

Latin American and Caribbean Program

The May 8, 1994 Elections in Panama

International Observer Delegation of the

The Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government

The Carter Center of Emory University

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THE COUNCIL OF FREELY ELECTED HEADS OF GOVERNMENT

The Carter Center of Emory University

PANAMA OBSERVER DELEGATION, MAY 6-9, 1994

Council Members

1. President Jimmy Carter
39th President of the United States, 1977-1981.
Chairman of the Council of Freely Elected Heads
of Government.
2. Mrs. Rosalynn Carter
Former First Lady of the United States.
3. The Honorable George Price
Former Prime Minister, Belize (1981-1984, 1989-1992).
Vice-Chairman of the Council of Freely-Elected Heads of
Government.
4. The Honorable Rodrigo Carazo
Former President of Costa Rica (1978-1982).

Personal Representatives of Council Members

5. Dr. Tulio Alvarez
Special Councillor to the Presidency, Special
Representative of Council Member and Venezuelan
President Rafael Caldera.
6. Dr. Rodrigo Madrigal
Representative of former Costa Rican President Oscar
Arias.
7. Mr. Joaquin Daly
Former official of the Organization of American States,
Representative of former Peruvian President Fernando
Belaunde Terry. Participated in advance mission to
Panama.

Other Delegation Members

8. The Honorable Jim Wright
Former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.
Participated in Council delegation to Haiti.
9. The Honorable Jack Vaughn
Chairman, ECOTRUST. Former Ambassador to Panama.
Former Director of the Peace Corps. Former Assistant
Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs.

10. Mr. Curtis Cutter
President of InterWorld Consultants. Senior Advisor and Representative of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs. Retired foreign service officer. Worked on Panama Canal Treaties. Participated in Council/NDI delegation to the Dominican Republic.
11. Mr. Bruce McCollm
President, International Republican Institute. Former Executive Director, Freedom House.
12. Mr. John Moores
Founder and former Chairman of BMC Software. Founder, The Moores Foundation and the River Blindness Foundation. Regent, University of Houston.
13. Ms. Rebecca Moores
Founder and Treasurer, The Moores Foundation.
Secretary and Treasurer, River Blindness Foundation.
14. Mr. Neil Creighton
President and CEO, Robert McCormick Tribune Foundation.
Retired Major General, US Army.
15. Mr. Charles Trainer
T & B Management, Milwaukee, WI. Member, Board of Trustees, CARE.
16. Dr. Juan Manuel Garcia Passalacqua
Representative of the National Democratic Institute. Political analyst in the US and Puerto Rico. Visiting Professor, Yale University. Participated in Council delegation to Panama (1989) and advance mission in 1994.
17. Dr. Richard Millet
Professor of History at Southern Illinois at Edwardsville. Noted scholar of Central America. Participated in Council delegation to Nicaragua.
18. Dr. Michael Conniff
Professor of Political Science, Auburn University.
Author of Panama and the US: The Forced Alliance.
19. Dr. Jennifer McCoy
Senior Research Associate, The Carter Center of Emory University. Professor of Political Science, Georgia State University. Directed Council's Nicaragua Election Office. Participated in Council delegations to Haiti and Guyana.

20. Dr. David Carroll
Associate Director, Latin American and Caribbean
Program, The Carter Center of Emory University.
Participated in Council delegations to Guyana and
Paraguay.

Consultants and Council Staff

21. Dr. William Furlong
Professor of Political Science, Utah State University.
22. Ms. Harriette Martin
Program Administrative Assistant, Latin American and
Caribbean Program, The Carter Center of Emory
University.
23. Ms. Sue Palmer
Program Coordinator, Conflict Resolution Program, The
Carter Center of Emory University.
24. Ms. Rachel Fowler
Program Assistant, Human Rights Program, The Carter
Center of Emory University.
25. Ms. Kelly McBride
Consultant, Council of Freely-Elected Heads of
Government. Resident in Panama.
26. Mr. Orlando Perez
Ph.D. Candidate, University of Pittsburgh. Resident in
Panama.
27. Mr. Frank Boyd
Ph.D. Candidate, Emory University. Consultant to Latin
American and Caribbean Program, The Carter Center of
Emory University.
28. Ms. Monica Washington
Arias Foundation, graduate of Harvard University.

SUMMARY OF OFFICIAL RESULTS OF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Percent</u> (of valid votes)
Ernesto Perez Balladares	355,307	33.3%
Mireya de Gruber	310,372	29.1%
Ruben Blades	182,405	17.1%
Ruben Carles	171,192	16.1%
Eduardo Vallarino	25,476	2.4%
Samuel Lewis Galindo	18,424	1.7%
Jose Salvador Munoz	3,688	0.3%

Other Electoral Information

Total valid votes	1,066,844	96.6%
Null votes	37,734	3.4%

Number of votes cast	1,104,578	
Number of votes cast	1,104,578	73.7%
Abstained	394,873	26.3%

Number of Registered voters	1,499,451	

Source: Junta Nacional de Escrutinio

RESUMEN POR PROVINCIA													
MAYO 8 DE 1964													
PARTIDO	BOCAS DEL TORO	COOQUE	COLOMA	COMBUI	DAMAY	ESTRELLA	L. SANTOS	PRIMA	REINOLAS	SAN BAS	TOTAL		
PAVANEJISTA DOCTRINARIO	125	81	237	834	16	462	42	055	114	002	3,086		
PRD	12,284	19,938	18,550	51,316	3,270	12,075	13,211	164,657	28,070	2,735	326,066		
PLA	883	1,297	1,421	3,409	300	408	1,310	6,286	935	827	17,046		
LIBRE	804	1,530	818	1,177	539	639	306	4,706	872	727	12,186		
TOTAL DE FUEMOTUADO	14,151	22,765	20,588	55,902	4,139	13,232	14,867	175,659	29,677	4,089	355,307		
MANA EDOHO	2,056	7,843	14,285	17,170	1,029	4,801	3,557	123,428	6,345	1,203	162,405		
AYUNTAMIA	6,200	21,037	11,157	42,142	1,104	14,459	11,869	63,259	16,851	3,502	211,760		
PLA	2,722	5,385	4,036	5,386	1,267	5,081	4,008	11,344	2,877	96	43,797		
LIBRAL	1,029	3,799	2,746	7,040	1,048	2,079	2,904	20,425	4,302	408	46,775		
U.D.I.	162	396	563	1,106	1,008	533	690	3,048	340	114	8,020		
TOTAL ALIANZA DEMOCRATICA	11,013	30,627	19,102	55,737	4,528	22,132	20,475	118,076	24,470	4,212	310,372		
MOJIBAMA	901	10,337	4,318	14,770	1,239	5,891	4,417	56,458	16,074	902	115,478		
P.R.C.	89	1,442	1,150	3,061	312	897	780	13,706	736	595	23,592		
MOJIBAMA	406	3,124	1,242	5,078	151	2,761	3,015	13,479	2,129	735	32,122		
TOTAL CAMPO 84	1,488	14,903	6,711	23,709	1,722	9,549	8,212	83,645	18,941	2,312	171,192		
DEMOCRATA CRISTIANO	880	2,094	940	4,424	728	1,335	888	7,569	5,822	786	25,476		
SOLIDARIDAD	636	1,469	509	959	313	838	590	2,237	710	817	9,120		
U.M.	532	625	400	1,627	36	232	237	4,390	703	436	9,304		
CONCERTADO NACIONAL	1,170	2,094	1,281	2,626	351	1,070	827	0,627	7,413	1,247	16,424		
GRAN TOTAL DE													
VOTOS VALIDOS	31,683	80,397	62,870	160,402	12,533	52,471	40,888	515,857	86,082	14,761	1,066,844		
VOTOS NULOS	2,022	3,010	2,265	7,662	1,054	2,005	1,416	12,673	5,201	304	37,734		
ELECTORE QVOTAFRON	33,705	83,407	65,135	168,064	13,587	54,466	50,306	528,530	92,103	15,065	1,104,578		
MESAS ESCRUTADAS	212	410	346	430	81	201	248	2,286	533	77	5,304		
NO VOTANTES	52,301	102,641	102,729	224,750	19,085	65,000	57,025	737,001	118,671	19,106	1,490,451		
NO VOTANTES ESCRUTADOS	52,301	102,641	102,729	224,750	19,085	65,000	57,025	737,001	118,671	19,106	1,490,451		
AUSENTISMO	18,596	18,734	37,594	56,686	6,390	10,524	6,719	204,531	26,468	4,103	394,873		
AUSENTISMO %	35.56%	18.74%	36.60%	25.22%	32.01%	16.17%	11.78%	28.29%	22.32%	21.37%	26.33%		

→ José Salvador Muñoz

→ Ernesto Pérez Baldañes

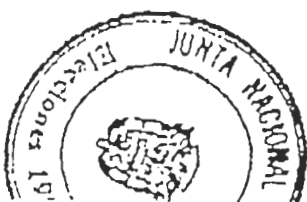
→ Rubén Blades

→ Mireya N. de Gruener

→ Rubén Darío Carles

→ Eddy Vallarino

→ Samuel Lewis Galindo



SEATS IN THE LEGISLATURE, BY PARTY (AND COALITION)
UNOFFICIAL PRELIMINARY RESULTS

PRD	.	.	.	.	.	.	30
PALA	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
LIBRE	.	.	.	.	.	.	2

("Pueblo Unido": Coalition total) . . . (33)

Arnulfista	.	.	.	.	.	14
PLA	.	.	.	.	.	3
Liberal	.	.	.	.	.	3
UDI	.	.	.	.	.	1

("Alianza Democratica": Coalition total) . . . (21)

MOLIRENA	.	.	.	.	.	5
PRC	.	.	.	.	.	3
MORENA	.	.	.	.	.	1

("Cambio 94": Coalition total) . . . (9)

Papa Egoro	.	.	.	.	.	6
Solidaridad	.	.	.	.	.	2
PDC	.	.	.	.	.	1

TOTAL SEATS						72*
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* There are 71 regular Assembly seats distributed among 40 electoral "circuitos." The results in 17 of the 40 circuitos have been challenged, but most of these are intra-party disputes and will not affect the final distribution among parties. The Electoral Tribunal will not release final official results until all the challenges ("impugnaciones") have been resolved, possibly by the end of June.

