

# The funeral of Margaret Thatcher - A Postscript

Friday 19 April 2013, by [ANNIS Roger](#) (Date first published: 19 April 2013).

**I have added the following postscript to my April 15 article on the death of Margaret Thatcher [1].**

**Roger Annis**

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## **From the letters page of *The Guardian*, April 15, 2013:**

... There has been a great deal of ink spilt since the demise of Thatcher, but with one or two notable exceptions very little has captured the depth of feeling among the vanquished because our voices have been drowned out by the harrumphings of Thatcher's disciples and admirers.

I write as the widow of a coalminer, and as I reflect on the appeals to respond to Thatcher's death with respect and dignity, I have two questions: how much respect did Thatcher show to decent working people asking nothing more than to continue selling their labour when she labelled us the "enemy within"; and how much dignity did men like my husband have when they were left to rot on the dole after her work was done?

And on Wednesday [April 17] we will have the ultimate indignity wrapped up in the ultimate irony as we are forced, as taxpayers, to contribute to the most indulgent and unjustified of state send-offs, for a woman who despised the state. Meantime our children look for work.

Emma Wallis,  
Rotherham, South Yorkshire

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## **Margaret Thatcher's funeral had more than 2,300 guests. Here are some of the notables:**

*Royals:* Queen Elizabeth II and her husband, Prince Philip; Greece's Crown Prince Pavlos and Princess Marie-Chantal of the Hellenes

*World dignitaries and public figures:* Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper and former prime minister Brian Mulroney; former U.S. vice-president Dick Cheney; former U.S. secretary of state Henry Kissinger; British Prime Minister David Cameron; former British prime ministers Tony Blair, Gordon Brown and John Major; German foreign minister Guido Westerwelle; Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu; F.W. de Klerk, the last apartheid-era South African president; U.S. presidential delegation, led by former secretaries of state George Schultz and James Baker; three-

member delegation from the U.S. House of Representatives, comprised of Republican Representatives Marsha Blackburn, Michele Bachmann and George Holding; former U.S. presidential candidate Newt Gingrich; Poland's Lech Walesa and Prime Minister Donald Tusk; Greek Foreign Minister Dimitris Avramopoulos; Czech Republic's Prime Minister Petr Necas and former president Vaclav Klaus; former Australian prime minister John Howard; former prime minister Mahathir of Malaysia; London Olympics chief Sebastian Coe.

[The Obama administration has been criticized heavily in the right wing (Tory) press in Britain for "snubbing" Britain by not sending a high level delegation to Thatcher's funeral. In the end, few current world leaders attended the funeral. The Tories had a delusional sense of the place of the event in world affairs, notwithstanding their faithful colleagues in the current regime in Canada who came through for them.]

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### **Letters to The Guardian on April 19, 2013, two days following the funeral of Margaret Thatcher:**

- I saw a different version of events in London than those portrayed in the media. As we walked from Waterloo station to St Clement Danes to join the funeral route, I was struck with how few people were on the streets. We couldn't get to the point at the courts of justice we were aiming for because of road barriers but had no problem finding a viewpoint at the beginning of the route – and we arrived a few minutes before it started. Again I was surprised at the low attendance, a few thousand at most. After expressing our democratic right –turning our backs on the gun carriage as it passed and muttering "job done" – we adjourned to St Martin's crypt for coffee. The London I observed was typical of a Wednesday morning, unruffled by events along the Strand and going about its normal business.

— Geoff Clegg, London

- When I walked behind Diana's coffin with other representatives of her favourite charities, there was a heavy silence, broken only by the sound of the horses' hooves, the tolling of the abbey's tenor bell and sobbing from the crowds. Yesterday, the crowds along the route applauded. Not sure what to make of that.

— Chris Birch , London

- My mother's funeral took place on the same day as Margaret Thatcher's. The vicar read the passage from John 14 that includes the words "in my father's house are many rooms". Later that day, I heard David Cameron read the same passage from the St James version which goes, "in my father's house are many mansions". No surprise there, then. Presumably Thatcher's choice of text reflected her belief that she was destined for a more exclusive, privately owned version of heaven than the rest of us.

— Christine Keogh , Gargrave, North Yorkshire

- To paraphrase St Paul: "Though I have the grandest funeral money can buy, if I have not love I am nothing."

— Gabrielle Cox , Manchester

- Seumas Milne (Comment, 17 April [2]) says that Margaret Thatcher did not turn the economy round. Has he not seen the findings of the LSE's growth commission? It shows that in the century from 1870 to 1980, the British economy grew less fast than those of the US, Germany and France. Since 1980 it has grown faster than all those three. The authors put most of this improvement down to the supply side reforms initiated by Mrs Thatcher. Why does the left find it so hard to be

objective?

— John Horam, London

[An additional article on the false claims of the Thatcher economic policies is available [3], originally published on Red Pepper.]

- May I express my gratitude to Emma Wallis (Letters, 15 April). In my opinion she gave voice, in a very eloquent manner, to the feelings arising from Thatchers life/death emanating from villages all over south Yorkshire. Perhaps the tribute paid to Mrs Thatcher in my home village of Goldthorpe on Wednesday was a more pertinent way of “celebrating” her demise. Thank you Emma. [See above for the text of letter by Emma Wallis; see the link here [4] for a report on the mock funeral of Thatcher in the village of Goldthorpe, attended by several thousand coal miners and families and during which her coffin was burned.]

— Ian McDonnell, ex-coal miner Goldthorpe/Dearne Valley collieries, Westcliff on Sea, Essex

- I never hated Thatcher. I was opposed to what she stood for: the Conservative party, monetarism and her strident true blue colonialism. I only saw snippets of Wednesday’s spectacle on TV. But they were enough to disgust me. The emphatic declaration that the state is mighty, monarchy, parliament and the media demanding the compliance of respect at every turn. How dare they! How dare they!

—Ann Jamieson, Highfields Caldecote, Cambridgeshire

- A fascinating picture in your funeral supplement (18 April) showing just some of the mourners. Of the 42 you identify, can we now be told which of them are not multi-millionaires?

— Phil Penfold , Doncaster, South Yorkshire

- I marked the passing of my fellow Methodist, Mrs Thatcher, by working an extra shift at my local food bank. Seemed apt, somehow.

— Peter Collins , Stanley, Co Durham

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## Footnotes

[1] See on ESSF (article 28407), [Death of Margaret Thatcher reopens the debate over her cruel legacy](#).

[2] <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/apr/16/bury-not-just-thatcher-but-thatcherism>

[3] See on ESSF (article 28413), [Dispelling the Thatcher myths](#).

[4] <http://www.socialistworker.co.uk/art/33083/Thatchers+coffin+goes+up+in+flames+in+Goldthorpe>