

11.15 Sunday

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Prime Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 January 1983

It is difficult to turn him down. You cannot see him this week. Can you see him at 11.15 on Sunday (we are keeping the whole afternoon free for you French special)?

A-J-C. 12. 1

Dear Jdm,

President Nimeiri of Sudan

President Nimeiri of Sudan arrived in London on 15 January for a short visit (perhaps 10 days). Although the President is here privately (he has come from Washington where he has been receiving medical treatment and is hoping to rest) he would very much like to see the Prime Minister, as well as Mr Pym.

Our relations with the Sudan are excellent; we have close military, aid and commercial ties with the country. In recent years the Nimeiri regime has been consistently friendly towards the UK and helpful to us over a number of international issues, most recently over the Falklands. Although weakened by internal economic problems, Sudan is likely to remain an important pro-western influence in the Horn of Africa and to a lesser extent within the Middle East, and a counter to the expansion of Soviet influence through Libya and Ethiopia. President Nimeiri merits our attention on his own account because of his moderate and statesmanlike stance on many African issues. He has consistently advocated the peaceful settlement of African disputes, for example in Chad, the Western Sahara, the Ogaden and Eritrea. He represents a moderate voice in the Arab world.

Mr Pym, therefore, hopes that the Prime Minister will agree to offer President Nimeiri a 45 minute call in the course of this week.

Yours ever

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

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