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Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH

Telephone 01-

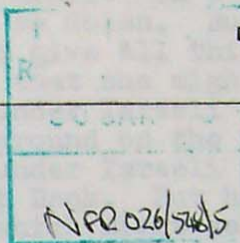
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HE Mr T A K Elliott CMG
TEL AVIV

Your reference

Our reference NFR 026/548/5

Date 30 January 1976



MRS THATCHER'S VISIT TO ISRAEL

1. I had lunch with Adam Butler (who will be accompanying Mrs Thatcher on her visit to Israel) yesterday and he has since telephoned me with some further news about her plans; so please treat this as a post-script to my letter to you of 26 January.
2. The Israelis are apparently insisting that, in view of the tightness of her programme, Mrs Thatcher should stay in accommodation provided by them rather than with you (her personal preference would have been to stay with you, but she feels that she must go along with the wishes of her hosts). Her office have, however, told the Israelis that they hope and expect that you will be consulted on the plans for her visit and that there will be an opportunity for you to see her shortly after her arrival.
3. Depending on the Israelis' own plans, Adam Butler thought that Mrs Thatcher would warmly welcome it if (as happened in Cairo) you were to offer a drinks party for her, inviting prominent members of the British community, followed perhaps by a private meal. On the other hand if you preferred to make whatever hospitality you offer an occasion for her to meet prominent Israelis - or perhaps both British and Israelis - she is happy to leave the choice entirely to you. She will assume that you will be discussing this with the Israelis and fitting it into the programme they are arranging. I understand that Mrs Thatcher and Adam Butler will be arriving on the British Airways flight on 21 March which gets in at 1855 hours. If the programme includes a press conference or TV interview, any additional guidance you can let us have on this for Mrs Thatcher would no doubt be very useful to her.
4. I took the opportunity over lunch yesterday to explain to Adam Butler our policy on visits by Ministers and senior officials

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to occupied Arab territories under Israeli auspices and showed him a press cutting from "Maariv" on a statement made by Mr Maudling after a visit to Golan. Butler said that Mrs Thatcher would need to give all this further thought; his off-the-cuff reaction was that she might draw a distinction between a visit to Golan under Israeli auspices intended for her own briefing and background on the military realities of the situation and visits under Israeli auspices to East Jerusalem and the Arab-occupied West Bank. But he took aboard the delicacy of making any statements which might seem to endorse either Israeli claims to Arab-occupied territory or the nature of the occupation regime.

5. He was particularly keen to have advice on good background reading on Israel for Mrs Thatcher, eg recent press articles, books, etc. If you have any suggestions between now and the time of her departure (for example, particularly illuminating articles appearing in the Israeli press), we should be most grateful to receive them.

A B Urwick
Near East and North Africa
Department

cc (silent): Mr Weir