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Visit of the Mexican Foreign Minister, Dr. Castaneda,  
to the U.K.; March 1981

MEXICO

JANUARY 1981

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
<del>6-3-81</del>							
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PREM 19/528							

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Mexico  
WM 21/5  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

21 May 1981

*Dear Willie,*

Mexico: Visit by Jorge Castaneda

The Mexican Minister for Foreign Affairs, Jorge Castaneda, has written to the Prime Minister expressing his thanks for the meeting which took place during his visit and congratulating the Prime Minister on the agreement reached with Guatemala which will lead to independence for Belize. I attach a translation of the letter; I do not think that a reply by the Prime Minister is necessary.

*Yours ever*

*Roderic Lyne*

(R M J Lyne)  
Private Secretary

William Rickett Esq  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON  
SW1



TRANSLATION

TLATELOLCO 31 MARCH 1981

Dear Prime Minister,

On my return to Mexico I wish to express my gratitude for the opportunity you gave me on 10 March of meeting you and discussing certain international questions which concern Mexico as well as Great Britain.

I am particularly pleased that coinciding with my stay in London, the Governments of Great Britain and Guatemala agreed the Heads of Agreement to enable Belize to achieve independence, in the terms envisaged by the corresponding resolution of the UN General Assembly.

The Government of Mexico is convinced that these Heads and the steps being taken to put them into practice will contribute significantly to the peace and security of a region which is unfortunately characterised by unrest.

I should be grateful, Prime Minister, if you would accept the assurance of my high consideration and personal appreciation.

Jorge Castaneda



SECRETARIO  
DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES  
MEXICO.

Tlatelolco, D. F., marzo 31 de 1981.

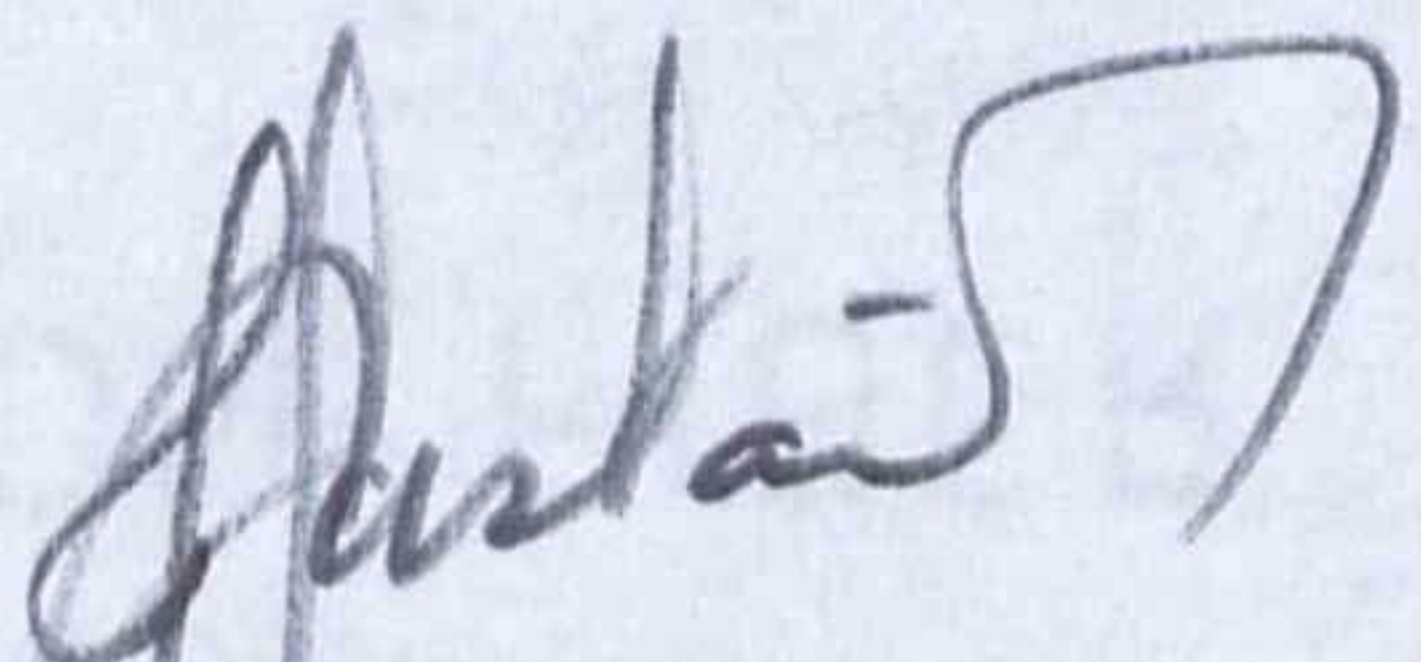
Estimada Señora Primera Ministra:

