

11 April 2013

Dr Julian Lewis MP
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Dear Julian

YELLOW NOTE: NO REPLY EXPECTED — MARGARET THATCHER

First may I congratulate you on your speech: characteristically stirring and pithy.

Two other thoughts occurred to me on that occasion.

- The Falklands Islands are once more in focus. Reportedly President Obama is starting to slant US policy towards support for South America; that is understandable. But our Prime Minister must ensure the US President realises he cannot side with Argentina in her absurd campaign to seize once more those islands, without terminating for ever the special relationship between our two countries. Last time we failed to make it clear to Argentina we would not crumble if they invaded our territory. This time must be different. Our UN Ambassador's excellent and clear rebuttal of the Argentinean claim must be upheld. The US President must be made to understand our determination is absolute and our position non-negotiable. The Falkland Islands are three times as far away from the Argentinean coast as the Canaries are from Morocco, twice as far as the Cap Verde Islands are from Senegal, yet no-one suggests either group of islands be ceded to neighbouring African territories against the will of the people who live there. Neither shall Great Britain betray the Falkland Islanders.
- Margaret Thatcher is remembered for her steadfastness in pursuit of her objective. Is it the same for David Cameron? I had thought that his objective was to cut the deficit. In fact the deficit (including financial interventions) in years ending 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 were respectively £80bn, £85bn, £60bn, £76bn. So (despite government claims to the contrary) hardly any progress has been made. Meanwhile, in the manner of Blair's foxhunting diversion, we waste time on irrelevancies. Here is one such: DLA is to be replaced by PIP. According to the minister, answering a complainant from the charity Scope, PIP will consume £2bn, just like DLA. This is in the context of a total benefit bill exceeding £150bn. No savings at all! So what are we playing at? When considering any policy proposal, the Prime Minister should ask: "How much money will this save?" However desirable it might be, no proposal should be countenanced unless it advances us towards that objective, cutting the deficit. I am reminded of John F. Welch, Jr. (past leader of General Electric Corporation) whose key question for years was "What does this proposal do for quality?" Let the Prime Minister take a lesson from him: for *quality*, read *cutting the deficit*.

Yours sincerely, as ever

John Dexter