



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 February 1980

Prime Minister
Ahmed A.?
Yes
Paul
- 13/2

Dear Michael,

Morocco: Visit of Former Prime Minister

M. Ahmed Osman, Moroccan Prime Minister from 1972 until March 1979 and since 1978 leader of Morocco's largest political party, will be in London on an official visit (probably as the guest of the Conservative Party) from 12 to 14 March. M. Osman will certainly hope to be able to call on the Prime Minister and may take offence if this is not possible.

Lord Carrington is reluctant to take up the Prime Minister's time but considers that there are grounds for her seeing M. Osman. He is King Hassan's brother-in-law as well as the longest serving Moroccan Prime Minister since independence. He clearly enjoys the confidence of his King, who is responsible for all major decisions in the country and who relies on personal emissaries rather than diplomatic channels for conducting business. It is quite likely that M. Osman will bring a personal message to the Prime Minister from the King.

There are also particular reasons at this time to pay attention to Morocco. King Hassan's foreign policy is generally helpful to us, in Africa, in the Arab world and recently at the Islamabad Conference at which Morocco took a forthright stand against Soviet aggression. Morocco is limited in its freedom of action by membership of the Organisation of African Unity and the Arab League, in which organisations she has to solicit support for her position in the Western Sahara. Nevertheless, Lord Carrington considers that if we hope to build a greater sense of common purpose between the Islamic countries and the West, Morocco may have to play an important role.

A | If the Prime Minister agrees, Lord Carrington suggests that 15-20 minutes would be adequate for the call.

Yours etc

Paul

(P Lever)
 Private Secretary

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