De vuelta en México deseo agradecerle la oportunidad que me brindó, el 10 de marzo último, de saludarla y de conversar sobre algunas cuestiones internacionales que preocupan a México tanto como a la Gran Bretaña.

Me alegra particularmente que, coincidiendo con mi estancia en Londres, los Gobiernos de la Gran Bretaña y de Guatemala hayan acordado las bases de entendimiento para que Belice acceda a la independencia, en los términos previstos por la correspondiente resolución de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas.

El Gobierno de México está convencido de que estas bases y los pasos que se den para llevarlas a la práctica contribuirán significativamente a la paz y la seguridad de una región que, desafortunadamente, se caracteriza actualmente por su turbulencia.

Ruego a usted, Señora Primera Ministra, aceptar el testimonio de mi más alta consideración y personal aprecio.

  
Jorge Castañeda.

Excelentísima Señora Margaret Thatcher,  
Primera Ministra  
10 Downing Street  
Londres.



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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

10 March 1981

SUBJECT

File

Sub

cc: Master

Mexico

Dear Rhodrie,

CALL BY THE MEXICAN FOREIGN MINISTER

The Mexican Foreign Minister, Senor Jorge Castaneda called on the Prime Minister yesterday afternoon. He was accompanied by the Mexican Ambassador and an official. Mr. Ure was also present.

The Prime Minister said that she had been very struck during her visit to Washington by the close rapport which President Reagan felt he had established with President Portillo. The relationship was evidently very warm. In the Prime Minister's view this was an important development. Senor Castaneda said that he was delighted to hear this.

Belize

The Prime Minister referred, briefly, to the talks at present in progress in London between representatives of the Governments of Guatemala and Belize. She thought these were going well. Senor Castaneda expressed the hope that progress would be made.

El Salvador

In response to a question from the Prime Minister, Senor Castaneda said that the best hope of resolving the situation in El Salvador would lie in a Zimbabwe-type solution. There would have to be some kind of broad based meeting of national reconciliation under the auspices of a great power, such as the United States, or group of powers. The object of involving other Governments would be to guarantee whatever agreement was reached between the internal parties. No military victory would be permanent. It would merely prolong the agony of the people of El Salvador. The Prime Minister pointed out that HMG's position vis à vis Rhodesia had been different from that which any Government had vis à vis El Salvador. El Salvador was an independent country. It would not be easy for others, except perhaps a near neighbour, to take a role. Who did Senor Castaneda have in mind? Would Mexico be prepared to play a role? Senor Castaneda said that the guerrillas trusted the Mexican Government but the junta did not. Powers other than Mexico who might be involved in a conference included Venezuela and the United States. It was also conceivable that some European political parties could have a role to play.

/On the situation

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On the situation inside El Salvador, Senor Castaneda said that the present regime's plans for land reform were not well conceived and were on an inadequate scale. The Duarte Government did not have the authority or the ability to carry through agricultural reform or to take over the administration of the main enterprises. Moreover, the idea that reform should wait until the guerrillas had been defeated was misconceived. Basic social reforms would only be carried out under pressure.

North/South Summit

The Prime Minister said that President Reagan, having been concentrating on domestic economic issues was now settling down to review foreign policy issues. This might take him some time. It might therefore be sensible to envisage postponing the North/South Summit in order to make it easier for President Reagan to attend. It was important that he should be present. Senor Castaneda said that he hoped President Reagan would not allow the matters that were urgent to be given absolute priority over matters that were important. The President had told President Portillo that he wanted to attend the North/South Summit but that it would be easier for him to come if the meeting were held later. The Mexican Government did not mind a postponement for one or two months. But they thought that it might complicate matters if the meeting were held after the Ottawa Summit. There was a risk that at Ottawa the industrialised countries would prepare a co-ordinated position. This would be an invitation to the developing countries to do the same. The North/South Summit might then develop into a confrontation.