In addition to the 71 regular seats in the Assembly, additional seats are awarded to any party that wins at least 5% percent of the national vote without winning any regular seats. This occurred in the case of one party, MORENA, which was awarded a seat. The total number of seats in the legislature is therefore 72.

Source: Junta Nacional de Escrutinio

República de Panamá
Tribunal Electoral

462N-MP/93
16 de noviembre de 1993

Señor
Jimmy Carter
Expresidente de los Estados Unidos de América
y Presidente de Carter Center of Emory University
One Copenhill
Atlanta, Georgia
U.S.A.

Estimado Presidente Carter:

Me es grato comunicarle que el Tribunal Electoral de Panamá, por este medio, le invita a participar en calidad de observador en las próximas elecciones generales a celebrarse en nuestro país el 2 de mayo de 1994.

Usted y su comitiva podrán participar en todas las etapas, tanto desde el inicio del proceso electoral como hasta la entrega de las Credenciales de los ciudadanos que sean elegidos para Presidente, Vicepresidentes de la República, Legisladores, Alcaldes, Concejales y Representantes de Corregimiento de la República de Panamá.

En virtud de que nuestro presupuesto de elecciones es limitado nos vemos en la imposibilidad de costearle su estadía y pasaje en nuestro país.

Sin embargo, el Tribunal Electoral se pone a su disposición para coordinar su visita y proveerle de cualquier información que requiera para el mejor desempeño de su misión.

La figura de Jimmy Carter ha estado ligada desde hace mucho años al difícil proceso democratizador de Panamá, y confiamos en que las próximas elecciones nos permitirán ver cristalizados tanto

462N-MP/93

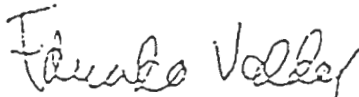
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los esfuerzos suyos como los de los panameños al ver unas elecciones transparentes, libres y honradas como lo manda la Constitución.

En espera de su respuesta, nos suscribimos de usted,

Atentamente,



Eduardo Valdés E.
Magistrado Presidente

EVE/crdep.

THE
CARTER CENTER
OF EMORY UNIVERSITY



April 25, 1994

To Eduardo Valdés E.

I write to thank you and the Electoral Tribunal for your invitation to observe the May 8 elections in Panama, and to inform you that I accept the invitation on behalf of the Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government, a group of 23 current and former Presidents and Prime Ministers from the Americas.

As you know, the Council sent a small assessment team to Panama last week to meet with you, Panamanian leaders, and others. Based on the recommendations of that team the Council has decided to accept your invitation, and is currently organizing a delegation of 12-15 observers. Our delegation plans to arrive in Panama by May 6 and stay through May 9 or 10.

I would like to thank the Tribunal also for your offer to provide assistance, including transportation and briefing, to our observer delegation. Our current plans call for most of our observers to remain in the area close to Panama City on election day. However, we would like for 5-8 members of our team to travel to polling sites in the interior regions, and would appreciate it if they could travel on buses and planes provided by the Tribunal. Dr. McCoy will contact you soon to follow-up on our delegation's arrangements.

Sincerely,

Eduardo Valdés E.
Magistrado Presidente
Tribunal Electoral
República de Panamá

Terms.Ref/April 29, 1994

Introduction and Terms of Reference:

The 1994 Panama Elections

Purposes of the Mission

Exactly five years ago, an opportunity for peaceful, democratic change in Panama was aborted by General Manuel Noriega. Many people believed that Noriega had an elaborate plan for stealing the election and for preventing Panamanians from voting. An international, bipartisan delegation led by Presidents Carter and Ford and Prime Minister Price went to Panama, and perhaps by their presence, provided assurance to Panamanians that their votes could make a difference. The people of Panama turned out to vote in such large numbers as to overwhelm any attempt by Noriega to manipulate the vote. In the end, he was compelled to annul the vote and subject himself to international condemnation. Instead of an opportunity for democratic legitimacy, the election in 1989 served to delegitimize Noriega's regime.

The election of May 8, 1994 promises to be very different. While the Electoral Tribunal was an instrument of Noriega's in 1989, it has gained confidence from political parties and much of the people. In 1989, the press was censored, but in 1994, it has been alive with questions, criticism, and public opinion polls. While there is some nervousness among the people, polls indicate that they want to vote, and they believe their vote will have meaning. Why then are we going? For four reasons.

First, because we were invited by the Electoral Tribunal and President Endara. Our delegation will hopefully encourage Panamanians to vote knowing that the world is watching and supporting them. The important role played by President Carter and the Council in the 1989 elections was appreciated by many of the political leaders with whom the Council's advance mission met. They welcomed the return of our group to reinforce the democratic process in Panama at this juncture in the country's history.

Second, international observers could lend support to the institutions of democracy, especially the Electoral Tribunal and the Comision de Justicia y Paz, that has begun to consolidate an impartial democratic process.

Third, if irregularities or problems emerge, a Council delegation could help to assess their cause, pattern, and effect. If the elections are close or questioned, our delegation, working with other domestic and international groups, could help reduce tensions and encourage the practical, problem-solving necessary to complete the process in a way that would give it stability and national and international legitimacy.

The Political Contest

In the May 1989 election, a wide coalition consisting of the Arnulfistas (President Guillermo Endara), the Morilena party (Vice President Billy Ford), and the Christian Democrats (Vice President Ricardo Arias Calderon) contested against the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD), led by Carlos Duque. But, in fact, the vote was a referendum on General Noriega, and the General lost by more than 2:1. The coalition took power after the U.S. military action, but in 1991, the Christian Democrats left the government, and in January 1994, Molirena left as well, having failed to reach agreement on a common candidate for the May election. When the date for registration of candidates closed on February 8, seven presidential candidates had been registered by 15 of 18 parties.

The Arnulfistas chose Mireya Moscoso de Gruber, the widow of three-time president Arnulfo Arias, in coalition with three other parties. The Morilena party passed over Vice President Billy Ford to choose the Comptroller General, banker Ruben Carles, who was supported by two other parties. Christian Democratic leader Ricardo Arias Calderon resigned for health reasons and was replaced by Edy Vallarino. The PRD chose Ernesto "Toro" Perez Balladares, and he was supported by two other parties.

With the division of the "civilista" coalition that had opposed Noriega and the PRD in 1989, the PRD has consistently led the polls with support that has ranged from 28-40%. The other parties have tried numerous times to unify - as they did in 1989 - but personal ambitions and bitter feelings between candidates representing different parties of the former civilista coalition seem, at times, as deep as between them and the PRD.

Support for the other Presidential candidates have fluctuated in the polls. In November-December 1993, polls suggested that Ruben Blades, the leader of the new political party, Papa Egoro ("mother earth" in an Indian language) would be the most formidable candidate, but by the time the other candidates registered in February, his star seemed to have crested and fallen in the polls. Ruben Carles then showed the most strength, even though the polls indicated that he had about half the support that Perez Balladares was receiving, and Carles' negative ratings were the highest of all the candidates. Polls taken in mid-April after a couple of Presidential debates indicate that Blades' popularity has increased and surpassed Carles while Perez Balladares' support declining, reducing his lead significantly. Mireya de Gruber was also doing much better in the polls. (We will try to send you the most recent polls before your arrival in Panama. The final poll is due to be published on Friday, May 6th.)

In brief, the political climate approaching election day is uncertain with the possibility that the election for Presidency could be close.

The Elections

On May 8, 1994, 1,499,451 Panamanians will be eligible to vote at 5,310 voting tables (mesas) in 1,980 polling centers. They will elect a new President, a unicameral National Assembly of 71 members (legisladores), 67 mayors (alcaldes), 511 municipal representatives (corregimientos), and 24 city councilors. There are five ballot papers representing these five different elections.

