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The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

11th July 1975

Dear Professor Viner,

Thank you for your letter of 29 June. It is kind of you to offer your help to the Party and I am very grateful.

The situation at present is that our Research Department has one economist and one statistician. Funds do not permit us to employ any more people who might otherwise be following an academic career in the universities. However, there are "academics" helping the Party in several spheres, notably finance, but they do so on a totally voluntary and often unco-ordinated basis. I am only too well aware that we have paid insufficient attention to our friends in the universities who do so much to influence public opinion, and inspire those ideas sorely required by the Party.

I am about to make every effort to reverse this pattern, but am afraid that in the initial stages it will only mean improving the "academics" voluntary assistance rather than employing more directly through hard pressed Central Office funds.

Alas we just haven't the means to take on someone of your distinction.

My own feeling is that it would be wise for you to accept the Australian offer. Every democratic nation needs people at the top of their universities prepared to stand up for the freedom of speech and those values which enable democracy to operate effectively. However, I hope that if you decide to accept the offer your stay in Australia will be temporary, and that your considerable talents will not be permanently lost to this country.

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I am deeply grateful for your offer and hope that when this letter reaches you in Colorado that you will not be disappointed with the reply. You have my assurance that I shall be doing everything possible to improve the Party's standing in academic circles and I shall require support and encouragement to do so. But in the short term we just cannot expand the number of academics directly employed by the Party.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely  
 Robert Drake

Professor John Vaisey