

From: Lady Bell

R1313

① N. Gow
② P. M.

First House
West Witheridge
Knotty Green
Beaconsfield

Res.

10th March 1982

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

Thank you very much indeed for your prompt letter of sympathy. It gives such a clear view of Ronald - how truly you perceived him; and it helped a lot. The "children", born and bred in the briar patch of politics as they have been, have found it difficult to believe that he is no longer at the House; particularly when something like the Budget was on.

Ronald was, I know, happier and more comfortable under your leadership than he had been for a very long time before; it came as an immense relief to him when the principles of a conservatism that he personally adhered to began to be reiterated and he could begin to feel reasonably respectable and in tune again.

He was greatly touched when you proposed his name for a Knighthood; it delighted his constituents and made his position in the constituency unassailable after what had been a difficult period a few years previously because of his opposition to our entry into the Common Market. I am personally very grateful to you, not least because it also gave him the experience, not always available during a lifetime, of reading several hundred letters praising his own virtues; he said then "After reading what they all say they think of me I'm now almost afraid to take a step in any direction for fear of spoiling it!" Only a temporary inhibition, however.

Ronald could never have been happy if he had had to relinquish politics after thirty-two years in the House; he was so lucky not to have to face that decision.

We are so very glad that you are going to read a Lesson - Ronald would have been pleased. The other will be ready by Sir George Baker, until recently President of the Family Division; they were in Chambers together for forty years.

With very best wishes and thanks,

Yours sincerely,
Audrey Bell.

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.
The Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London SW1

Bu



10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER,

1. I THINK THAT THERE
IS NO NEED TO REFER
TO THIS.

2. YOU WILL SEE LADY
BELL AT THE MEMORIAL
SERVICE ON 31ST MARCH,
WHEN YOU WILL BE READING
A LESSON.

3. WHAT A
VERY NICE LETTER.

[Signature]

16/3/1962.