

## UNITED KINGDOM

### *Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher*

Margaret Thatcher, Conservative Member of Parliament for Barnet, Finchley, was appointed Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service on May 4, 1979. She is Britain's first woman prime minister and, after winning two subsequent elections, the longest serving British prime minister in this century.

Born in 1925 in Grantham, Mrs. Thatcher was educated at Oxford, obtaining a degree in Natural Science and a Master of Arts. She spent four years as a research chemist and read for the Bar in her spare time. She was called to the Bar by Lincoln's Inn in 1954 and practised as a barrister, specialising in taxation law.

Mrs. Thatcher contested two parliamentary elections for the Conservative Party before being elected to the House of Commons in 1959. Her first ministerial appointment came in 1961, as Parliamentary Secretary to the then Minister of Pensions and National Insurance. She was a front-bench spokesperson for the Conservative party in opposition and became a member of the shadow cabinet. On her party's return to office in 1970, Mrs. Thatcher was appointed Secretary of State for Education and Science and was made a Privy Counsellor. She was chosen Leader of the Opposition in February 1975.

This will be Prime Minister Thatcher's 11th economic summit. She will be accompanied by Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe and Chancellor of the Exchequer Nigel Lawson. Mrs. Thatcher's personal representative is Nigel Wicks, Second Permanent Treasury Secretary.

### *Canada — U.K. Relations*

Canada's relations with the U.K. are especially close, although they have changed considerably over the years. Two important events — the British entry into the Common Market in 1973 and, on the Canadian side, the growing concentration of trade with the United States and the Pacific Rim countries — have influenced the relationship. The development of the single European market and the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement have heightened interest in the opportunities presented.

The United Kingdom remains Canada's most important trading partner in Europe, and third-largest trading partner overall after the United States and Japan. Two-way merchandise trade with the United Kingdom for 1988 grew to \$8.1 billion, an increase of 12 per cent over 1987. The U.K. enjoyed a trade surplus of about \$1.2 billion due largely to North Sea oil exports to Canada. Canadian exports to the U.K. rose by some 21 per cent to \$3.5 billion (still dominated by forest products, metals, ores and fish, but showing healthy increases in electrical, machinery, telecommunications and optical equipment), representing 32 per cent of all Canadian exports to the European Community.