

CONFIDENTIAL



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Prime Minister

I have asked Sir John
Leahy to attend as well.

21 January 1983

A.S.C. 21/1

Dear John,

Call by President Nimeiri

The Prime Minister has agreed to see President Nimeiri of Sudan at 1030 on Monday 24 January at 10 Downing Street. The President has asked to be accompanied by the Sudanese Ambassador, Mr Nasr el Din Mustafa Ahmed.

/ I enclose a single brief, covering bilateral, internal and
/ Middle East issues for the call and personality notes on the President and the Ambassador. The Prime Minister last met President Nimeiri, who speaks good English, in July 1980.

The Arab/Israel brief assumes an announcement by the Moroccans on 22 January that the Arab League visit is going ahead. If the announcement is not made, paragraph 12 of the points to make will need to be amended accordingly.

Yours ever

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

John Holmes

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER BY PRESIDENT NIMEIRI OF SUDAN:
24 JANUARY 1983

Points to Make

Bilateral Relations

1. Glad to hear that President is fully recovered from his recent illness. Hope he manages to rest in Britain.
2. Our aid (our second largest budget after India) and British Army Training Team evidence of our continuing support for Sudan.
3. Sympathetic to Sudan's economic problems. UK played full part in Paris Consultative Group meetings. Pledged £7 million additional aid.

Bilateral Problems

4. British claimants owed £1.1 million for nationalisations. Understand Finance Ministry are working on a plan to start payments. This is important to those concerned.
5. Glad to see that problems over local payments for the Power III project have been resolved. Important that this keeps on schedule.

Falklands

6. Grateful for Sudanese support during Falklands conflict and for helpful Sudanese abstention over Argentine resolution at the UN General Assembly. Appreciate President's personal support.
7. Hope Sudan will continue to support us in other international fora, for example within the Non-Aligned Movement.
8. Our view on negotiations has not altered.

Internal Situation in Sudan

9. Consultative Group meeting in Paris appears to have gone well. Prospects for the IMF Standby arrangement seem good. The difficult economic measures appear to have been imposed without too much trouble. President's action to stabilise economy welcome.

10. Political timetable for 1983? SSU Congress.
Presidential elections (March?)

Foreign Affairs

ARAB/ISRAEL

11. Arab League Delegations visit. Much regretted misunderstandings that arose last November. Attached importance to visit by the Delegation. When problem arose at last moment, looked urgently for a mutually acceptable basis. Since worked hard with Moroccans to find alternative solution.

12. Hope/^{/Glad} that [as Moroccans have announced] visit now going ahead on 7-8 February. Look forward to thorough discussion with full Delegation including Palestinian representative. Important to direct energies to making real progress towards peace.

13. Policy towards PLO. No step backwards. Committed to Palestinian self-determination and PLO association with negotiations. Well-established policy that senior ministerial contacts with PLO only useful if PLO prepared to take crucial step forward by accepting Israel's rights and rejecting terrorism. Our policy constructive: and well-known to Arab side before visit.

14. Prospects for peace improved following Reagan and Fez. But time short. Have pressed US to take practical step to follow up Reagan's call for settlements freeze. In Arabs' own interests to build on current US interest in solving

Palestinian problem. Jordan/PLO discussions a welcome attempt to work out realistic negotiating position. Deserve support from other Arabs.

15. PLO attitudes. Outcome of PNC meeting could be decisive. Impressions of attitudes within PLO? What are views of PLO fighters in Sudan?

ETHIOPIA

16. How do you interpret developments in Ethiopia? Is Mengistu ready for more constructive relationship with neighbours, including Sudan? Any signs of readiness to negotiate with Eritrean secessionist movement?

17. What are present roles of: Soviet Union; Libya?

18. Are other Arab countries, eg Egypt, Saudi Arabia, helping reduce tension? Anything we can do to help?

LIBYA

19. How is Qadhafi likely to react now that the OAU Chairmanship appears to have eluded him? Risk of renewed interference in Chad?

20. Threat of Libyan-backed subversion in Sudan?

EGYPT

21. Significance of recently signed integration agreement with Egypt.

IRAQ

22. Interested to hear account of your policy towards Iraq. (Recent decision to send troops.)

CALL BY PRESIDENT NIMEIRI OF SUDAN: 24 JANUARY

ESSENTIAL FACTS

NIMEIRI'S VISIT TO LONDON

1. Nimeiri suffered a mild stroke in December, has been to United States for medical treatment (he has hypertension) and has been pronounced fit. This visit to Britain (15-28 January) is primarily to rest before embarking on a busy year which will include a congress of the ruling SSU party and a presidential election in which he is the sole candidate. Sudan's economic problems will be very much on the President's mind.

