

CONFIDENTIAL



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

9 May 1980

Dear Michael,

Call by President Bongo of Gabon
on Prime Minister at 1730 on
Tuesday, 13 May

President Bongo is to call on the Prime Minister at 1730 on 13 May for 30 minutes, accompanied by the Gabonese Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, M Martin Bongo (a nephew of the President), and the Ambassador, M Edouard Teale.

I attach briefing for the Prime Minister which has been agreed with the DOT, together with personality notes on the visitors. All speak little English: Mr Peers Carter, the official interpreter, will be present.

President Bongo is on a private visit and the call is at his own request. He will have attended a lunch hosted by Lord Carrington earlier in the day and is to be received in audience by The Queen at 1240 on 14 May. His last visit to London was as a guest of Government in 1970.

The call will be useful in strengthening bilateral relations. There might be two objectives: to build on the rapport established in recent years (President Bongo is well disposed to us and to the West generally, and is particularly gratified that we opened a resident Embassy in Libreville in 1978); and to convince the President that we believe British firms to be capable of playing a much bigger role in Gabon's development to our mutual benefit. (Our share of this traditionally French-dominated market is less than 3%).

We know of no particular subjects which the President wishes to raise with the Prime Minister but the brief includes a defensive line in case he raises the question of a State or official visit (for which he has been angling).

Yours truly
Roderic Lyne

(R M J Lyne)
Private Secretary

Michael Alexander Esq
10 Downing Street
London

CONFIDENTIAL