On participation, Senor Castaneda said that the Soviet Union had so far failed to respond to Chancellor Kreisky's approach. It therefore seemed unlikely that they would attend. If so, no invitation would be extended to China.

The Prime Minister asked if there would be a structured agenda at the meeting. Senor Castaneda said that it was envisaged that only terms of reference would be provided. The Summit would be an occasion for an exchange of views rather than negotiation. The aim would be to establish in general terms how far countries were prepared to go to meet the needs of others. The Prime Minister welcomed this approach. The value of the occasion would lie in the opportunity provided for leaders to meet each other. It would be important to handle the press carefully in order that excessive expectations were not aroused.

At the end of the meeting, after a brief discussion about the Mexican economy, Senor Castaneda asked the Prime Minister whether it would not be possible for her to stay on in Mexico for a few days after the Summit. The Prime Minister thanked him for the invitation and explained the difficulties she would encounter in extending her absence from the country while Parliament was in session.

*Yours ever*

*Richard Alexander*

R.M.J. Lyne, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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Mexico  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

6 March 1981

*Dear Michael,*

Call on the Prime Minister by the Mexican Foreign Minister  
Jorge Castaneda on Monday 9 March

I attach briefing for the call by the Mexican Foreign Minister on the Prime Minister covering bilateral issues, Central America and the Mexico Summit.

In the limited time available it will be impossible to discuss all these three subjects in great depth and in view of the forthcoming Summit in Mexico, the Prime Minister may wish to concentrate on that issue.

We envisage that Lord Carrington will discuss the Belize talks during his meeting with Castaneda on 11 March.

*Yours etc*  
*Roderic Lyne*

(R M J Lyne)  
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON



CALL BY THE MEXICAN FOREIGN MINISTER, JORGE CASTANEDA (PRONOUNCED, CASTANYEDA) ON THE PRIME MINISTER

## POINTS TO MAKE

A. UK/Mexican Relations

Relations excellent; look forward to further exchanges. Very interested to hear President Lopez Portillo (pronounced, Porteeyo) has been giving attention to Mexico/US relations. Event of importance to us to have you here. Look forward to other visits. Important to build up co-operation and consultation on world affairs. Hope Heads of Mission Conference a success.

B. Mexico Summit

2. Participation. We look forward to playing an active part. US participation very important. Could also support inclusion of the Netherlands (as EC President) and/or Australia.

3. Prefer informal format with a minimum of communiqué. Careful preparation will be needed but this should not hamper discussion.

4. Do not favour Cuban presence. Could not object to presence of Soviet Union and China but Summit would be more fruitful without the Russians. They appear to be hesitant and, perhaps, should not be pressed.

5. Detailed agenda undesirable. Useful to identify some key themes in advance. Eg. energy, food and financial flows (of all kinds, not only official aid).

6. We would not favour too close a link with the Global Negotiations lest this inhibit discussion.

7. Timing. Early June acceptable. Could also accept postponement for a few months.

8. Further preparation should include all those who will attend.

C. El Salvador

9. Britain not a regional power. But very concerned along with EC partners at what is happening. Invite Castaneda's view on

/situation



situation. (He will call for non-intervention and perhaps criticize American policy).

10. Understand Mexican position. Non-intervention by outside powers would be ideal outcome. <sup>But</sup> US evidence demonstrates conclusively that arms have been supplied to the Salvadorean guerrillas by communist countries. Support called for it to be stopped.

11. Have issued statement condemning arms supplies to guerrillas, but also calling on Salvadorean Government to put its house in order.

12. How can other countries help bring about a dialogue of moderate politicians in El Salvador?

D. Belize

13. We appreciate Mexicans continuing interest and co-operation over Belize. We are conscious of your special concern over any settlement.

14. Negotiated settlement remains our objective and is best all round solution. Current negotiations in London are crucial. Lord Carrington will be briefing you in more detail on this.