ANGLO-SUDANESE RELATIONS

2. Sudan was under British administration from 1898 to 1956 and her ties with Britain remain strong and friendly. In addition to our civil aid (£40m in 1982/3) Sudan also receives significant military assistance through the British Army Training Team and courses in Britain. The Sudanese are in deep trouble financially and look to us for both political and economic help, with the IMF, the Paris Club and in arranging additional emergency aid. President Nimeiri's regime is friendly and pro-Western, taking a moderate line on the Middle East conflict and a constructive line on African problems. There is a continual flow of Sudanese Ministers, officials and businessmen visiting London. Mr Hurd visited Sudan in December 1981. Our Ambassador has good access to the President.

3. The Sudanese have been helpful throughout the Falklands conflict. They supported a settlement within the context of Security Council Resolution 502. The President expressed in private his full support for the UK. Sudan abstained on the Argentine resolution at the General Assembly.

BILATERAL PROBLEMS

4. Two minor irritants:-

a) Five British firms are owed a total £1.1m in compensation for nationalisation of their property in Sudan in 1970. Despite Sudanese promises little progress has been made. In the past few days, perhaps because of Nimeiri's visit, the Finance Ministry have told our Ambassador that Sudanese intend to pay compensation in instalments of £200,000 starting after the receipt of the IMF tranche due in February and at quarterly intervals thereafter. We hope Sudanese will hold to this. Amount is small but it means a great deal to the vociferous firms involved.

b) Sudanese have been slow with their local payments on the Power III electricity project to which majority of British aid to Sudan is committed. Again in the past few days the Sudanese have brought payments up to date and have set up a committee to examine ways of expediting payments in future. This is encouraging and we hope the Sudanese will be able to ensure that late local payments do not hinder future work. Complaints are not one sided however; the performance of the main British contractor, Northern Electrical Industries, was poor at initial stages and NEI must bear some responsibility for delays.

INTERNAL SITUATION IN SUDAN

Economic:

5. Sudan is the largest country in Africa (1 million square miles) and one of the poorest (GDP/capita 1980 = \$470). Under populated (19.3 million in 1981) and brain-drained, Sudan is a classic victim of the oil crisis; 25% of imports and 70% of export earnings go on oil. Indigenous oil deposits hold out some hope for the future and a major pipeline is planned, but production will not begin for several years. Sudan faces a balance of payments and debt servicing crisis. An IMF standby arrangement broke down in 1982, a new arrangement is under discussion. Fund is expected to approve \$38 million in February with \$170 million to follow. Sudanese have already imposed some

severe measures (50% devaluation, 70% increase in petrol prices) to meet IMF demands.

6. Rescheduling of Sudan's external debt of \$8 billion and generous assistance from the aid community required. At a Consultative Meeting of aid donors in Paris 12-14 January delegations indicated assistance in 1983 of \$750 million. UK pledged additional £7 million of balance of payments support (conditional on agreement with the IMF and on Paris Club and other creditors reaching satisfactory rescheduling of Sudan's debts)

7. Sudan is facing a growing problem with refugees from Ethiopia, Uganda and Chad who have placed an additional burden on the economy. There are currently 500,000 refugees in the country. UK has recently given additional \$800,000 in aid for refugees.

Political:

8. Present government came to power in 1969 as a result of a virtually bloodless coup d'etat. Authority is vested in an Executive President, Nimeiri, elected in 1971 and was the only candidate (due for re-election in 1983). Officially there is a single party, the Sudanese Socialist Union, which cuts deliberately across regional and sectarian loyalties, which are still strong, and which form the basis for the main opposition groups.

9. Nimeiri's chief worry is the economy. He had little option but to impose the severe IMF conditions but appears to have got away with it. Ultimately Nimeiri has to rely on the Army but the loyalty of the armed forces is in doubt. However, there is still no focus for serious political opposition. Libyan backed subversion is continuing but is at a low ebb. The South is at least temporarily quiescent and the Sudanese people seem preoccupied with the drudgery of merely surviving.

FOREIGN POLICY

10. Sudan's foreign policy strives to maintain a balance between Egypt, her military guarantor against threat from

Ethiopia and Libya, and the oil rich states on whom she relies for economic support. She has leaned closer to the West since the abortive Communist coup of 1971 and the consequent increase in economic dependence on western aid and finance. Sudan veered close to Egypt in the wake of the Libyan invasion of Chad in 1980 and an integration agreement was signed by Nimeiri and Mubarak in September 1982. United States' involvement has increased dramatically, particularly since the assassination of President Sadat. Relations with Libya are severely strained and the threat of Libyan backed subversion remains. Sudan boycotted the two abortive attempts to hold an OAU summit in Tripoli because of her bad relations with Qadhafi.

