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BRITISH EMBASSY

3100 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008

Telephone: (202) 462-1340

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M. R. Melhuish, Esq.,
North America Department,
F. C. O.

Sean Ramsey

VISIT TO WASHINGTON OF THE RT. HON MRS. MARGARET THATCHER, M.P.

11 - 14 September, 1977.

1. I attach a copy of Mrs. Thatcher's programme, a record of her press conference at the Embassy and of her meetings with the House International Relations Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and a selection of cuttings from American newspapers.

2. Her programme was a full one and incorporated all the calls she had asked for and included three additions: a call at the C.I.A., a session at Brookings Institution and a briefing at the Department of Defense. Mrs. Thatcher herself arranged three private meetings at the Residence on Monday morning 12 September (my minute of 8 September copied to you refers) with Mr. John Carbaugh, Foreign Policy Adviser to Senator Jesse Helms (R. North Carolina), General Keegan and Mr. Novak of the Washington Post. She asked that details of these calls should not appear in the text of the programme. You will know that, not unexpectedly, her call on Bert Lance was cancelled.

3. She maintained a frenetic pace throughout and although at the end she was thoroughly exhausted, the visit went well and she appeared satisfied. She received extensive coverage in the United States press and her press conference in the Embassy was well attended. Her performances on television were also successful. So far as we can establish she was well received by the personalities she called on. You may have seen that in press interviews, Mr. John Grant, M.P., P.U.S.S. at the Department of Labour, took Mrs. Thatcher to

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task for the partisan nature of some of her public statements, and there have also been press references (e.g. Henry Brandon) to the inadvisability of Mrs. Thatcher having criticised the Rhodesia proposals during her meeting with the President. But we have had no feedback to this effect from the Administration. Indeed Bob Funseth (Jack Crowley's successor as Head of the North European Bureau of the State Department) made a point of telling me that he (and he thought Mr. Vance) had been impressed by her performance when she called on the Secretary. He also mentioned that David Rockefeller and the businessmen she had addressed in New York had been similarly impressed. Dick Fyjis-Walker, however, had the impression that she had not gone down quite so well with the Washington Post Editorial Board. But the Rockefeller and Post reactions could be partly explained in terms of political attitudes, I think.

4. We understood from her party that her visit to New York and Houston also went well, and no doubt they will be reporting to you separately.

5. I should mention that her very full programme went very smoothly from the administrative point of view. She has written in very warm terms her appreciation and Stephen Howarth deserves a special mention for all his work. Mrs. Thatcher wrote to him personally to express her thanks, which was a nice touch.

*Yours
me.
Wark.*

R. M. Russell

c.c. (without enclosures)

G. Booth, Esq., C.M.G., C.V.O.,
NEW YORK.

R. Fox, Esq., O.B.E.,
H.M.C.G., Houston.