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CALL BY THE MEXICAN FOREIGN MINISTER, JORGE CASTANEDA (PRONOUNCED, CASTANYÉDA) ON THE PRIME MINISTER

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

1. Castaneda is visiting the UK primarily to chair a Mexican Heads of Mission Conference in London prior to attending a meeting in Vienna in preparation for the North/South Summit. This visit represents a timely opportunity to re-emphasise our relations with Mexico following the visit by the Secretary of State to Mexico last August.

UK/Mexican Relations

2. There is little doubt that as a non-oil customer of Mexico we are missing out on many of the commercial opportunities arising from Mexico's rapid industrial and economic expansion. It is a great pity that we were unable to agree on mutually convenient dates at an earlier time in President Lopez Portillo's term of office to enable him to make a State Visit to the United Kingdom. Apart from gaining none of the recent contracts awarded in the areas of shipbuilding, steel-making and railways, all of which have gone to our competitors who are also Mexican oil customers, the Mexicans are paying greater attention to other countries diplomatically. The influential Industry Minister, Lic Oteyza, for example, has recently visited France for the fourth time in 2 years while our invitations to him have not been taken up.

Mexico Summit

3. There are still misgivings in Mexican Government circles about the UK position which has sometimes compared unfavourably with that of countries such as France and Canada. We need to get across the message that although we may not agree with Mexico and the other G77 countries on some issues, our attitude is constructive and based on a desire for real progress rather than empty sloganising.

Central America and Belize

4. Within the Mexican Government, Lic Castaneda is considered Radical and Left-Wing. While stopping short of outright support

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for revolutionary groups such as the Salvadorean FDR, the Mexicans show little sign of sympathy for the US position and there is a danger of serious US/Mexico confrontation. While the open friendship between Mexico and Cuba may to some extent be a sop for Left-Wing consumption within Mexico, there is no doubt that this close relationship is considered real by Lic Castaneda. We have enjoyed Mexican understanding and support for our position on Belize but we cannot take this for granted and must continue to keep the Mexicans closely informed.

5. Mexico provides 7,000 bpd of oil to El Salvador. It also gives refuge to members of the Salvadorean FDR in Mexico City. It is uniquely placed to put pressure on both sides to negotiate.

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PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH MEXICAN FOREIGN MINISTER: BELIZE  
ESSENTIAL FACTS

1. Mexico takes a close interest in Belize. In addition to sharing a common border Mexico has a historical claim to the northern part of the territory, but in recent years the Mexicans have taken the line that providing any settlement with Guatemala does not entail cession of territory they will allow their claim to lapse.

2. Mexico consistently supports our position over Belize and was very closely associated with the Belizeans in drafting the 1980 UN resolution which set a timetable for Belizean independence. The Mexicans have stated on several occasions that they would be prepared to assist in any way we considered helpful. We have kept them well informed of developments though they have not yet been briefed on the very latest position. As a direct result of the Secretary of State's visit to Mexico last August and Mr Ridley's visit in October the Mexican Foreign Minister told the Guatemalans that it was unrealistic of them to expect territorial cession.

NEGOTIATIONS

3. The most recent round of negotiations in the series which opened in Bermuda last May took place in New York on 5-6 and 12-13 February. The Guatemalans appeared to have dropped their requirement for mainland territory and in our judgement might have even been prepared to settle for a long lease over the Sapodilla and Ranguana Cays together with associated territorial sea rights and a commercial/economic development package. But the negotiations came close to breakdown when the Belizeans offered only a short conditional lease covering the southernmost cay. Since then Premier Price of Belize has been to London. A meeting at Ministerial level began on 5 March. Lord Carrington opened the first session.



BRIEF NO : NORTH/SOUTH SUMMIT

Essential Facts (paras 2-8 not for use)

1. Casteneda is en route to a co-sponsors meeting in Vienna (13-15 March); this will decide on participation, dates, agenda and format for the Mexico Summit.
2. American attitude remains crucial. They have now told us that President Reagan has telephoned President Lopez Portillo to say that he was ready to take part in the Summit, but that there was a problem over dates - it would have to be after the summer - and that there were questions of participation which Haig would follow up. (The latter is the condition that Castro should not be present). The US and Mexican Presidents are due to meet in early April.
3. Both these conditions could give difficulty. We would not object to postponement to the Autumn since, although there might be some risk of raising expectations, it would allow us to use the Ottawa Summit for co-ordination. Developing countries would, however, see this as a disadvantage. There is an additional difficulty for Mexico since by September President Lopez Portillo will already be involved in negotiations concerning his successor.
4. Most developing countries will realise that the attendance of Castro himself would rule out American attendance but the Mexicans have pressed for him to be invited as an observer and others may press for a Cuban presence of some kind.
5. Global Negotiations also complicate timing. Continued deadlock would prompt the Algerians to claim that there was no point in a Mexico Summit in June. Others would argue that a Summit meeting could still be useful, perhaps in achieving a breakthrough.