11. Relations with Ethiopia are once again going downhill. Sudanese are suspicious of tripartite pact signed August 1981 (Libya, Ethiopia, PDRY). Sudan has long provided asylum for Eritrean secessionists. This has encouraged Ethiopia to provide help for Southern Sudanese opposed to Nimeiri. Mengistu, closely aligned to Moscow, has consolidated his hold on power in Ethiopia. Some signs that he wishes to improve relations with the west but his actions, eg attacks on Somali villages make this difficult. We believe Sudan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia incline to the view that continuation of secessionist war in Eritrea and Somali claims to the Ogaden help perpetuate the Russian presence in Ethiopia. They may therefore be encouraging both the Eritreans and Somalis to seek negotiated solutions to their problems.

12. Nimeiri announced on 4 October a decision to send Sudanese troops to Iraq. The wheel has turned full circle since Sudan and Iraq severed diplomatic relations in April 1979. Nimeiri's gesture appears to have been made without much thought. The decision is unpopular within the Sudanese armed forces and there are already rumours of Sudanese casualties on the Iranian front.

13. Sudan normally takes little part in the search for an Arab/Israel solution. But recently President Nimeiri

has played up his attachment to the Palestinian cause. He was the first Arab leader to offer refuge to PLO fighters from Beirut, and has agreed to re-open the PLO office in Khartoum. There are now some 500 PLO fighters in the Sudan. Arafat has paid a well-publicised visit to them, and publicly expressed his gratitude to Nimeiri. But the Sudanese have complained about the failure of the PLO to pay the costs of maintaining those PLO fighters in Sudan.

14. The Sudanese press reacted sharply to the postponement of the Arab League Delegation's visit to London. But they refrained from raising either this issue or the cancellation of the Secretary of State's visit to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf with the Ambassador in Khartoum. It is most unlikely that Sudan would take action against us in the trade field on their own initiative. They are very conscious of British aid and in view of the accumulation of economic debts and transfer demands have little economic leverage. But if no solution to the Arab League visit is found and a call for a trade boycott against Britain gathered momentum, the Sudanese would find it difficult to avoid joining in. President Nimeiri will, therefore, be particularly interested in where negotiations stand with the Moroccans on reinstatement of the visit, particularly the question of Palestinian representation.

Near East and North Africa Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
20 January 1983

SUDAN FACT SHEET

TITLE	Democratic Republic of Sudan
CAPITAL	Khartoum
AREA	2,506,000 sq kms
POPULATION	19.3 m (1981)
GROWTH RATE	% pa 1970-79 2.7%
GNP	\$8,640 million
GNP/CAPITA	\$470 (1980)
TOTAL ARMED FORCES	71,000 (1981)
TOTAL MILITARY EXPENDITURE	\$245 m (1981)
TOTAL EXPORTS	\$381.6 m (1981/2)
TOTAL IMPORTS	\$1,822 m (1981/2)
UK EXPORTS TO	£118.6 m (1981) (1st 10 months 1982 - £104.8 m)
UK IMPORTS FROM	£6 m (1981) (1st 10 months 1982 - £9 m)
UK AID FRAMEWORK	1982/3 £40 m (ODA commitment of £74 m to Power III electricity project, due completion 1984)
RELATIONS WITH IMF	Quota SDR 132 million (new standby arrangement under discussion)

MEMBERSHIP OF PRINCIPAL INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS:

UN
NAM
G77
OAU
Arab League

GAAFAR MOHAMMED NIMEIRI

President of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan, Supreme Commander and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation.

Born 1930 at Wad Nubawi, Omdurman, of an Ansar family from Dongola. He attended school in Wad Medani and Hantoub.

He graduated from the Sudan Military College in 1952 with the rank of Second Lieutenant, and was posted to Darfur. In 1957 he was retired from the Army on suspicion of involvement in plots against the Government. He was reinstated in 1959 and posted to Southern Command where he saw action against Southern Rebels. In 1963 he was sent to West Germany for a training course and by 1964, as Commander of First Battalion, Khartoum Garrison, he was one of several officers arrested for a short time by General Abboud's regime, which was ousted shortly afterwards.

His obvious qualities of leadership marked him out for further Staff College training and he was sent to Fort Leavenworth, USA, in August 1965. On his return to the Sudan he was appointed Acting Commander of Eastern Command in November 1966. The next month he was arrested for involvement in an abortive coup. He was reinstated in January 1967 to command the Infantry Training School at Gebeit though his automatic promotion was blocked because of his record of intrigue and conspiracy and he remained until the Revolution of May 1969 a Colonel.

In his thirteen years in power he has made a number of U-turns taking the Sudan from extreme Arab nationalism and friendship with the Communist countries to a policy of attracting petro-dollars and Western technology for his grandiose development plans. He replaced his military Command Council in 1971 with a quasi-civilian presidential system and a one party organisation, the Sudanese Socialist Union, through which he has tried unsuccessfully to encourage popular participation in government. He was elected President in 1971 and re-elected for a further six year term in February 1977. In January 1980 he chose to put his Presidency of the SSU to the test of elections before they were due: in the end no-one stood against him and the result was an outstanding affirmative vote.