There are seven presidential candidates representing 15 parties through various coalitions. (See list of political parties.) The picture of 4 of the candidates appear several times on the ballot under each of the parties of a coalition. (For example, Mireya de Gruber has four pictures; Carles and Perez each have three.) A voter may only mark one party square, however. This is important to the parties because in order to survive legally, a party must win 5% of the vote in one of the races.

Voters may choose different parties for the presidential and legislative races, and about 35% indicated in a poll published in La Prensa on April 15th that they intend to split their vote. This makes it difficult to predict the outcomes of the legislative races, although it is extremely unlikely that any party will win a majority in the legislature.

For elections at the legislative level, voters live either in 26 demographically smaller single-member districts (circuitos) or 14 more populous districts where several legislators will be selected by proportional representation. In the multi-member districts, voters can vote for individuals within a party, but they cannot vote across parties.

The Electoral Tribunal

With justification, the Electoral Tribunal of Panama in 1989 was deeply distrusted. A new Tribunal was formed by the Endara administration. It is led by three magistrates chosen by the three branches of the government (and the three parties of the governing coalition) for a ten-year term beginning in 1990: President Eduardo Valdes was nominated by the Mollirena Party; Guillermo Marquez by the Christian Democrats; and Dennis Allen by the Arnulfistas.

The new Tribunal has worked hard to gain the public's confidence. Opinion polls vary on the extent to which they have succeeded. A Gallup-CID poll in March 1994 found that about half of the public trusted the Tribunal, and half did not. But the La Prensa poll of April 15 found that 68.7% trusted the Tribunal and only 20.2% did not. Other questions found that 61.1% believed the electoral process would be clean and impartial; 62.7 % that the count would be honest; and 67.8% that the police would be impartial. While these figures reflect an encouraging trend, still about one-third of the population is not confident in the process.

The advance team reported that only two of the presidential candidates interviewed expressed concerns about the Electoral Tribunal or the electoral process to date. The Molirena candidate, Ruben Carles, was concerned about the Tribunal's decision to uphold the indictment of the Morilena candidate for mayor, the incumbent Mayin Correa, for using public resources to support her campaign. (She is removed from her mayoral duties for one year, but will remain on the ballot. She is ahead in the polls. If she wins, her substitute would take office for the remainder of the one-year period.) Carles also raised concerns that the new ballot system may confuse voters and lead to a large number of null votes which could effect the results in a tight race.

The PRD candidate, Ernesto Perez Balladares, expressed his concerns to the advance team and publicly with the decision of President Endara on April 14 to dramatically broadcast on national television videotapes recorded by General Noriega. The tapes included excerpts from the cabinet meetings of President Solis Palma (1988-89) with scenes of the security forces beating people in the streets. The tapes showed members of the PRD talking about the misuse of state resources. The PRD viewed the decision to air the tapes as a deliberate attempt to denigrate the PRD and a violation of Endara's own published commitment to remain impartial and above the electoral process. In a public address afterwards, Perez Balladares expressed his sadness that the tapes were publicized and repeated that he and his party have no wish to recreate a military or return to the dark days of the Noriega past.

In the view of many PRD opponents, it was appropriate to air the videos and revive a discussion of the past because the voters deserved to be reminded and to be exposed to a debate about the role of the PRD in Panama's history.

The Tribunal issued a full page statement declaring that only the Legislature has the constitutional prerogative to judge the President's actions, but at the same time, in an implicit slap of the President, it reaffirmed its own independence and commitment to ensure that the electoral process will be completely fair. The Comision de Justicia y Paz issued a balanced and thoughtful statement, noting that "no one can disregard the past," but calling on the candidates to debate the current and future issues "with tolerance, respect, and responsibility." With great delicacy, the Commission said that the manner of presentation by the President could "be interpreted as an effort to change the preferences in the present electoral process, which could contradict his call not to, 'use his authority and influence to serve the interests of the participants in the election process.'"

Both the PRD and the Arnulfistas filed complaints with the Tribunal that they received death threats as a result of the tapes. In addition to these complaints, some isolated incidents of campaign violence were reported to the team by the Arnulfista and

PRD candidates. The Tribunal also told the team about complaints by the parties about negative campaigning directed at the PRD and Cambio 94. It was suspected that sympathizers of the two parties were placing the ads anonymously. The Tribunal met with the television stations and obtained an agreement from them prohibiting the placement of anonymous ads. The negative ads then stopped.

Nevertheless, of the major issues in an election process -- voter registration list, access to media, campaign resources, impartiality of election authorities, and election day procedures -- the parties had no serious complaints, even though there are no campaign spending limits. Although there were a few criticisms of the process by two of the parties, no one questioned the impartiality of the Electoral Tribunal.

The Tribunal will have about 42,000 personnel working on election day. All of the voting table officials have been named and are being trained, although not all have been showing up. This could cause some problems on election day. In addition, the Tribunal organized a 400-volunteer Cuerpo de Delegados (Corp of Delegates) to serve as mediators during the campaign and on election day. They are reported to be very effective.

Voter Registration

The voter registration list was an object of concern in 1989, but the current Electoral Tribunal has carried out a civic education campaign to encourage voters to update their documents, and about 880,000 voters did so. About 95% of the voting population registered before the cutoff date on October 23, 1993, for a total of 1,499,451 voters with credentials. They may vote with either their old voter card or a new cedula, which was issued up until April. However, no one can vote without a credential. Although some people did not receive a credential, this problem was not a source of concern for the political parties.

The Tribunal has organized mobile teams and a phone line where voters can check their ID and their voting place.

The Vote Count

After the ballots are counted, the results are written on an ACTA, which is signed by the election officials and sometimes by the poll-watchers as well. The acta is the crucial instrument for aggregating the count. After the actas are completed and transmitted, both the marked and the unused ballots are burned at each voting site. The purpose of the burning is to avoid stuffing ballot boxes or the stealing or exchange of ballot boxes during transport to central vote count centers.

Complaints about the conduct of the elections may be written on the acta by the party poll-watcher, but to be official, a

complaint must be registered within 3 days of the publication of official results. The Tribunal is the adjudicator of complaints, and there is no legal deadline for the Tribunal to resolve complaints.

The key to the count remains the Actas. The Electoral Tribunal has an extensive network of faxes, radios, and car transport planned to communicate the results of the vote count at each mesa. The procedure for the count at the mesa is to first count the presidential ballots and then transmit the results to the next level of electoral authorities (through the municipality, province and up to the national level). Next, the legislative ballots are counted and transmitted, and so on through the 5 races.

The transmission of unofficial results to the Tribunal occurs as follows: a) voting centers within 45 minutes of the national vote count center will be transmitted by car; b) centers within 2 hours distance will use phone, radio or fax; c) remote centers will use radios.

The Tribunal has its own radio network which will provide back-up to telephones and help prevent problems in rural areas where fraud has happened historically. The computer systems have a back-up to provide a replication of results. If electricity is cut, the telephones should still work, though faxes will not.

The Tribunal will begin announcing unofficial results as soon as they receive 5% of the results (based on the Chilean model); and expect to have presidential results Sunday night. Official results will have to await the actual transport of the hard-copy actas to Panama City.

Election observers and Pollwatchers

The Catholic Church-led Comision de Justicia y Paz is the successor to the Cruzada Civilista which organized a quick count in the 1989 elections that provided the basis for estimating the true winners of that election. Formed in August 1991, the Comision has organized an impressive voter observation network, as well as played an important mediating role throughout the 1994 electoral process. (Their quick count of 1992 confirmed the Tribunal's results in the referendum.)

The Comision has encouraged a calm electoral process from the beginning when it mediated the approval of the Compromiso de Santa Maria in which all of the political parties agreed to a clean, peaceful and ethical campaign. The Comision also holds weekly meetings with the candidates to mediate problems and encourage ethical behavior. In addition to the work of the Commission, the United Nations Development Program has coordinated a process - "the Bambito process - of dialogue among the political parties, business, labor, universities, and the Church beginning in 1993.

The purpose has been to discuss social and political issues and to promote reconciliation.

The Comision will have 1800 Panamanians observing the elections on election day and will conduct a parallel tabulation of 80% of the votes (at 1500 mesas), as well as an exit poll between 9am and 2 pm. The parallel tabulation will provide the data for a quick count for the presidential race, although the Comision does not plan to publicize their results. Observers will stay in one location the entire day. The Comision expects to have its results by 10:00 pm on Sunday night.

Political parties are each allowed to have two poll-watchers in each voting station, although no party is likely to do so. The PDC and PRD will each try to place one pollwatcher in perhaps 90% of the mesas. The Arnulfistas and Morilena are also expected to mobilize large numbers, although less than that. The Tribunal has trained about 2000 party representatives.

Several groups of foreign observers will be present. The Tribunal is inviting about 20 electoral magistrates from Latin America. The Comision is inviting a group of foreign observers. The OAS (15-20), CAPEL (20), UN (2) and EEC are all sending small delegations, as well as the diplomatic corps in Panama. We will seek to coordinate our activities with these groups.