6. The Russians continue to hesitate. They have now apparently said that they cannot reply until they have a formal invitation.

7. Italy, Australia and the Netherlands are pressing for places. The latter hope for Community support as Presidency but have not formally raised the matter in the Community. (Their claim would be much weakened if the Summit is postponed beyond June). The Austrians believe that reopening the list of 21 provisionally agreed (Annex A) will lead to renewed pressures for further invitations, thus diluting the meeting unacceptably.

8. Mexicans and Austrians will now take soundings only of co-sponsors before 13 March. They will send personal representatives to other capitals concerned after the co-sponsors meeting. We believe that the Japanese have not succeeded in their attempt to join the co-sponsors.

9. No significant developments on Global Negotiations. Reagan Administration have not yet made their position clear and may not do so before mid March.

10. Dates for King Khaled's State Visit in June are still fluid but both sides are aware of the need to avoid coinciding with a Mexican Summit.

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PERSONALITY REPORT - CASTANEDA Y ALVAREZ, LIC. JORGE

Minister for Foreign Affairs since May 1979.

Studied law at the National University of Mexico (UNAM) 1938-43. Joined Diplomatic Service and was a delegate to 5th Session of UN General Assembly 1950. Also held academic posts at UNAM and elsewhere as Professor of Public International Law. President of UN Sixth Committee 1958. Member of International Law Commission 1967. Senior Director with responsibility for international organisations 1965-70. Mexican Permanent Representative to the UN Agencies in Geneva 1971-75. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs 1976. Minister of Foreign Affairs since May 1979.

Author of many books on international law. A leading figure among international lawyers who is an expert on Law of the Sea questions. A shrewd negotiator. Well known to Foreign Office Legal Advisers.

He was appointed Foreign Minister on the "resignation" of Santiago Roel in the May 1979 Cabinet reshuffle to take Mexico back into the arena of international affairs with a professional and measured approach to Third World matters, Mexico's relationship with the US and the Mexican energy initiative at the UNGA. He has restructured the Foreign Ministry and brought back professional diplomats from their exile during the Roel era.

His Polish born Jewish wife is an expert on environmental questions and frequently attends international meetings on the subject. Her views on international affairs are said to be fairly radical.

Both speak excellent English.

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MEXICO: BASIC DATA

Land

1,978,800 km<sup>2</sup>; 12% cropland, 40% pasture, 22% forested, 26% other (including waste, urban areas and public lands).

Population

66,633,000 (January 1980), average annual growth rate 2.6% (current).

Religion

97% nominally Roman Catholic, 3% other.

Literacy

65% estimated; 84% claimed officially.

Labour Force

18.0 million (1978) (defined as those 12 years of age and older).

Capital

Mexico (also known as Mexico City).

Government Leader

President Jose Lopez Portillo y Pacheco.

Suffrage

Universal over age 18; compulsory but unenforced.

Elections

Presidential election July 1982.

Political Parties

Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), Gustavo Carvajal Moreno; National Action Party (PAN), Abel Vincencio Tovar; Popular Socialist Party (PPS), Jorge Cruickshank Garcia; Authentic Party of the Revolution (PARM), leader to be chosen February 1980; Mexican Democratic Party (PDM), Ignacio Gonzalez Gollaz; Socialist Workers Party (PST), Rafael Aguilar Talamantes; Mexican Communist Party (PCM), Arnoldo Martinez Verduga.

Voting Strength

1979 congressional election: 69.8% PRI; 11% PAN, 5.1% PCM; 8.1% other opposition; 5.9 annulled.

/Economy



### Economy

GDP: US\$91.4 billion (1978), \$1,340 per capita; 66% private consumption, 12% public consumption, 13% private investment, 9% public investment (1978); net foreign balance 0%; real growth rate 1978, 6.6%.

