elections due in November. His visit will give us the opportunity of explaining our foreign policy concerns and, particularly in the context of the forthcoming UN General Assembly, of trying to win him over on the Falklands issue.

It would be normal for a Commonwealth Prime Minister to pay a short courtesy call on the Prime Minister during a visit, and there is no doubt that Father Lini

/would

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would react well to this. Without wishing to overstate the case, if the Prime Minister had a few minutes available during the afternoon of Monday, 11 July it would clearly be in the interests of our relations with Vanuatu, as well as generally within the region.

Yours ever

John Holmes

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

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23 JUN 1983



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Vanuatu

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

27 June 1983

VISIT OF THE PRIME MINISTER
OF VANUATU

Thank you for your letter of 23 June.
The Prime Minister could see Father Walter Lini
at 1500 hours on 11 July.

Mrs. Thatcher has commented that
Father Lini is likely to seek increased aid.
I should be grateful if the brief could
cover this matter.

A. J. COLES

J.E. Holmes, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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