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**Margaret Roberts THATCHER**

**UNITED KINGDOM**

*Prime Minister  
(since May 1979)*

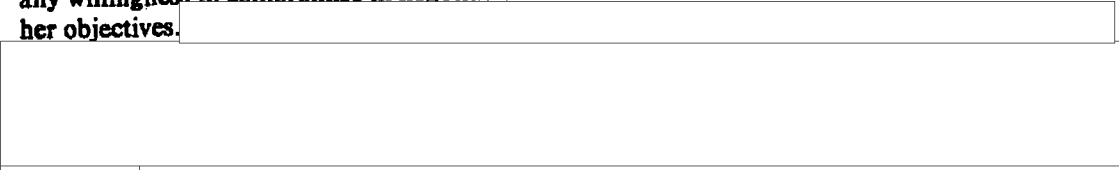
*Addressed as:  
Prime Minister*



Leader of the Conservative Party since 1975, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher is the preeminent figure on the British political scene. [redacted]

[redacted] she is a forceful and self-confident leader who is proud of her convictions, places a premium on strength of purpose, and is often resistant to change. When she has faced challenges to her authority as party leader or Prime Minister, Thatcher has met them head on and has vanquished her opponents. We believe that she has now become so accustomed to winning every battle that she is supremely confident that she will carry the day against any adversary, foreign or domestic. She views any willingness to compromise in negotiations as a weakness, and her goal is to achieve all of her objectives. [redacted]

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**The Thatcher Team and the Domestic Agenda**

After Thatcher led her party to an overwhelming victory in the 1983 national election, she moved swiftly to place her own stamp on her new Cabinet team. She promoted various loyalists, many of whom, like her, have risen from modest social backgrounds to positions of power. At the same time, she dropped from influential posts some Tory barons who [redacted] represented the older and more patrician wing of the party, long its dominant force. Since the election, however, her critics both in and out of Parliament have contended that her government has drifted and has been unable to capitalize on its large majority in the House of Commons. According to the British press, she has had trouble controlling her 143-seat majority, as demonstrated by the early December 1984 backbench revolt against proposed government cuts in education subsidies. Nonetheless, her critics in the party remain loyal, and she can still muster lopsided majorities in Parliament on most issues. [redacted]

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[redacted] members of Thatcher's party are concerned because she relies on a few advisers and does not consult the full Cabinet when making policy decisions. These critics doubt whether she is politically well served by the advisers she promoted last year, inasmuch as they lack political expertise and closely reflect her personal political views. The British press has noted that her authoritarian attitude toward the Cabinet and muddled handling of controversial matters such as the aforementioned education subsidy cuts have contributed to her image as an isolated leader. Thatcher remains confident despite attacks on her leadership and has repeatedly stated to the press that she intends to seek a third term and remain in power indefinitely (her current term expires in June 1988). [redacted]

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graduate of Oxford, she has worked as a research chemist and a lawyer. She has served in Parliament since 1959. In October 1984 she narrowly survived an assassination attempt when the Provisional Irish Republican Army detonated a bomb in the hotel where she was staying. She and her husband, Denis, a retired oil company executive, have 31-year-old twins: Carol, a journalist, and Mark, a business consultant. Mark has lent his name to a variety of enterprises, and his business dealings have at times been an embarrassment to his mother. [Redacted]

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13 December 1984

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