




Speech By  
**Steve Minnikin**

**MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH**

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**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Thatcher, Rt Hon. Baroness Margaret**

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (11.25 am): ‘You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong. You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift. You cannot help the wage-earner by pulling down the wage-payer.’ These words originally penned by Abraham Lincoln were written down on a piece of paper and kept by one of the western world’s most influential leaders as a source of inspiration. Indeed, she was one of the people whom I referred to in my maiden speech alongside Churchill and Reagan.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I wish to rise in this august House to speak about the recent passing of the Rt Hon. the Baroness Margaret Thatcher. Dubbed the ‘Iron Lady’ by a Soviet Union journalist, Baroness Thatcher was Britain’s first female Prime Minister, who was elected in 1950 as the member for Finchley in the House of Commons. Baroness Thatcher was a true leader in every sense of the word and one of the west’s true conviction politicians. As she stated—

No great party can survive except on the basis of firm beliefs about what it wants to do. It is not enough to have reluctant support. We want people’s enthusiasm as well.

Whether you lean to the Left or to the Right of the political pendulum, you certainly cannot deny that Baroness Thatcher left a remarkable legacy in Britain and around the world. Along with other prominent figures from the era, she assisted in bringing an end to the Cold War, along with President Ronald Reagan, Mikhail Gorbachev and Chancellor Helmut Kohl. Baroness Thatcher was a true world leader and never minced her words or led anyone to doubt the truth of her convictions particularly on the world stage. For example, when addressing the threat of communism she stated—

The Russians are bent on world dominance, and they are rapidly acquiring the means to become the most powerful imperial nation the world has seen. The men in the Soviet Politburo do not have to worry about the ebb and flow of public opinion. They put guns before butter, while we put just about everything before guns. They know they are a superpower in only one sense—the military sense. They are a failure in human and economic terms.

Regardless of your political persuasion, there should always be respect for the office of Prime Minister. It was extremely disappointing to note that many Labour MPs in the House of Commons chose to boycott the tributes in the House of Commons to Baroness Thatcher. In the passing of such a former Prime Minister, no matter what political party they hail from, it is essential to mark respect for their achievements and position. It was disgusting, may I even say disturbing, to see many of Baroness Thatcher’s detractors who were probably not even born during her tenure as Prime Minister of Great Britain celebrating her death in the streets. It makes me ponder the question: where has the respect in society gone? I could not fathom celebrating the death of other former prime ministers or premiers.

My political leanings may not agree with the ideologies of former prime ministers such as Gough Whitlam, Bob Hawke, Paul Keating or premiers such as Peter Beattie or Wayne Goss. The difference, however, is that I respect the high office they held and their overall contribution to our society. I was extremely disappointed in those individuals on the other side of politics that have

displayed contempt and utter disregard of one individual's achievements in life. Baroness Thatcher had not even passed away 24 hours before many people were gathering in the streets. The lobbying to have the song *Ding Dong! The Witch is Dead* climb up the British pop charts says more about the way in which segments of the Left in modern society are heading rather than the legacy of this courageous lady.

Baroness Thatcher's political principles changed the face of modern western politics in her almost forensic pursuit of her ideological enemies. John Campbell stated in his 2009 book *The Iron Lady* that, according to Baroness Thatcher—

... there were in principle, as she put it in a speech to the West German Christian Democrats, 'only two political philosophies, only two ways of governing a country', however many party labels might be invented to obscure the fact: the Marxist-socialist way, which put the interest of the state first, and the way of freedom, which put the people first.

John Campbell went on to say—

Modern Western forms of democratic socialism as practised by the German Social Democrats or the British Labour party she regarded contemptuously as merely watered down versions of Marxism without the courage of Moscow's convictions ... the Labour party—under the influence of its increasingly dominant left wing—was becoming ever more openly Marxist. True to Hayek, she believed that socialism was a slippery slope—literally the road to serfdom—which would lead inexorably to Communism if the slide was not halted and reversed.

Baroness Thatcher adhered to the credo of, 'We do not seek to lead people's lives for them, nor to boss them around, nor to regulate them into apathy. A government for all the people must have the humility to recognise its limitations and the strength to resist the temptation to meddle into citizens' lives.' Baroness Margaret Thatcher was without a doubt one of the most significant political figures of our lifetime. I wish to place on the record in this chamber my deepest sympathies on the passing of the Rt Hon. Baroness Margaret Thatcher.