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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

12 December 1983

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T 208/83

Dear Prime Minister,

I very much regret that my absences overseas to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting and the European Council prevented me replying earlier to your letter of 12 November which was kindly conveyed by Mr. Mimura when he visited London as Leader of the Japanese Market Access Mission.

To my regret other commitments made it impossible for me to meet Mr. Mimura personally. But arrangements were made for him and the members of the Mission to have discussions with Mr. Norman Tebbit, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, and his colleague Mr. Paul Channon, the Minister for Trade.

I should like to thank you for sending the Mission to the UK and to express my appreciation for all the other measures you have taken, many clearly requiring difficult political decisions, designed to make the Japanese market more accessible to foreign products. The lead you personally have given through your repeated public appeals to all your citizens to redouble their efforts to increase imports of foreign manufactured goods has been most welcome.

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Although our visible trade imbalance continues to grow at a rate which is causing serious concern, the value of British exports to Japan has shown an encouraging increase of 15% this year. I very much hope that this marks the beginning of a trend towards more balanced trade between our two countries. For my part, I will, of course, continue to encourage British industry to step up further their marketing efforts in Japan.

I look forward to seeing you in London next year both for the Economic Summit and also, I hope, on a longer bilateral visit.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Mr. Yasuhiro Nakasone