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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

5 September 1979

Prime Minister

Apoc Ophion A in Mrs Stephens' minute.

Ann: 6/9

Dear Michael,

Visit to London by the Greek Prime Minister

The Greek Ambassador has told the Department that he had been instructed to mention very confidentially to us that Mr Karamanlis was intending to pay a private visit to London in October. He would be arriving late on the afternoon of Monday 22 October and, at present, planned to spend the whole of the next day, Tuesday 23 October, here. Mr Roussos said that Mr Karamanlis would very much like to see Mrs Thatcher for a talk at any time during this period and, indeed, could extend his visit into Wednesday 24 October to suit Mrs Thatcher's convenience. Roussos said that he had been instructed to ask for an early answer.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary recommends that the Prime Minister should if at all possible receive Mr Karamanlis and hopes that she might be prepared to give him lunch. Mr Karamanlis has been the architect of Greece's return to democracy and her continued Western alignment, and of her accession to the European Community, the signature of the treaty for which took place in May this year. He is also a considerable person in his own right, and the timing of his private visit to London comes between visits to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (1-10 October) and to China and Poland later in the year, so that he may have some interesting comments on international questions. Eastern Mediterranean issues, including Cyprus, would be an inevitable topic; as would the problem of Greece's reintegration into the military structure of NATO. But it is the impact which a meeting would have on our bilateral relationship which leads Lord Carrington to endorse Mr Karamanlis's request for a call. He himself had a useful talk with Mr Karamanlis when he was in Athens for the Accession Treaty signature ceremony.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Martin Vile in the Cabinet Office.

Yours etc

(P Lever)
Private Secretary

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