Civic Education

The Centro ProDemocracia and the Electoral Tribunal have conducted extensive civic education on how to vote. The Tribunal has had ads on TV every day for the last two months, as well as in newspaper and radios. They have provided training for party representatives as well as their own voting station officials.

During the visit of the advance team, the Tribunal was conducting tests to see if citizens understand the voting process. Although the results were not yet in, it appeared that the most errors occurred not on the more complicated legislative ballots, but on the presidential ballot where individuals marked their chosen candidate each time he/she appeared in a party box.

Public Safety

The Public Forces are turned over to the Electoral Tribunal beginning May 2 until three days after the elections. Police who are stationed in areas outside of their voting site will be allowed to vote after the polls are closed in order to avoid multiple voting. None of the parties and few observers voiced concerns about the police.

Summary of Discussions with Political Leaders
Advance Mission
Panama City
April 13-16, 1994

President Guillermo Endara

President Endara stated he was committed to a clean election; that the Tribunal was excellent; and that the Catholic Church (in the Comision de Justicia y Paz) had promoted the important Compromiso de Santa Maria. He said he will transfer power to whoever wins the elections.

President Endara expects a good climate during and after the elections. He has faith in the police force. He has already announced his plan to invite the winner on May 9 to the Palace to being a transition. He will also invite the president-elect to the Cartagena summit scheduled for June 15.

Endara invited and welcomed President Carter's advice in the transition. Since Panamanians do not have any experience in a presidential transition, Carter's experience would be very useful.

Arnulfista Candidate Mireya Moscoso de Gruber and Coalition Members

Sra. Mireya de Gruber commented that Panamanians are in a learning process as this will be their first democratic elections. She wants these elections to be peaceful, but is concerned that there will be violence. The Arnulfistas expect the campaign to heat up. Already one violent incident occurred in a campaign rally against Gruber, and she has received blackmail threats regarding President Endara's national address (the upcoming videotape airing).

The coalition plans to have 8,000-10,000 pollwatchers; expects to win 31-35 legislative seats; and is "sure they will win the elections." They have confidence in the Tribunal and will respect the results. They cited the good work of the Tribunal in the 1992 referendum, even though the government lost the vote. They also stated that President Endara (Arnulfista party) will deliver power to whoever wins.

Gruber stated that President Carter was instrumental in 1989 and that they were grateful for his role then. The subsequent OAS mediating role, however, was in favor of the military. The U.S. invasion was to defend democracy in Panama, not to intervene. President Carter can count on their support and can help guarantee democracy in Panama. They are receiving threats from the same group as in 1989 (and referred to PRD members who played prominent roles then as being active in the PRD campaign now). Gruber recognized that the Canal Treaties were followed by a political opening under Torrijos to allow the formation of political parties, and that the Treaties had a high political cost to President Carter in the next U.S. election.

The Arnulfistas fear the PRD reaction in the event of a loss, and believe that a Carter-led delegation could help prevent violence. They want many international observers and encouraged international organizations and Carter to come to "guarantee a pristine election and deter any manipulation."

PRD Candidate Ernesto Perez Balladares and Campaign Staff

The PRD campaign staff stated that they saw a consensus on the integrity of the Tribunal and that, despite the fact that the PRD did not have a representative among the magistrates, the PRD has confidence in the Tribunal. They cited several reasons for their confidence. One, the track record in the 1991 partial elections and the 1992 referendum demonstrated its capacity. Two, the PRD conducted an audit of the 1994 voter registration list (padron) and found it to be accurate; in fact, they noted this was the first time an audit by a political party affirmed the integrity of the padron. Three, the Tribunal moved to change the electoral law in June 1992 to abolish the vote of party representatives (pollwatchers) on the Actas. Four, the Tribunal took a positive action to end the negative campaigning in the form of the media ads by sympathizers of the Cambio 94 campaign against the PRD, and the responding ads by PRD sympathizers against Ruben Carles. They further complimented the work of the Comision de Justicia y Paz and said that the party's deputy secretary general attends the weekly meetings.

Nevertheless, Ernesto Perez Balladares related the following concerns to the team regarding the election process to date: the use by the government of public resources for the campaign (though the PRD did not plan to file a formal complaint); death threats to him (complaint lodged with Tribunal); and President Endara's violation of both the electoral code and his personal commitment not to interfere in the campaign when he televised the videotapes of the Noriega period.

Perez Balladares stated that he will accept the results of the elections and will move away from the Panamanian tradition of "Either I win, or I'm robbed of my victory." He has promised to recognize the victor on election night. If the victor, Balladares will broaden his government to include independents and other parties in his cabinet and a non-PRD member as Attorney General (Procurador). The PRD expects to win 20-25 Assembly seats, but will seek a concertation among parties in the Assembly even if they win a majority of seats.

The PRD is mobilizing 33,000 supporters to work in some capacity on election day: 11,000 pollwatchers (1 per polling site plus alternate); 17,000 to mobilize and help voters outside the voting sites; and runners (corredores) to collect and transmit data for the parallel vote count.

They indicated that the prestige of an observer team led by President Carter would be important to prevent violence and

encourage the acceptance of the results of the elections.

Cambio 94 Candidate Ruben Carles

Ruben Carles had two concerns regarding the electoral process to date. First, he questioned the decision of the Tribunal Electoral to uphold the indictment of Molirena mayoral candidate Mayin Correa on charges of using public resources for her campaign. Second, he raised concerns about the new ballot system that could cause confusion among voters. In his view, the new ballots were a dramatic change from the past and would lead voters to make errors in marking their ballots that would result in many null (invalidated) ballots, and could even effect the outcome of a close election.

Carles' views of international observers were equivocal. He stated that there was an important role for international observers in the 1994 elections, but that President Carter suffers from an image of being pro-Torrijista. Nevertheless Carter's presence in the 1989 elections, along with President Ford, was determinant, and Carles encouraged them to return in 1994 with a bipartisan delegation. In his view, the Americans played a more positive role than did the Latin Americans, especially the OAS, whom he viewed as pro-Torrijista in 1989.

PDC Candidate Eduardo Vallarino

Vallarino had no significant complaints about the electoral process and felt the Tribunal was doing a good job. International observers would be a stabilizing factor and should come because "if they come, they probably won't be needed; but if they don't come, they probably will be needed."

The UNDP's Bambito process has been very good. It has helped erase the animosities among Panamanians. The PDC has offered to form a new sort of coalition in which the party would give up its presidential candidacy if other parties would sign its political program (Pact for the People). This would constitute a true uniting of programs, rather than a coalition with divided programs. So far the party has received no response from other parties.

Panama.Background/April 29, 1994

BACKGROUND MEMORANDUM:

THE 1994 PANAMANIAN ELECTIONS

**Summary of Conclusions of Advance Mission
and
Description of the Electoral System**

The Advance Mission

As chair of the Council of Freely-Elected Heads of Government, an informal group of 24 leaders from the Americas, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter was invited by the Electoral Tribunal and President Guillermo Endara to observe the national elections in Panama on May 8, 1994. An advance team comprised of Jennifer McCoy, Joaquin Daly, Juan Manuel Garcia-Passalacqua and Kelly McBride visited Panama April 13-16 to assess the status of the electoral process, consult with Panamanian leaders, and recommend whether the Council should accept the invitation.

The team met with five of the seven presidential candidates, the Electoral Tribunal, the Catholic Church-led Comision de Justicia y Paz, officials of the U.N. Development Program, and the Centro Pro-Democracia (see attached interview list). In discussions with the presidential candidates and political parties, the team found widespread confidence in the Electoral Tribunal, extensive preparations by the Comision de Justicia y Paz to mount a domestic election observation and parallel vote count, and few complaints about the electoral process to date.

Nevertheless, the team sensed a general uneasiness in the country that was perhaps related to the tragic electoral fraud perpetrated by General Manuel Noriega in 1989 and witnessed by a delegation led by Presidents Carter and Ford and Prime Minister George Price sponsored by the Council of Freely-Elected Heads of Government, and the National Democratic and National Republican Institutes for International Affairs. The nervousness in the country was captured in an extensive public opinion poll, published in the Panamanian newspaper, La Prensa, on April 15, in which a plurality - 42.6% - indicated that they thought there would be violence during the electoral process - whereas 36.4% said there wouldn't.

Because the team was encouraged in virtually all of its meetings to send an observer delegation and for other reasons described in the terms of reference, the Council decided to send an international and bipartisan team.

Finally, the Council delegation could promote reconciliation and a smooth, peaceful, and democratic transition - an event that Panama has not witnessed for three decades.

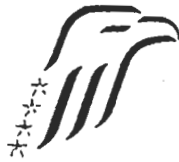
The Monitoring Process

Our delegation will begin its briefings on Friday afternoon and continue them through Saturday. We will learn about Panama's electoral process and how we should monitor the election. We will meet with many of the candidates, and we need to ask them their views of the electoral process and whether they will accept the results if the vote and count are fair. We will show you how to monitor the election and how to fill out a survey form, which we will give to you during the briefings.