### Agriculture

Main crops - corn, cotton, wheat, coffee, sugarcane, sorghum, oilseeds, pulses and vegetables; general self-sufficiency with minor exceptions in meat and dairy products; caloric intake, 2,700 calories per day per capita (1975).

### Fishing

Catch 670,096 tonnes (1977); exports valued at \$151.3 million, imports at \$17.8 million (1975).

### Major Industries

Processing of food, beverages, and tobacco; chemicals, basic metals and metal products, petroleum products, mining, textiles and clothing. and transport equipment.

### Exports

US\$6,545 million (fob, 1978); cotton, coffee, non-ferrous minerals (including lead and zinc), sugar, shrimp, petroleum, sulphur, salt, cattle and meat, fresh fruit, tomatoes, machinery and equipment.

### Imports

US\$8,051 million (cif, 1978); machinery, equipment, industrial vehicles, and intermediate goods.


### Major Trade Partners

Exports - 70% US, 6% EC, 3% Japan (1978 prelim); imports - 57% US, 19% EC, 9% Japan.

### UK/Mexican Trade £ sterling

UK Exports 1979	134.8 million.	UK imports 1979	36.3 million.
" "	1980 188.8 million.	" "	1980 111.6 million.





VISIT BY THE MEXICAN FOREIGN MINISTER JORGE CASTANEDA

MEXICO - BACKGROUND BRIEF

1. Mexico is one of the four leading Latin American countries on which British policy towards Latin America is concentrated. Mexico has an area of just under two million square miles and its population of 67 million could double in 25 years. Recent discoveries of large oil reserves have given a substantial boost to Mexico's international importance and influence. Mexico is also a leading producer of silver and sulphur and holds significant deposits of 20 or so strategic materials including uranium.

INTERNAL POLITICAL SYSTEM


2. Although a Federal Democratic Parliamentary state, the President is the dominant decision-maker and the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) has for 50 years swept all elections to the 100 seat senate and the 400 seat Chamber of Deputies. The PRI is more an institutional system of Government; it is not a political party with an easily identifiable ideological basis. The PRI draws its strength from an ability to tolerate and adjust to dissenting opinion within its membership, and from the principle that the President may not be re-elected once his six year term of office is finished.

3. This year sees the beginning of the process to elect a new President. The PRI will choose their candidate this autumn. Elections will take place in June 1982 and the victor (the PRI have won all elections in the past 50 years) will be inaugurated in December 1982.

4. Recent political reform measures, including the allocation of 100 of the 400 Chamber of Deputies seats to the Opposition on a proportional representation basis have given opposition parties greater participation in the political fora. Never-

/theless





theless a large number of Mexicans abstain in elections, reflecting a degree of alienation from the political system among the rural and urban poor.

#### ECONOMY

5. President Lopez Portillo has successfully restored confidence after a severe internal recession in 1976, and has said that the Government will continue to push for rapid growth despite a risk of inflation, at present just under 30%. Mexico faces immense problems, including high population growth of approximately 3% per year, plus under- and unemployment figures of around 40%. 50% of the population is under 25 and illegal migration of young workers to the US, although a major source of friction between the two countries, provides an essential safety valve. Industrial plans, embodied in the global development plan are ambitious and envisage a growth rate of 8% in each of the next ten years.


6. Mexico's oil reserves stand at 60 billion barrels proven; probably reserves could well exceed 250 billion barrels. Daily production is approximately 2.35 million barrels of which just under 1.5 million barrels are exported. She is fourth in the world's league of oil producers after the Soviet Union, Saudi Arabia and the USA.

7. Agriculture is backward. Imports of grain from the US, Canada and Argentina are being stepped up. Agriculture has received a substantial boost in the recent budget and in the Mexican Food Plan (SAM).

#### FOREIGN POLICY

8. Mexico pursues an active and independent foreign policy orientated towards the Third World. She is a member of the Group of 77, has observer status at the Non-Aligned Movement and has a seat on the UN Security Council. Mexico is a champion of the UN and has taken a leading part in such questions as disarmament, law of the sea, UNCTAD and the North/South Dialogue. She is hosting a North/South Summit meeting to be held in Cancun in June 1981 in which the UK will participate.





