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MR. ALEXANDER

Prime Minister

Apex Annexes A+B?

Yes not

Am - 2/7/74

Prime Minister's Visit to the United States:  
17th-18th December

The Prime Minister is to visit Washington and New York on 17th and 18th December. During her visit she will have about 1 $\frac{3}{4}$  hours substantive talks with President Carter in Washington on the morning of 17th December and will also attend a dinner given by the President that evening. Among her other engagements, she will be meeting the Secretary of Defence and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon, Congressmen and Mr. Volcker of the Federal Reserve Board.

2. On 18th December the Prime Minister's programme in New York will include calls on Dr. Waldheim and the President of the General Assembly, a speech to the Foreign Policy Association and dinner with a group of 'opinion formers'. She will be accompanied throughout by Lord Carrington.

3. Mrs. Thatcher has met President Carter twice before, once when she visited Washington while Leader of the Opposition and more recently at the Tokyo Economic Summit in June. This will however be her first visit to Washington as Prime Minister. Her election and subsequent period in office have aroused considerable public interest in the United States. So have the policies of the new Government. Her visit will provide a valuable opportunity to exploit this interest and to gain further American understanding for our policies, both foreign and domestic.

4. It seems unlikely that there will be a formal agenda for the talks with President Carter. But both the Prime Minister and the President will no doubt want to exchange views on questions of particular concern to each country, notably in our case Rhodesia and other Southern African issues and a wide range of defence matters including SALT. The Americans may still be much preoccupied with Iran and Pakistan. The two leaders will also want to discuss worldwide economic issues, particularly energy. Depending on progress made meanwhile, the most important items of bilateral business



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are likely to be the new generation of the British nuclear deterrent and the situation in Northern Ireland, with particular reference to the question of arms for the RUC. In addition, the Prime Minister will no doubt want, publicly as well as privately, to demonstrate that Britain is under new management and following new policies.

5. I attach at Annex A a draft assessment of British and probable American objectives and at Annex B, a suggested list of briefs. A brief on nuclear matters, including the deterrent, will be prepared outside the normal series. If the Prime Minister is content, we shall proceed on this basis, aiming to get briefs to you on 7th December.



for (Robert Armstrong)

28th November 1979



## CONFIDENTIAL

## UNITED KINGDOM OBJECTIVES

- ✓ 1. To underline the importance we attach to our relationship with the United States (which is wholly consistent with the new Government's more forthcoming attitude towards Europe) and the value we attach to keeping in close contact with our most powerful ally.
- ✓ 2. To ensure that the United States continues to adopt a helpful attitude towards our policies on Southern Africa, particularly Rhodesia.
- ✓ 3. To discuss with President Carter world economic issues, including energy.
- ✓ 4. To ensure that the United States Administration at a high level is in no doubt about the realities of the Northern Ireland situation and about the Government's conviction to bring about a transfer of responsibilities in an acceptable way, while fulfilling our duty to protect citizens of all denominations against terrorism; also, to apply pressure on the Americans over arms for the RUC.
- ✓ 5. To discuss defence and arms control matters, including prospects for a SALT III Agreement and TNF.
- ✓ 6. To demonstrate to the American public that Britain is under new management and following new policies but that the close relationship between Britain and the United States continues.
7. To continue the working relationship begun with President Carter in Tokyo.

## PROBABLE UNITED STATES OBJECTIVES

1. President Carter will see the visit primarily as an opportunity to show himself to the Americans as a President who is not a lame duck but in command of affairs and working closely with and enjoying the confidence of one of America's principal allies.
2. To maintain British support for the ratification of SALT II - and specifically to ask the Prime Minister to take a helpful line with the members of Congress she meets. Also, perhaps to discuss arms control and defence matters including TNF modernisation.
3. To discuss worldwide economic and energy issues and the economic outlook in the USA and the United Kingdom against the background of United States preoccupations with inflation and dependence on imported oil.