On Sunday, we will deploy throughout the country and in coordination with other Panamanian and international groups. We will return to the Hotel on Sunday evening or Monday morning to evaluate as a group what we have seen and to discuss the statement that will be issued at our concluding press conference.

The most important premise that should guide this delegation, as it has guided all of our missions, is that we should be absolutely impartial with respect to all of the political parties and candidates. Secondly, we should not draw any conclusions about the electoral process until the group has an opportunity to gather at the conclusion to hear from each other. On the day of the election, some of you will see a process working very smoothly, and some might see some problems. It is impossible and unfair to your colleagues and to the Panamanian people to draw a conclusion about the overall election from a single person's monitoring experience. That is why we all need to fill out the forms and hear from each other before reaching any conclusions. To avoid the possibility that remarks may be taken out of context or misconstrued, delegates should not make any statements to the media regarding their evaluations until the delegation has reconvened, each team has presented their findings, and a formal statement has been released.

THE
CARTER CENTER
OF EMORY UNIVERSITY



Hon. Jimmy Carter
May 6, 1994
Arrival Statement
Panama

Five years ago, we left Panama distressed that an opportunity for peaceful, democratic change was aborted. Today, we return confident that the Panamanian people will have the chance that was denied them by General Manuel Noriega - to fulfill the democratic right to choose their next leaders.

The Council of Freely-Elected Heads of Government, a group of 24 current and former leaders of the Americas, was invited to observe these elections by the Tribunal Electoral and President Guillermo Endara. As Chair of the Council, I want to introduce the delegation that has travelled here to witness these historic elections. My co-chairs are George Price, former Prime Minister of Belize and Vice Chair of the Council, who was also here for the 1989 elections, and former Costa Rican President Rodrigo Carazo, who will be arriving tomorrow.

I want to thank Council members President Rafael Caldera of Venezuela, Fernando Belaunde of Peru, and Oscar Arias of Costa Rica for sending representatives to serve on our delegation. I would like to thank my good friend former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Jim Wright for joining us and would also like to recognize Bruce McColm, President of the International Republican Institute and Jack Vaughn, former U.S. Ambassador to Panama. In fact, let me ask each of my colleagues if they would stand and identify themselves.

The Council has observed eight elections in this hemisphere. Everywhere we have gone, we have been committed to be impartial witnesses of elections and to support the democratic process of the countries that invite us to come.

In the last four years, Panamanians have worked hard to develop democratic institutions that have integrity. Part of our mission is to lend our support to those in the Tribunal Electoral and the Comision de Justicia y Paz, who have worked so hard to make sure this election would be free and fair.

As in many other countries where we have monitored elections, we are coordinating our work with the Organization of American States and with CAPEL. Our delegation is composed of 30 members and staff, and on election day, our group will be divided and will travel to different areas of the country. Together with groups from the Organization of American States and CAPEL, we will monitor as many mesas as possible. Then Monday morning, we will reassemble in this hotel to share our assessments of the elections and to consult with the other observer groups and with the Commission on Justice and Peace. We plan to share our conclusions with you on Monday afternoon in a press conference.

As most of you know, Rosalynn and I have always felt a bond of affection for the people of Panama. We therefore appreciate being invited to visit your country at such a crucial moment. The new government that the people of Panama will elect on Sunday will have to work closely with the United States to ensure the successful implementation of the Canal Treaties. Most important, however, the new government will need to be able to consolidate democracy, reconcile the many different parties, and address many issues of concern to Panamanians. Such a government can only emerge from a free election that is accepted by the people of Panama and the international community.

The people of Panama are ready to make such a decision, and we are here to express our solidarity with those who are committed to making the election on Sunday the most democratic decision in decades.

Thank you.

Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government
OBSERVER FORM

May 8, 1994 Panamanian Elections

[Fill out one (1) form for each polling table (mesa).]

I. Basic information

Observer Name _____ Circuito number/Name _____
Polling site (centro) name _____
Mesa number _____

Time at site _____ Number of Voting Mesas at site _____

Number of registered voters at this mesa: _____

Present at Poll Opening?: Yes _____ No _____; Present at Poll Close?: Yes _____ No _____

II. Complete the following based upon your observations, as well as the impressions of President of the voting mesas and/or poll watchers:

1. Did mesa open on time? Yes _____ No _____
2. Was ballot box empty at poll opening? Yes _____ No _____

3. Approximately how many have voted so far (percent)? _____

4. Is the mesa well-organized? Yes _____ No _____

5. Are three mesa officials present? Yes _____ No _____

6. Did the three mesa officials appear well-prepared and independent? Yes _____ No _____

7. Did the voters understand the ballot? Yes _____ No _____

8. Were there significant problems with the voter rolls? Yes _____ No _____

9. Were there significant problems with the voting credentials (cedula)? Yes _____ No _____

10. Does security situation appear satisfactory? Yes _____ No _____

11. Is voting private? Yes _____ No _____

12. Which poll watchers (representatives) are present from the parties: Alianza Democratica [Arnulfista Party--PA(); Authentic Liberal Party--PLA(); Liberal Party--PL (); Independent Democratic Union Party--UDI()]; Pueblo Unido [Democratic Revolutionary Party--PRD (); Labor Party--PALA (); Liberal Republican Party--PLR/LIBRE ()]; Cambio 94 [Nationalist Republican Liberal Movement--MOLIRENA (); National Renewal Movement--MORENA (); Civic Renewal Party--PRC ()]; Concertacion Nacional [Solidarity Party--PS (); National Unity Mission Party--Mision ()]; Parties not in coalition: Christian Democratic Party--PDC(); Doctrinal Panamanian Party--PPD(); Papa Egoro Movement--MPE(); Popular Nationalist Party--PNP ()

13. Domestic observers: Comision de J. y P. () Other()

III. Based on your assessment answer the following:

Overall, does voting process appear satisfactory? Yes _____ No _____

Any other observations or comments? (Use space on back of form)

I. Informacion General

Nombre del Observador/es _____
Circuito _____ Numero de Mesa _____
Centro de Votacion _____ Numero de Mesas _____
Hora de llegada _____ Numero de Electores Registrados _____
Observo la apertura de la mesa? Si ___ No ___ El cierre? Si ___
No ___

II. Basado en sus observaciones y asimismo en las opiniones del Presidente de mesa y/o representante:

1. Abrio la mesa a la hora prevista? Si ___ No ___
2. Estaban las urnas vacias Si ___ No ___
3. Hasta el momento, que % de electores han votado? _____
4. Esta la mesa bien conformada y organizada Si ___ No ___
5. Estan presentes tres oficiales de mesa? Si ___ No ___
6. Observa que los tres oficiales de mesa son independientes y bien preparados? Si ___ No ___
7. Los votantes comprenden el proceso de votacion? Si ___ No ___
8. Hubieron problemas en el registro electoral? Si ___ No ___
9. Hubieron problemas con la cedula electoral? Si ___ No ___
10. Es satisfactoria la seguridad? Si ___ No ___
11. Es el voto secreto? Si ___ No ___

12. Que representantes de partidos estan presentes: Alianza Democratica [Partido Arnulfista--PA(); Partido Liberal Autentico--PLA(); Partido Liberal--PL (); Partido Union Democratica Independiente--UDI()]; Pueblo Unido [Partido Revolucionario Democratico--PRD (); Partido Laborista--PALA (); Partido Liberal Republicano--PLR/LIBRE ()]; Cambio 94 [Movimiento Liberal Republicano Nacionalista--MOLIRENA (); Movimiento de Renovacion Nacional--MORENA (); Partido Renovacion Civilista--PRC ()]; Concertacion Nacional [Partido Solidaridad--PS (); Partido Mision de Unidad Nacional--Mision ()]; Partidos no en coalicion: Partido Demócrata Cristiano--PDC(); Partido Panamenista Doctrinario--PPD(); Partido Movimiento Papa Egoro--MPE(); Partido Nacionalista Popular--PNP ()

13. Observadores locales: Comision de Justicia y Paz () Otros ()

III. Conclusion:

En general, el proceso de votacion se desarrolla satisfactoriamente? Si ___ No ___

Otros comentarios (favor use el otro lado de la pagina):

Preliminary Summary of ELECTION OBSERVER FORMS

The Council delegation members observed a total of 335 mesas. The results were overwhelmingly positive. Below is a summary of the results of two of the most important questions, the "overall assessment" in part III, and the number of party "poll watchers" present (question #12):

III. Overall, does voting process appear satisfactory?

Yes	323
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No	1
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Undecided	3
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(No answer checked, apparently because observer did not feel comfortable in characterizing the process as satisfactory or unsatisfactory)

Incomplete form	5
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(No answer checked and answer is unclear from other information on form)

#12. Poll watchers (representantes) present from the parties? (total number present)

In the 335 mesas observed by the Council delegation, there was an average of 6.6 party poll watchers (representantes) present.



Hon. Jimmy Carter
May 9, 1994
Departure Statement
Panama

Upon our arrival in Panama we noted a dramatic change since we were here in 1989. In the 1989 elections the Panamanian people were denied the chance to successfully complete their democratic right to choose their leaders. Today, we must congratulate the Panamanian people, President Endara, the Electoral Tribunal, and all the leaders in the political arena for their extraordinary expression of civic participation.

