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February 11, 1975

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MEMORANDUM FOR LIEUTENANT GENERAL BRENT SCOWCROFT
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Margaret Thatcher, New Leader of UK
Conservative Party

In the second round of balloting February 11, Margaret Thatcher soundly defeated four opponents to capture the leadership of the Conservative Party, replacing former Prime Minister Edward Heath.

Mrs. Thatcher, the Shadow Cabinet Minister for the Environment and former Minister for Education and Science in the Heath Government, polled 146 votes, seven more than the necessary majority of 139. William Whitelaw, her closest competitor, received only 79 votes.

Mrs. Thatcher's victory was as surprising as Whitelaw's poor showing. Mrs. Thatcher's decisive victory shows a degree of unity within the Conservative Party that has not been visible since Heath's defeat by Harold Wilson last March. Since no British General Election is expected for the foreseeable future, US-UK relations are unaffected. To win a future election she will have to move an appreciable distance from her position on the right wing of her party.

George S. Springsteen
Executive Secretary

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