He has survived several attempts to unseat him, the most serious being in July 1971 (by the Communists) and in July 1976 (by the National Front led by Sadiq El Mahdi (qv) and Sherif Hussein El Hindi). In January 1982 he only survived amidst severe criticism from his political and military leaders by dint of courageous bluff.

His worse blot was the massacre of the Ansar on Abba Island in 1970. His greatest political achievement was the Addis Ababa Agreement in 1972 bringing to an end the 17 year old rebellion in the South.

He likes to regard himself as an African and Arab statesman and a bridge between the two worlds. He was proud of his Chairmanship of the OAU in 1978/79, and has offered himself as a mediator in various African disputes, in particular the Eritrean issue where he likes to quote the example of Southern Sudan. An advocate of regional groupings in Africa.

In Arab affairs he was careful to distance himself somewhat from Camp David to preserve the difficult balance between Egypt, his military guarantor, and Saudi Arabia, his potential financial guarantor. His paranoid hate of Qadhafi was heightened by the Libyan invasion of Chad in December 1980 which threw him into the arms of Sadat, and, on the latter's assassination, the US. Since January 1981 links with Egypt under a policy of "integration" have multiplied.

Internally, Nimeiri realised after the 1976 coup attempt that he had to deal with his exiled opponents and in 1977 began a policy of National Reconciliation with opposition groups which has attracted the Muslim Brothers into a tactical alliance, enmeshed the Ansar in fruitless dialogue, but not brought home the UNUP exiles. The policy ran out of steam in summer 1981.

The concentration of power in Nimeiri's hands, and his reliance on the Army have become increasingly blatant. He has appointed weak and inefficient Ministers without their own political standing, and been assiduous in not allowing rivals to arise, sacking Vice-Presidents when necessary. The inadequacies of the regime, especially in economic policy, have become increasingly obvious, corruption has multiplied, and Nimeiri's personal popularity and prestige has waned.

Nimeiri is very much a soldier: disciplined, courageous of average intelligence, strong physically and with a streak of ruthlessness. He is very hardworking despite periodic anxiety over his health (he suffers from high blood pressure).

He has not been very successful in his attempt to delegate authority. He enjoys power and is determined to keep it despite his claims that he wants to stand down in 1983. Essentially a patriot, he believes that he knows what is good for the Sudan and is best qualified to provide it. Unsophisticated and inexperienced in politics when he came to power, he has since developed considerable political skill. He built up his public image by touring the country, making numerous speeches and mixing with the people, and inspiring respect rather than affection. However he has developed a certain "charisma" by dint of being in office so long and he stands head and shoulders above those around him. He probably lacks deep political convictions, though he has increasingly strong religious ones. He has been disillusioned by his experience of communism and appears to have decided that a moderately pro-Western policy is the Sudan's best bet.

He is married but has no children, a fact which causes him considerable disappointment. He and his wife have visited a gynaecologist in the United Kingdom more than once to seek medical help over the problem, and more recently he has been secretly to the United States for the same purpose. In August 1980 he had an operation in the US to remove a blood clot. He was advised to further reduce his working hours after a collapse in September 1980, but following a further check-up in December 1980 his health has improved and he has taken back more presidential functions, although he is not, and probably never will be, quite the man he was; he tires easily, and becomes somewhat incoherent and slurred in speech.

NASR EL DIN MUSTAFA

Ambassador to London.

Born October 1930 in Omdurman. Educated at Wadi Seidna Secondary School and the Faculty of Engineering, University of Khartoum, and London University (BSc in Civil Engineering, 1956). In 1958 he was sent on a study course to the United Kingdom and became a member of the British Civil Engineers' Association.

Served with various sections of Sudan Railways after which appointed Resident Engineer in Port Sudan and then Chief Harbour Engineer. In April 1968 he helped in the establishment of the Sudanese Estate Bank. In June 1969 he was seconded for work with the Armed Forces to carry out its major engineering projects: the naval base and air defence bases. Granted the rank of Brigadier in June 1971 and commissioned to establish the military works of which he was in charge until November 1973. Member of the Board of Directors of Sudan Railways since its establishment in August 1973, and was responsible for the establishment of the Sea Ports Board. Promoted to Major-General in December 1974. Appointed Minister of State for Planning in February 1976 and Chairman of the Council of Technological Colleges in March 1976, and Minister of National Planning in September 1977. Not reappointed in the Cabinet reshuffle of November 1981. Ambassador in London from April 1982.

A pleasant man but a weak Minister who was criticised for having allowed his Ministry to become largely subordinate to the Ministry of Finance.

Married with five children.