As Chair of the Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government, a group of 24 current and former leaders from the Americas which I chair, I am leading an observer delegation which is here at the invitation of the Electoral Tribunal, President Endara, and other Panamanian leaders. Also with me as co-leaders of this delegation are the Council's Vice Chairman George Price, former Prime Minister of Belize, and Rodrigo Carazo, former President of Costa Rica, who had to leave a few hours ago. Other members of the delegation include representatives of Council members former Peruvian President Fernando Belaunde Terry, and former Costa Rican President Oscar Arias.

The 27 members of our delegation were deployed throughout the country, and coordinated closely with the observer teams sent by the OAS, led by Mario Gonzalez, and CAPEL, led by Daniel Zovatto, both of whom we hope to cooperate with in the future. All three of our groups share the view that this election was one of the best organized and successful we have ever seen. Our observers also consulted with the Panamanian observers organized by the Comision de Justicia y Paz, as well as with the observers organized by the Electoral Tribunal. Panama today should be proud to celebrate this historic day. Although only one of the presidential candidates could win the election, all the people of Panama are the true winners of this process. Their efforts in this election stand as a model for the entire region and for the hemisphere.

While there are many whose efforts were vital to the success of this election, we want to make special mention of the outstanding work of the Panamanian Electoral Tribunal from the three Magistrates, down to the thousands of officials nationwide who organized the voting mesas, including the important contributions made by Panamanian youth and women.

This morning, I met with Ernesto Perez Balladares, and this afternoon I will meet with other candidates. The Council and I are ready to assist Panamanians in any way if we can be of help during the transition and after.

When I return to the U.S. tomorrow I will inform President Clinton and Secretary of State Christopher of our observations of the electoral process and the spirit of democracy which we have witnessed here.

Panama has a special place in my and Rosalynn's hearts, and we are confident that all Panamanians will continue to work to strengthen their democracy in the future.

The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

The U.S. Stake in Panama ...

FEW VOTES ANYWHERE will mean more for the United States this year than Panama's presidential elections last Sunday. It's not that the winner, U.S.-educated millionaire businessman Ernesto Perez Balladares, is Washington's man; on the contrary he heads Panama's leading nationalist party. It's that on his watch Panama must carry off final conveyance of the American-built Panama Canal to Panama on Dec. 31, 1999. The smooth transfer of this vital giant facility will call for high political skills on each side.

Treaties made by President Jimmy Carter and the late General Omar Torrijos in 1979 spelled out the new terms of Panamanian sovereignty and operation over the waterway and surrounding lands. Nothing has changed to justify altering those treaties. But in both countries political snags lurk. In some Panamanian quarters there is a disturbing reluctance to move on without American guidance—for instance, to lose the income from American military bases, which are to close. In some American quarters there persists the attitude of "patriotic" overpossessiveness toward the canal that fired up the losing but bruising battle against treaty ratification in the Senate.

Aware that both the process and the result of voting in Panama can color the countdown to 2000, President Carter himself led an election observer mission. Despite widespread fears of disruption, the process was peaceful and fair. The easy victory that Mr. Perez Balladares scored and the comfortable governing coalition he is expected to assemble should strengthen him as an interlocutor with the United States. Mr. Perez Balladares is of the populist party that Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega turned into the political arm of the armed forces until an American invasion deposed the strongman five years ago. He has striven to identify himself with his party's more acceptable Torrijos roots and to democratize the party from the inside. But he will have to keep working hard to still fears of the revival of the thuggery and corruption associated with Gen. Noriega.

President Bush invaded Panama in 1989 in large measure to halt Gen. Noriega's patronage of the drug traffic. The chief effect of his ouster on the drug trade was to privatize it and to create another set of obstacles to law enforcement. On this and other pressing concerns, the United States badly needs Panama's vigorous cooperation.

Businessman Appears Victor In Panama

By HOWARD W. FRENCH
Special to The New York Times

A left-of-center businessman who remade the image of his party after its disgrace under Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega has won Panama's first democratic elections in over quarter of a century today, according to exit polls this evening.

The expected victor, Ernesto Pérez Balladares, 48, an American-educated banker and former Government minister, overcame the stigma attached to General Noriega by recalling the image of another former dictator, Gen. Omar Torrijos.

The projected win by Mr. Balladares of nearly 40 percent of the vote only five years after General Noriega's ouster in a United States military invasion represented a stinging defeat for Panama's traditional elite, which was hounded power in the wake of the American intervention.

Mr. Balladares has promised a growing economy with more jobs and a greater role in public life for Panama's middle and lower classes.

Rather than any of the candidates of the elite, second place was occupied by the political novice Rubén Blades, the salsa singer and Hollywood star.

Exit polls showed Mr. Blades, who only recently returned to his country to head the ticket of the Papa Egoro, or Mother Earth Party, winning nearly one-quarter of the vote.

In a late-starting campaign, Mr. Blades offered many Panamanians the promise of an end to racial and economic elitism in a country that is ethnically diverse but starkly stratified. In addition, Mr. Blades's campaign revolved around the notion of ending what is widely seen as endemic corruption in government.

In helping to rebuild General Noriega's political base, the Revolutionary Democratic Party, Mr. Balladares carefully distanced himself from the former dictator, recently calling him the worst leader since



In the first free elections in Panama in 25 years, the icons of the elite were soundly defeated. Early results showed that a leftist banker, Ernesto Pérez Balladares, who greeted supporters yesterday, was far in the lead.

for his imposing build. "Toto bore no responsibility for the Noriega era. He is a true leader like Torrijos."

After decades of deep involvement in Panamanian affairs, the United States seemed to have no clear favorite in the vote.

"For 150 years, for the United States, the result was more important than the process here," said Richard Millet, an expert in Panamanian history at the University of Southern Illinois, who came to Panama as an election observer.

"Now it is the process that matters, because if the process works right it gives results we can live with."

With recent elections marred by wholesale fraud or by bitter and tense campaigning, today's vote seemed

remarkably settled. Panamanians turned out in large numbers early in the day and the process was widely reported to have been orderly.

Among 1,200 international and Panamanian observers was a team of about 30 led by former President Jimmy Carter.

"Reports from the various observers and officials all suggest that everything is going well," Mr. Carter said.

In addition to selecting a President, Panamanians also voted for two vice presidents, all representatives in the National Assembly, 67 mayors, 511 magistrates and 24 local councils.

About 1.4 million of Panama's 2.5 million citizens were registered to vote.

Candidate with links to Noriega leads Panama presidential vote

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Panama City, Panama — A millionaire businessman with past ties to Gen. Manuel Noriega was leading Sunday in Panama's first presidential elections since the U.S. invasion in 1989, according to early official results.

It was the first time Panamanians had voted so freely and peacefully. The military, which ruled Panama for more than two decades before the United States invaded to depose Noriega, had influenced outcomes through electoral fraud and threats of coups.

With 40.1 percent of the vote counted late Sunday, Ernesto Perez Balladares, known as "Toro" ("Bull") for his beefy build, was leading with 33.1 percent of the vote, the independent Electoral Tribunal said.

Perez Balladares ran the 1989 campaign of Noriega's hand-picked candidate, but he gained popularity in the current election by invoking the memory of the late populist military dictator Gen. Omar Torrijos.

Perez Balladares has said he opposes a return to militarism and has tried to distance himself from Noriega.

Mireya Moscoso of the ruling Arnulfista Party was in second place with 28.3 percent of the vote, the tribunal said. She is the widow of the late Arnulfo Arias de la Madrid, a popular president who was elected three times and thrown out all three times by coups.

Actor and salsa singer Ruben Blades, who campaigned by holding concerts featuring his popular music and calling for a break with past politics and parties, was third with 17.7 percent of the vote.

The last elections, held in May 1989, were annulled by Noriega when it became apparent that his candidate would lose to Guillermo Endara. Endara and his vice presidential candidates were beaten up by street thugs controlled by Noriega.

Endara was later sworn in as president on a U.S. military base

during the American invasion. U.S. forces captured Noriega and took him to Miami, where he was convicted of drug trafficking. He is serving a 40-year sentence in a prison in Miami.

Some 1.4 million of Panama's 2.5 million citizens were registered to vote. In addition to electing a president, they chose two vice presidents, 71 representatives, 67 mayors, 511 magistrates and 24 local council members.

Turnout appeared to be heavy as thousands of voters lined up under cloudy skies at dozens of voting stations around the capital.

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter was one of some 1,200 international and Panamanian election observers. The vote was seen as a test of the Central American nation's democracy, especially since Endara's party was likely to lose power.

Noriega's party wins in Panama

Reborn group to rule as canal turnover nears

By David L. Marcus
Staff Writer of The Dallas Morning News

PANAMA CITY, Panama — Former dictator Manuel Antonio Noriega's populist political party, which appeared destroyed after the U.S. invasion of Panama, swept back to power in Sunday's elections.

