

1129
August 24, 1961.

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Mr. Lester B. Pearson —
Conference on World Tensions
New College.
Oxford, England.

Dear Mr. Pearson:

As you invited me to The Oxford Conference on World Tensions, I feel my duty to explain candidly why I have decided not to attend it.

Since the very beginning I had the impression (not a new one, since I have had it all through my work at the U. N. during the last five years) that Africa and Asia would be the Conference's focal points. This is natural and unavoidable, but, at the same time, I could hardly picture myself making any contribution to those two fields, new and distant for us Latin-americans.

I had then the idea of preparing a paper (and see whether I could have a chance to read it) on this topic: what the Western Powers may learn from Latin America in regard to present day problems of Africa and Asia. I started doing some reading and taking notes, and I had planned to start writing early this month. I did not figure on my government, however, under whose service I am and will be up to December 31 st. of this year.

I was ordered on July 27 to head the Mexican delegation to the VII General Assembly of the Panamerican Institute of Geography and History, which took place at Buenos Aires. I have just returned from this assignment, and of course, I am unable to do what I intended.

To be frank, I hate the idea of spending your money for my own benefit and contributing nothing to your work.

Will you please excuse me, and, for my part, I do hope to have a better luck next time

Yours sincerely

Daniel Cosío Villegas

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México, D.F., a 4 de julio de 1961

Mr. Lester B. Pearson
Parliament Buildings
Ottawa, Canada

Dear Mr. Pearson:

After wiring you my acceptance to your kind invitation to attend the Oxford Conference on Tensions in Development, I started to write a letter confirming my acceptance, as I had said in my cable. Somehow I could not proceed with the letter, but I started with my arrangements, among them a call on my physician. I am extremely sorry to say that he has strongly objected to my doing anything but to take a three-months absolute rest.

I wish I could help you in finding a person you may invite instead of me. Although I suppose you have some information, I would dare to submit some suggestions. If you were interested in the political aspects of Latin America, two names may be considered: Eduardo Frei Montalva and Víctor Raul Haya de la Torre. The first one is a member of the Chilean senate and leader of a small but powerful political party, of a liberal-Catholic shade. He is a law professor both at the Catholic and the National universities of Chile. Haya de la Torre, as you may know, is the recognized founder and leader of the APRA party of Peru. A third name occurs to me, and much nearer at hand: Germán Arciniegas, a Colombian, a well known writer, and at present ambassador at Rome.

If your interest is rather on the economic problems of Latin America, I would suggest Mr. Víctor Urquidi, an outstanding Mexican economist long associated with the Economic Commission for Latin America.

The names and addresses are as follows:

Eduardo Frei Montalva
Senado de la República
Santiago, Chile.

Víctor Raul Haya de la Torre
APRA
Lima, Perú.

Germán Arciniegas
Ambasciata de Colombia
Rome, Italy.

Víctor Urquidi
Torre Latinoamericana, piso 31
México 1, D. F.
México.

Believe me your obedient servant

Daniel Cosío Villegas
President