9. Relations with the US have traditionally been difficult. She rejected US appeals for support over the Olympics, the Tehran hostage issue, and to take Cuban refugees. The attitude of the Mexican public of suspicion towards the US does not preclude an all-pervasive US influence on Mexican life. Mexico's President Lopez Portillo met President Reagan at the US/Mexican border in January. Although little of substance was discussed, a further meeting is to be arranged soon.

10. Mexico is keen to diversify its economic links away from the US and is eager to conclude economic agreements with Japan and European countries who wish to buy Mexican oil. It makes no secret of its pursuit of 'oil diplomacy' to secure technological collaboration and investment on terms favourable to Mexico.

11. Mexico has rejected the idea of joining GATT, and is not a member of OPEC.

12. Mexico has agreed with Venezuela to supply oil to certain countries within Central America and the Caribbean in an imaginative scheme in which 30% of the oil cost is returned to the customer in the form of soft loans.

#### BRITISH/MEXICAN RELATIONS

13. Current UK/Mexican relations are good. A fairly constant flow of visitors is maintained. Recent visitors to Mexico have included the Minister of State, Mr Ridley, Minister of State for Trade, Mr Parkinson, Secretary of State for Industry, Sir Keith Joseph, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, Lord Carrington, Secretary of State for Energy, Mr Howell, and the PUSC for MAFF, Mr J Wiggins. Visitors from Mexico have included the Mexican Minister of Finance, David Ibarra, the President's wife Sra Carmen de Lopez Portillo and his sister Dona Margarita Lopez Portillo, Minister for Planning, Miguel de la Madrid, and Industry Minister, Miguel Barbarena.





14. Outward visits are being planned by the Secretary of State for Education, Mr Carlisle and the Secretary of State for Agriculture, Mr Walker.



MFJ

B/F 6.3.81

Mexico

21 January 1981

Brief requested by  
phone SOP 27.1.81

Visit of Mexican Foreign Minister

The Prime Minister has seen your letter to me of 19 January about the visit of Dr. Castaneda to this country in March. She would be prepared to see Dr. Castaneda from 1500-1530 on Monday 9 March.

MODBA

R.M.J. Lyne, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.





(1)

10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister—

You will see from the two letters attached that it seems likely we shall have the Foreign Ministers of Mexico & Iraq in London at the same time early in March. You have already agreed to see the Iraqi & will therefore, I fear, have to see the Mexican as well. You can manage them both, in dining terms, on the afternoon of Monday 9 March. We would ensure there was an hour's gap between the two half-hour meetings. Agree?

Yes Mr. Amth





Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

19 January 1981

*Dear Michael,*

Visit of the Mexican Foreign Minister

The Mexican Foreign Minister is to attend the meeting which will take place in Vienna on 13-15 March in preparation for the North/South Summit in Cancun, Mexico from 11-13 June. Dr Castaneda is expected to chair a conference of Mexican Heads of Mission in Europe beforehand. The Mexican Ambassador has told us that, if we agree, the Foreign Minister would prefer to hold the Conference in London from 9-12 March.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary proposes to issue an official invitation to Dr Castaneda to visit the UK for talks in this period. Lord Carrington sees this visit as a good opportunity to re-affirm to the Mexicans our interest in the Summit and our desire to attend it as well as to consolidate further our relations with this increasingly important country in which we have considerable commercial interests.

As you know, the Iraqi Foreign Minister is due to pay an official visit to the UK from 9 to 11 March, and the Prime Minister has agreed in principle to receive Dr Hammadi. Because of the timing of the Budget and the Prime Minister's other commitments, Dr Hammadi's call (about which Francis Richards will be writing separately) will presumably have to take place on the afternoon of 9 March. Lord Carrington considers that Dr Castaneda should be treated in a manner no less favourable than Dr Hammadi. Before confirming the invitation to the Mexican Foreign Minister, therefore, he would be grateful to know whether the Prime Minister could agree to receive Dr Castaneda. Lord Carrington was received by President Lopez Portillo in Mexico last August, and - given the importance of our political and commercial relations with Mexico - considers that comparable treatment for Dr Castaneda would be fully justified.

*Yours ever*  
*Roderic Lyne*  
(R M J Lyne)  
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
10 Downing St