With more than 45 percent of the vote counted, the Revolutionary Democratic Party was winning the presidency, about one-third of the seats in the National Assembly and several mayoral races. The party, known by its Spanish abbreviation PRD, will control Panama for the crucial five-year period that ends just before the United States leaves the Panama Canal.

Top officials of the PRD — including President-elect Ernesto Perez Balladares, who seemed set for victory with a plurality of just 33 percent of the vote — had close connections to the military regime that ruled Panama for the 21 years.

Please see NORIEGA'S on Page 6A.

6A The Dallas Morning News

Monday, May 9, 1994 H

Noriega's party wins elections in Panama

Continued from Page 1A.

before the 1989 invasion. Although he has denounced the corruption at the end of the dictatorship, Mr. Perez Balladares appears in a videotape made several years ago hugging Gen. Noriega, the deposed dictator.

"It's an embarrassment for us, for Panamanians, that we were clapping for the invasion in 1989 and now the same people who used to play with Noriega are back in power, and by democratic means," said Alvaro Dominguez, who flew in to vote from the Cayman Islands, where he is a banker and Panama's honorary consul.

Mireya Moscoso, widow of former president Arnulfo Arias de la Madrid, was in second place with 28.3 percent of the vote, the Electoral Tribunal said. She is the candidate of the Arnulfista Party of outgoing President Guillermo Endara.

Internationally known salsa singer Ruben Blades, once the favorite in the race, was in third place, with 17.7 percent of the vote.

Mr. Blades, who spent two decades away from Panama and earned a degree in international law from Harvard, had portrayed himself as the honest nonpolitician.

The U.S. Embassy in Panama City was careful not to appear to favor any of the seven presidential candidates, and Democrats and Republicans alike in Washington showed little interest in the outcome. The country has such a low priority that President Clinton hasn't named a replacement for the ambassador to Panama, who retired in February.

But Panamanians called this their most important election ever. The new government will decide what to do with billions of dollars worth of U.S. military bases that are being turned over to Panama. Just after the next president is inaugurated, he will take possession of Fort Amador, a headquarters for the U.S. Navy, as well as the site of a golf course and officers' club.

1999, just three months after Mr. Perez Balladares finishes his term. However, his supporters are expected to push for a constitutional reform to end the one-term limit on presidents. For years, the PRD has patterned itself after Mexico's Institutional Revolutionary Party and it, too, plans to hold power for a long time.

Even PRD loyalists were surprised by the party's ability to reorganize and bounce back so quickly.

"I never, ever expected we'd return to power after less than five years," said Jusna Herrera, information director in the PRD's office in the working-class neighborhood of San Miguelito.

She and others said the party has matured since the days when Mr. Noriega hand-picked its candidates.

"We can't erase what happened, but we can, and did, learn from it," she said.

An informal survey of voters indicated that the vote was largely a backlash against the closed, wealthy clique that controls politics and business in Panama. The group is known as the *rabiblanco* — the "white tails."

"This is a reaction to the oligarchy, to the way the government arranges bids so a small group of people get a lot of money," said first-time voter Roger Lau, 22. Just five years ago, he said, he eagerly joined the protests against Mr. Noriega and the PRD. But he joined the party after watching "military corruption turn into civilian corruption."

Even though this was the first election since the U.S. invasion, that topic was barely mentioned. "We don't dwell on the invasion because when you have a pain, a loss, you try to block it out," said Ms. Herrera.

Oddly, some Panamanians said the invasion helped the PRD, which has shed its more notorious members, starting with Mr. Noriega.

"The party has been purified, it's



Associated Press

Ernesto Perez Balladares, opposition presidential candidate, waves Sunday after voting in the general election.

who appeared willing to forgive the party for past sins.

The invasion, ordered by former President George Bush, was supposed to attack drug trafficking and money laundering while restoring democracy. Although criminal mafias are flourishing, democracy did make a comeback — though not with the results Mr. Bush's advisers might have wanted.

The atmosphere was drastically different from that of the 1989 election, when Mr. Noriega's hand-picked election commission aborted the vote count after early returns showed the PRD candidate losing to Guillermo Endara by a 3-1 ratio. Mr. Endara was installed as president after the invasion.

The vote was overseen by 1,200 election observers, including former President Jimmy Carter and movie director Oliver Stone.

Turnout was among the highest of any in elections in the Americas in recent years. The Electoral Tribunal estimated that 90 percent of the 1.5 million eligible voters went to the polls, despite Mother's Day celebrations that traditionally keep families at home.

"For the first time in history, we're having clean, transparent and open elections, and the people's choice will be honored," said Ana

Noriega's party wins Panamanian election

By TRACY WILKINSON
Los Angeles Times

PANAMA CITY — A man whom U.S. troops captured and interrogated during the 1989 invasion that ousted Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega was elected president yesterday in Panama's freest elections in decades.

Ernesto Perez Balladares, candidate of the political party that served as a front for Noriega's dictatorship throughout the 1980s, took more than a third of the votes in a field of seven contenders.

When Perez Balladares declared victory late yesterday, he was leading with 33.2 percent of the vote with 52.3 percent counted, the independent Electoral Tribunal said.

"Now we began to construct, together regardless of our different political groups, the future of the nation," Perez Balladares said after declaring victory.

The Electoral Tribunal said Mirya Moscoso of the ruling Arnulfo Arias Party was in second place with 28.3 percent of the vote. She is the widow of Arnulfo Arias de la Madrid, a popular president elected three times and thrown out every time by coups.

Salas, musician and Hollywood actor Ruben Blades, who put his movie career on hold to run for president, was in third with 17.7 percent.

Panama's first presidential election (More on PANAMA on Page 4)

Panama

Front Page 1

tion since the invasion has been seen as a test of whether democracy will take root in this country after a long history of domination by the army or the United States.

It was the first time in 25 years that Panamanians could choose a president without the specter of military dictatorship, and the first time in more than three decades that the results are likely to be respected.

The new government will be responsible for preparing Panama to take over the Panama Canal in 2000.

"We are confident that at the end of this day, we will come out on top," a beaming Perez Balladares said early yesterday as he cast his ballot.

The past ties of Perez Balladares' Democratic Revolutionary Party, or PRD, to Noriega and the military, worry and frighten opponents.

But the candidate apparently conserved his party's traditional base while tapping into a strong protest vote among Panamanians angry at the pro-business government of President Guillermo Endara, which to many seemed inept and uncaring toward the poor.

"I am proud to be a Panamanian,"



Ernesto Perez Balladares: Has declared victory in the race

man," Endara said in a nationally televised interview after the polling. Yesterday's voting was, on the whole, orderly. Many polling stations opened late as workers awaited cardboard ballot boxes.

But few other problems and no major violence were reported, in marked contrast to past elections, where voters were often intimidated, ballots were stolen and results were canceled.

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and former House Speaker Jim Wright of Fort Worth led a team of more than 1,200 international observers who were deployed

throughout the country to guarantee clean voting. Wright said last night that voting had been busy but orderly.

"Everything I've heard and seen tells me it has been just a very orderly procedure," Wright said from his room at the Caesar Park Hotel on Via Israel in Panama City. "People are in a very festive mood."

That picture contrasts sharply with the violence that came after the May 1989 presidential elections. So does the manner in which Panama's political parties treated each other at the polling places, Wright said.

In 1989, Noriega annulled the results when his handpicked candidate, Carlos Duque, lost to Endara. Endara and his vice presidential candidates were roughed up by Noriega's agents, and a few months later the invasion was launched.

The invading troops swore Endara into office at a hasty ceremony on a U.S. military base. Noriega was eventually captured and is serving a 40-year drug-trafficking sentence in a Florida prison.

Perez Balladares, known as "The Bull" because of his hefty build, is a longtime leader of the PRD. He ran Duque's campaign and continues to be surrounded by several party stalwarts who were close to Noriega or were linked to corruption in the past.

But Perez Balladares, a wealthy businessman schooled at the University of Pennsylvania and Notre Dame, campaigned tirelessly to distance himself and the party from Noriega.

"Today's party has nothing to do with Noriega," he said in an interview last week. He gained popularity by invoking the memory of the populist military dictator Gen. Omar Torrijos.

Wright said he visited about 30 polling sites yesterday, starting his day before the polls opened. To ensure that boxes were not stuffed with fake ballots before voting opened, Wright and other members of the international team joined Panamanian party observers to watch the boxes being assembled.

After the polls closed, the observers watched the tallying.

"I was impressed by the civility and the courtesy and cooperation, even among the representatives of the different parties," Wright said of the balloting. "There were no signs of disorderliness, let alone violence."

Wright said the only debate he witnessed arose over what he called "very technical questions." One voter's ballot appeared to have been marked for two candidates in the same race.

Staff writer Lou Chapman contributed to this report.

El gobierno de Clinton *colaborará con el nuevo gobierno panameño*

Estados Unidos reconoce triunfo electoral del PRD

El secretario de Estado norteamericano calificó como "libres y limpias" las elecciones.

PANAMÁ.
AFP/REUTERS/EFE.

