



Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
London SW1A 2AH

Telephone 01-



R M Russell Esq, CMG  
British Embassy  
WASHINGTON

Your reference

Our reference

Date

4 July 1977

Dear Mark,

MRS THATCHER'S VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES

1. In our telegram No 1755 of 1 July, we promised to let you have further details of Mrs Thatcher's intended visit to the United States from 7-14 September.

2. As you will have seen from the telegram, the main purposes of Adam Butler's call on me on 29 June were to give me as much detail as possible of Mrs Thatcher's visit and to seek our assistance. In fact, the visit started off as a sponsored State Department one. The Embassy here had made the first suggestion to Mrs Thatcher who had responded with enthusiasm. But clearly Butler had little faith in the State Department's ability to produce a worthwhile programme and very much wanted us to take this over. We have now agreed to do this and I have told Bill Woessner in the US Embassy that we will look after Mrs Thatcher while she is in the States. I should be grateful if you would make suitable comforting noises to Jack Crowley and thank him, as I have Woessner, for the work which he has already put into the programme.

3. Butler told me that the party, consisting of Mr and Mrs Thatcher, Butler and Carolyn Stephens, plan to reach New York on Wednesday, 7 September. Mrs Thatcher would like to travel by Concorde to Washington but, since there is no regular Concorde flight on a Wednesday, she may have to go direct to New York. As we talked about the New York visit, it became quickly apparent that Butler had already made a number of arrangements for Mrs Thatcher, including accommodation and practically every meal during her short stay in New York. When I said that I thought that Gordon Booth would be disappointed if he could not give some entertainment for Mrs Thatcher, Butler said that he was certain that Mrs Thatcher would be delighted if the Consul-General could arrange a reception in the early evening of Thursday, 8 September, before she goes out to dinner. Perhaps Booth, to whom I am copying this letter, would let me know if this is possible.

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4. Butler said that most of the meetings already arranged for the afternoon of 8 September and the morning of 9 September would be with bankers and other businessmen but that Mrs Thatcher would like to devote the morning of 8 September to calls on Ivor Richard, Dr Waldheim, Ambassador Young and Mayor Beame. Perhaps Gordon Booth and Robin Byatt could arrange these calls.
5. Butler went on to say that Mrs Thatcher very much wanted to make one visit away from the Eastern seaboard. After much consideration they had decided to go for Houston; the alternatives being Chicago, Detroit or Cleveland. Mrs Thatcher and her party were planning to fly to Houston in the afternoon of 9 September in time to give a speech at a dinner meeting of the local English Speaking Union that night. They had already made arrangements to meet a number of representatives of oil companies and other businesses but Mrs Thatcher very much wanted to visit the Space Center outside Houston. The only possible time she could manage this would be during the morning of Saturday, 10 September and Butler asked whether the Consul-General could enquire whether this would be possible.
6. We talked about accommodation and, since it was clear that Butler saw advantage in the party staying in an hotel, I thought it best not to suggest that Roy Fox might put Mr and Mrs Thatcher up. I would be grateful however, for Roy's recommendation for a decent hotel. The party would be leaving Houston either late on 10 September or early on Sunday morning, 11 September for Washington. As it seems likely on present form that Mrs Thatcher will only be in Houston for about twenty four hours and as dinner on 9 September and lunch on 10 September are already arranged, I did not suggest any official entertainment but will make further enquiries if Roy Fox would like me to.
7. Butler said that Mrs Thatcher's main aim in Washington was to renew her acquaintance with President Carter whom she had met when he was in London during the Downing Street Summit Conference. Mr Carter has agreed in principle to see her either on 12 or 13 September. Mrs Thatcher also wanted to call on a number of senior members of his Administration. It was at this point that Butler said that he would be grateful if we could take over the arrangements for the other calls and he has now told me that Mrs Thatcher would like to call on Messrs Mondale, Vance, Lance, Brown, Blumenthal and Brzezinski. She would also like to visit Mr McNamara and I threw in for good measure the possibility of a visit to the Hill, either to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee or the House Committee on International Relations, or both. Since she plans to leave Washington for London on the evening flight of 14 September she will have 3 days for these appointments. I should be grateful if you would now start making preliminary plans, provided you have no objection.





8. Butler said that they would be seeking as much publicity for this visit as possible. In New York Mrs Thatcher would be making a major public speech and Butler was currently negotiating with two well-known institutions. They had already been approached by NBC for their Sunday morning talk show and he was exploring other television possibilities. He had sent a cable to the Washington Institute for Foreign Affairs who might be interested in arranging a meeting with Mrs Thatcher. I explained to Butler that Andrew Berding's place had now been taken by Charles Foltz. It might be worth just checking with WIFA to make sure this request has been received.

9. Butler told me that Mr Jay had already offered accommodation at the Residence for the party which Mrs Thatcher had gratefully accepted. Dinners have already been arranged for Monday, 12 September and Tuesday 13 September, which seems to leave only Sunday evening, 11 September if the Ambassador wishes to give any entertainment. I have already mentioned these plans to Mr Jay who will be considering them on arrival.

10. Finally, I should add that Butler has changed his plans and will now almost certainly not be staying on after Mrs Thatcher leaves.

11. All these proposals are very much subject to your views and those of Gordon Booth and Roy Fox. I hope you, and they, will feel free to make any other suggestions that may occur to you.

Yours ever,

Ramsay

Ramsay Melhuish  
North America Department

cc:  
Consul-General, New York  
Head of Chancery, UKMIS, New York  
Consul-General, Houston