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Prime Minister
Agree to

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 February 1986

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President of
Sierra Leone?
hear Charles CDP
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Visit by President Momoh of Sierra Leone

The new President of Sierra Leone, Joseph Momoh, will be travelling through London on 19/20 February en route to China, where he has been invited on a State Visit. On his return to London on 2 March, he will spend a few days here. The Foreign Secretary believes it would be helpful to our interests in Sierra Leone if President Momoh could be invited to pay a brief courtesy call on the Prime Minister on 4 or 5 March. The President will in any event call on the Foreign Secretary.

The Sierra Leone government are generally very helpful to us in international fora. They readily provided assistance to the Falklands Task Force in 1982, by bunkering ships and refuelling aircraft, and at the UNGA in November 1985 abstained on the Argentine resolution on the Falklands and on our amendments.

Since taking office in November 1985 President Momoh has shown that he is determined to tackle his country's economic problems. He will face considerable opposition in tackling the widespread and flagrant corruption of old-guard politicians and Lebanese traders who have hitherto controlled the economy. It is in our political and commercial interests that Momoh should succeed in turning the economy of this potentially wealthy country around. We are encouraging him to come to terms with the IMF and working hard to consolidate our traditionally leading role in Sierra Leone. Mr Eggar's attendance (representing the Prime Minister) at President Momoh's inauguration in January was part of that process. Momoh's unexpected visit to the UK now provides us with an opportunity to gain his confidence and influence him at an early stage in his Presidency.

Yours ever

Robert Budd

(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

PP

C D Powell Esq
PS/10 Downing Street



London, 18. 11. 1911

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File



cc: Sir P. Craddock

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

19 February 1986

VISIT BY PRESIDENT MOMOH OF SIERRA LEONE

Thank you for your letter of 18 February about President Momoh's visit. The Prime Minister would be glad to see him at 1530 hours on Wednesday 5 March.

BF |

Charles Powell

Colin Budd, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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