ELECCIÓN

La campaña electoral se realizó sin mayores problemas, con lo que se ha cerrado un ciclo especial en el istmo, asegura uno de los observadores internacionales.

El departamento de Estado de Estados Unidos reconoció el triunfo electoral de Ernesto Pérez Balladares, del opositor Partido Revolucionario Democrático (PRD) de Panamá y le deseó éxito en su gestión, según una nota de prensa difundida ayer lunes por la embajada norteamericana en la capital panameña.

"Tenemos toda la expectativa de poder trabajar con el señor Pérez Balladares en una manera constructiva mientras implementamos los Tratados del Canal de Panamá, y en el logro de nuestras metas y objetivos comunes", expresa el comunicado.

La nota incluye también una felicitación al pueblo panameño por realizar unos comicios "libres, imparciales y pacíficos".

El PRD fue el partido de los militares que gobernaron a Panamá entre 1968 y 1989.

Este colectivo político había brindado total apoyo al general Manuel Antonio Noriega hasta en momentos difíciles, como cuando el ex hombre fuerte de Panamá discutía agriamente con el entonces presidente de los Estados Unidos George Bush.

El general Noriega fue derrocado por la invasión estadounidense a Panamá el 20 de diciembre de 1989, que instaló también al saliente presidente Guillermo Endara.

Pese a ello, Pérez Balladares ha expresado su interés en mantener relaciones "de altura" con Estados Unidos, colaborando con las autoridades de ese país en la lucha contra el narcotráfico y el



Warren Christopher

El futuro gobernante ha expresado también su deseo de que el Canal Interoceánico pase a ser soberanía panameña en el año 2000, tal como lo establecen los tratados Torrijos-Carter suscritos en 1977 entre ambos países.

Por su parte, el Secretario de Estado Norteamericano, Warren Christopher, dijo en la ciudad de México que el gobierno del presidente Bill Clinton colaborará con el virtual presidente electo Ernesto Pérez Balladares.

Christopher encabeza una delegación estadounidense que viajó a México para participar en la reunión anual de una Comisión Binacional.

El secretario de Estado de los Estados Unidos dijo que Washington negociará con el nuevo gobierno panameño para asegurarse de que la transferencia del Canal de Panamá, prevista para el

ce sin problemas.

"El gobierno de los Estados Unidos trabajará estrechamente con el gobierno panameño, asegurándose que la transferencia prevista para el fin de siglo sea positiva", dijo a reporteros en una conferencia de prensa.

Por su parte, el expresidente norteamericano James Carter, suscriptor del tratado y uno de los observadores extranjeros del proceso electoral panameño, calificó la elección del domingo como "una de las mejor organizadas y exitosas que hemos visto".

En su declaración Carter dijo que los esfuerzos de Panamá representan "un modelo para toda la región y el hemisferio".

A juicio del procurador de los Derechos Humanos, Jorge Mario García Laguardia, que también asistió como observador a los comicios panameños, el porcentaje



Bill Clinton

obligará "a establecer un régimen de consenso que pueda producir una gobernabilidad".

García Laguardia agregó que el triunfo de Pérez Balladares demuestra que "los derechos políticos de los centroamericanos están debidamente garantizados" pues las elecciones en Centroamérica se realizan "en forma limpia y transparente".

El Procurador reconoció que existía "cierto temor" en la nación panameña de que se produjeran incidentes, "dada la invasión estadounidense y el grado de polarización existente en esa sociedad", pero todo se desarrolló normalmente.

"La campaña electoral se realizó sin mayores problemas, con lo que se ha cerrado un ciclo especial en el istmo en donde los derechos políticos están debidamente garantizados", insistió el

LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA

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— El Departamento de Estado felicita al futuro presidente — “Estoy convencido de que Pérez Balladares será un maravilloso dirigente de Panamá”, dijo Carter

POR A. SANCHEZ BELISLE
El Departamento de Estado de los Estados Unidos, felicitó ayer al presidente electo de Panamá, Ernesto Pérez Balladares y le deseó éxitos en su gobierno.
“Felicitamos al pueblo panameño por sus elecciones, las cuales, según los observadores, fueron libres, imparciales y pacíficas. Felicitamos al ganador Ernesto Pérez Balladares, por su victoria y le deseamos éxitos en su gobierno”, dijo oficialmente el Departamento de Estado.
“Tenemos la expectativa de poder trabajar con el Sr. Pérez Balladares de una manera oficial, mientras implementamos los tratados del Canal de Panamá, en el logro de nuestras metas y objetivos comunes”, agregó el organismo estadounidense.
En tanto, ayer en Panamá, el expresidente de los Estados Unidos, Jimmy Carter, dijo que

las elecciones realizadas en Panamá, el pasado domingo, han sido unas de las “mejores organizadas y exitosas” que se han efectuado en América Latina.

“Nunca en nuestras vidas hemos visto unas elecciones tan perfectas”, expresó Carter en una declaración de salida de Panamá, donde presidió una delegación de 27 observadores miembros del Consejo de Jefes de Gobierno Libremente Elegidos, que presenciaron los comicios.

“Debemos felicitar al pueblo panameño, al presidente electo, al Tribunal Electoral y a todos

los líderes de la arena política, por su extraordinaria expresión de participación cívica”, indicó Carter, al considerar que los comicios panameños representan “un modelo para toda la región y para el hemisferio”.

“La Imagen Internacional de Panamá ha llegado a una cúspide de aprobación”, añadió Carter, al manifestarse convencido de que Ernesto Pérez Balladares “será un maravilloso dirigente de Panamá”.

LUNES, 9 DE
MAYO DE 1994

"No hay problemas, mucha gente quiere votar", Carter



Jimmy Carter

Por EMILIO SINCLAIR

El expresidente estadounidense Jimmy Carter, quien encabeza la delegación de observadores de su país, manifestó en las primeras horas de la mañana de hoy que "no hay problemas, mucha gente quiere votar".

La delegación de observadores de los Estados Unidos junto con invitados de otras naciones recorren todo el país, para percatarse de la pureza del sufragio.

El aeropuerto internacional Marcos Gelabert (Paitilla) por razones de seguridad permanece cerrado para los vuelos regulares y los aviones hacia el interior del país partían del Aeropuerto de Tocumen.

Algunos observadores internacionales, asignados a la vigilancia del proceso electoral, recorrieron la carretera percatándose de los acontecimientos.



Se registran incidentes durante elecciones

Vilma E. Figueroa B.
De La Prensa

Tres detenidos por la comisión de supuestos delitos electorales entre ellos dos candidatos a representantes, un acto de protesta en el interior del país, el accidente de un observador internacional y de un funcionario del Tribunal Electoral (TE) y la colocación de multas a establecimientos comerciales en Chiriquí por la venta de bebidas alcohólicas, fueron algunos de los incidentes que se dieron ayer en Panamá durante el proceso de elecciones.

El expresidente de Costa

Rica, Rodrigo Carazo Odio, quien participa en las elecciones como observador, viajaba en un automóvil que chocó contra otro vehículo en la calle 50, en la capital, sin consecuencias que lamentar para el invitado.

**Auto de observador
Rodrigo Carazo chocó
en la calle 50**

del Tribunal Electoral.

Luego del accidente Carazo se reunió con el expresidente de Estados Unidos, Jimmy Carter.

En tanto, un vehículo alquila-

do por el Tribunal Electoral se accidentó en las cercanías de la ciudad de Colón. El conductor Roberto Salsaccedo fue internado para reconocimiento médico en el Hospital Amador Guerrero.

Sin revelar la identidad, el TE informó que en la provincia de Veraguas un candidato a representante fue detenido por utilizar un carro con matrícula oficial para guardar material propagandístico.

En Chiriquí, distrito de Concepción, sector de Dugaba, se descubrió a una persona, cuya identidad no se divulgó, distri-

buyendo papeletas fuera de las mesas de votación, por lo que se puso a órdenes de las autoridades competentes.

Otro de los detenidos, un candidato a representante en Chiriquí de Chepo, fue capturado momentos en que fue sorprendido con material electoral en un vehículo de propiedad del Estadio.

El sindicado en el delito electoral le faltó el respeto al Delegado Electoral, por lo cual se le detuvo y se procedió a mantener la custodia del vehículo.

En David, Provincia de Chiriquí,

quí, varios delegados electorales sancionaron a algunos comercios que, pese a la reglamentación existente, efectuaron ventas de bebidas alcohólicas durante la vigencia de la "ley seca".

**Comerciantes que no
respetaron ley seca
fueron sancionados**

Un boletín del TE informó que en Chiriquí, Ocu y Parita se registraron protestas de varios representantes de partidos políticos, que llegaron a la hora del

cierre de las elecciones a depositar sus votos.

Cuando las autoridades de la mesa aplicaron las disposiciones previstas para esos casos se originó la protesta.

Precisa la nota de prensa que en el Centro de Votación de la escuela República Dominicana, en Cocle, hubo una llamada de alerta sobre la colocación de una bomba, cuyo caso fue atendido por especialistas y miembros de la policía, quienes, luego de realizar una inspección en el área, informaron que se trataba de una falsa alarma.