



Mr. Alexander. Selw

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Press Secretary*

5 March, 1981

*Jim Kent,*

The Prime Minister has asked me to add her thanks to my own to you and your people, including Jonathan Davidson, for all their help during the quite remarkably intense visit of the Prime Minister to Washington.

You are, of course, going to let me have an assessment of the media reaction and the Prime Minister's impact when you have had a chance to assess it. All I can say here back home is that we got an enormous amount of coverage, especially on television, which was on the whole impressive and helpful.

I am indebted to you and your colleagues for all the help they gave me and the support they provided for the Prime Minister and I do not think you should take too seriously little bits of criticism that have been appearing in the papers here. The truth is that this was not a newsy visit and that the journalists had to make their own way in the story world. That always puts them on edge. It always makes life seem more difficult than it really is. And in my experience it always causes complaints.

I spoke last evening to Ian Aitken of the Guardian, who has covered more Prime Ministerial visits than I have had hot dinners, and he was very relaxed in retrospect. He said that all visits are conducted at a certain level of nervous tension and there was nothing unremarkable about this one.

I conclude from all this that, given the lack of hard, nuggety news, I think we did rather well.

Many thanks to you all.

*John Ingham*  
*B. Ingham*

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