

Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our web site at www.LibraryVideo.com

- www.margaretthatcher.org/essential/default.asp
The Margaret Thatcher Foundation offers a wealth of information, including speeches, interviews and key documents.
- www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1994thatcher.html
The Modern History Sourcebook has the full text of Margaret Thatcher's 1994 tribute to Ronald Reagan.
- www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1988thatcher.html
The Modern History Sourcebook has the full text of Margaret Thatcher's 1988 "Speech to the Church of Scotland General Assembly."

Suggested Print Resources

- Collins, Christopher (ed.). *Margaret Thatcher: Complete Public Statements*. Oxford University Press, Oxford; 1999.
- Dorman, Andrew M. *Defence Under Thatcher*. Palgrave, New York, NY; 2002.
- Harris, Robin (ed.). *The Collected Speeches of Margaret Thatcher*. HarperCollinsPublishers, New York, NY; 1999.

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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GREATEST SPEECHES
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Historical Overview

In the early 1980s, with the discouraging initial results of her dramatic overhaul of the economy, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's popularity hit an all-time low. Domestic economic problems and the general decline of the once-vaunted British Empire combined to create strong feelings of pessimism about the future. Victory over Argentina in the Falklands War raised the morale of the British people and shifted the public image of their prime minister from a cold and ruthless opponent of the modern welfare state to that of a strong leader of a revitalized Great Britain. Thatcher's speech in the aftermath of the war was more than a declaration of victory — it was a powerful reassertion of British power and influence on the world stage.

Time Line

1925 — Margaret Thatcher is born in Grantham, England.

1959 — Margaret Thatcher is elected to Parliament.

1975 — Margaret Thatcher wins the leadership of the opposition Conservative Party.

1979 — Great Britain elects Margaret Thatcher as its first woman prime minister.

early 1980s — The economy of Great Britain suffers from high unemployment and inflation.

1982 — The Falklands War is fought between Great Britain and Argentina.

1983 — Margaret Thatcher is reelected prime minister.

1987 — Margaret Thatcher is chosen as prime minister for the third time.

1990 — Margaret Thatcher resigns as prime minister.

Vocabulary

Falklands War — A 1982 war fought between Great Britain and Argentina over several disputed islands in the south Atlantic Ocean.

World War II — The second major war of the 20th century that involved the Allied Powers led by England, France, the Soviet Union and the United States who fought the Axis Powers, which included Germany, Japan and Italy.

Labour Party — A political party formed in 1900 to advocate for the rights of British labor and trade unions in Parliament.

Conservative Party — A political party that Margaret Thatcher led as Prime Minister, which advocated an economic policy of tax cuts, privatization and free market reforms.

Welfare State — A system of government in which the state provides a number of social services to support the welfare of its citizens.

Cape Horn — The southern tip of South America.

Union Jack — The term used for the flag of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

inflation — An economic condition in which prices of goods and services rise, and, as a result, devalue a nation's currency and the purchasing power of consumers.

communist — One who advocates an economic system in which all means of production and property are publicly owned.

United Nations — An organization founded in 1945 that works to ensure world peace.

(Continued)

The Iron Lady — A term frequently used in connection with Margaret Thatcher to describe her harsh stance against communism.

Politburo — The most powerful group of law and policy makers in the Communist Party in the Soviet Union.

junta — A group (usually military) that organizes a government after a revolution or coup d'état.

Exocet — An anti-ship missile used by Argentine warplanes against British ships in the 1982 Falklands War.

Poll Tax — A tax introduced by Margaret Thatcher in 1990 that was extremely unpopular and that played a role in her replacement as prime minister.

Discussion Questions

1. Why was the Thatcher government so unpopular in the early 1980s?
2. Why did Argentina's President Galtieri decide to re-take the Malvinas?
3. How did Margaret Thatcher get the nickname, "The Iron Lady"?
4. How did President Reagan respond to the Falklands crisis?
5. What was the "Falklands Factor"?
6. Why did Margaret Thatcher resign from office in 1990?

Discussion Questions & Activities

- When Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher delivered her victory speech at the end of the Falklands War in 1982, her main purpose was to put into words the sense of rediscovered British pride. Ask students to analyze the use of language and emotions evoked by Thatcher's speech. As an extension, students may discuss the historical significance and modern relevance of the following quote: "We must find the means and the method of working together not only in times of war, and mortal anguish, but in times of peace, with all its bewilderments and clamor and clatter of tongues." The full text of the "Speech to Conservative Rally in Cheltenham" may be found at this web site: www.margaretthatcher.org/speeches/displaydocument.asp?docid=104989
- Following her stern 1976 speech on the evils of communism, the Soviet Ministry of Defense's newspaper, *The Red Star*, dubbed Margaret Thatcher "The Iron Lady," a nickname that Thatcher felt described her unwavering character to a T. Ask students to read Thatcher's "Britain Awake" speech and to analyze her thoughts on Russian military aggression and the defense of British "freedom." Her speech may be found at the following web site: www.margaretthatcher.org/speeches/displaydocument.asp?docid=102939
- In 1988, Margaret Thatcher delivered her famous "Bruges Speech" which expressed her concerns about increasing European integration. Ask students to summarize her views on Britain's relationship with the rest of Europe and the future of Europe. As an extension, students may write editorials expressing contemporary British fears about the creation of a European "super-state." The "Bruges Speech" may be found at the following web site: www.margaretthatcher.org/speeches/displaydocument.asp?docid=1073320