



Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AL

LAST PAPER Telephone 01-

RECEIVED IN
REGISTRY No. 10
13 MAR 1975
NF 2/542/1

2

M L Tait Esq MVO
British Embassy
AMMAN

Your reference

Our reference

Date 5 March 1975

MRS THATCHER AND THE ARAB WORLD

① - 1. Thank you for your letter 4/1 of 28 February.

2. Conservative Office Research Department say that Mrs Thatcher is currently President of the Anglo/Israel Friendship League of Finchley and a member of the Finchley Council of Christians and Jews. We also believe, though the Conservative Central Office cannot confirm this straightaway, that she is also a member of the Conservative Friends of Israel recently established on the initiative of Michael Fidler. Her membership of the first two organisations is, of course, hardly surprising in view of the large Jewish community in her Finchley constituency.

3. We do not think there is anything we can, or should, do about Mrs Thatcher's membership of pro-Israeli organisations. But the Conservative Central Office told us when we made a bland enquiry about Mrs Thatcher's links with Jewish organisations that the Central Office is well aware of the problems which these links might pose now that Mrs Thatcher has become leader of the Party and they think it likely that she will be concerned to seek a balance in her interests and actions affecting the Middle East. Lord Carrington's report on his recent visit to the Middle East will no doubt reinforce this.

4. If the Press raise the question of Mrs Thatcher's alleged pro-Israeli sympathies with you, you must obviously decline any official responsibility. But you can, equally obviously, add that Lord Carrington's visit to the Middle East and the personal messages from Mrs Thatcher which he delivered to King Feisal, King Hussein, and Presidents Assad and Sadat provide firm evidence that Mrs Thatcher as leader of HM Opposition, is keen to see good relations between herself and her party and the Arab states.

LAST PAPER

N C R Williams
Near East & North Africa Department

cc: D A S Gladstone Esq
Cairo

H B Walker Esq
Jedda

A J D Stirling Esq
Beirut

R L Balfour Esq MVO
Damascus

CONFIDENTIAL

Fr. MJK
13/3