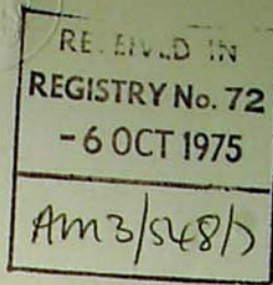


Mr Edmonds

30/ix

Mr Sykes



Mr Smith 7/10 (15)
Miss Fleming 7/10
PA
7/10

MRS THATCHER'S VISIT TO UNITED STATES

see 1547

1. I submit a letter from Mr Russell, reporting on Mrs Thatcher's visit to the United States.
2. There can be no doubt that Mrs Thatcher got what she wanted out of this visit, both in terms of putting herself across as a political leader to be taken into account and in terms of getting a great deal of publicity in Britain. But her visit also served a useful non-partisan purpose in helping Americans to take a less pessimistic view of Britain than their own media have been taking in recent months.
3. It was perhaps inevitable that Mrs Thatcher should underline her own views as a leader of the Conservative Party, particularly on certain aspects of the welfare state. As Mr Russell says, however she herself was careful to put her remarks into perspective. You will see from Mr Fyjis-Walker's minute of 15 September that Sir P Ramsbotham at one point considered making a complaint to Mrs Thatcher. But it does not seem that, in the event, the substance of what she said (as distinct from the way the press presented it) merited such a complaint. More important, from the point of view of her American audiences, was the effect of her manifest confidence in Britain and its future.
4. I understand from Mrs Thatcher's office that she feels much indebted to the members of the missions in places she visited not only for their hospitality but also for the advice and administrative help she received from them. I am clear myself that without this there would have been a serious risk of mistakes in the arrangements and misunderstandings between her staff and her American hosts, which would have reflected badly on Britain. This was avoided.
5. I am acknowledging Mr Russell's letter.

Derek Thomas
Derek Thomas
North America Dept
K 268 MA 753

30 September 1975