



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

27 October 1980

Dear Mr. Hill,

I have read your letter to me about the problems of your business.

You probably know that I grew up in a family running a small business. I know of the dedication and long hours which families put into their businesses and I can understand the personal tragedy caused by the run down of a business.

In recent months, I have read of this kind of tragedy a number of times. I realise that there is nothing which I can say to bring real comfort to those, like you and your workforce, who are the victims. Even if you understand what has caused the problems, and what the Government is doing to give small businesses better chances in the future, this can offer no immediate help.

The country is now facing the consequences of years of failure to tackle fundamental economic problems. You have probably heard me and my colleagues explaining this many times - how we have to beat inflation to secure long term prospects, and how we have to get control of the money supply to achieve this. We are tackling these problems at a time when the world economy is in recession, and when there are still great uncertainties, caused by oil prices. We always knew that it would be tough, and we have never tried to hide that. The pound is stronger than we might have expected, and that adds to the difficulties of many of our industries, although it does help keep down the costs of our raw materials.

/But whilst

But whilst we have been tackling these problems we have started to make changes to help small businesses. These include the tax changes of 1979, the special package of measures in the 1980 budget, changes in employment legislation, simpler and faster planning procedures, and less central government demand for statistics. There is more to be done in the future.

I realise that small businesses will only feel the real benefit of these changes when the overall economic situation improves, and that will take some time yet. Every time I hear of individual problems like yours, I would love to be able to provide some instant relief. The fact is that there is no simple step which can relieve the pressure on businesses like yours, and reduce the level of unemployment, without risking our long term prospects. This time, we have to have the nerve to fight through to long term success. I know that there will be innocent victims, because of the depth of our difficulties. I hope that people like you will be able to recover or restart in a better climate for the future.

Yours sincerely  
Margaret Thatcher

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Mrs Angela Hill.



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

27 October 1980

*Dear Mr. Hawley,*

Thank you for writing to me about the problems faced by your business. I grew up in a family running a small business. I know of the dedication and long hours which this demands from a family, and I can understand only too well the personal tragedy which you face in our economic slow down.

Many small businessmen have written to me about their problems in recent months. I realise that there is nothing I can say which will bring real comfort to those, like you and your workforce, who are the immediate victims of our long running problems. Even if my colleagues and I explain to you what caused those problems, and what we are doing to give small businesses a better chance in the future, this cannot offer immediate relief.

The country is now facing the consequences of years of failure to tackle fundamental economic problems. Now we must beat inflation to secure our long term prospects, and to help our industries create real new jobs for the future. To achieve this, we have to get control of the money supply. That has made it necessary to keep interest rates high, and to hold public spending down as much as possible. I am sorry that we have not been as successful in keeping public sector spending under control as I would have wished. I do not intend to let the private sector shoulder an unfair proportion of the burden in the future. These problems have to be tackled at a time when the world economy is in recession, and when the underlying uncertainty caused by oil price rises continues. We always knew that there would be a tough period of adjustment, and I have never tried to hide that.

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I realise that small businesses will only feel the real benefit of these changes when the overall economic situation improves, and that will take some time yet. Every time I hear of individual problems like yours, I would love to be able to provide some instant relief. I am often asked to do something to ease the pressure, but that is rarely a request to put more money into the economy, and to restart a cycle which has been repeated so often as we get into these difficulties. The fact is that there is no simple step which can relieve the pressure on businesses like yours, and reduce the level of unemployment, without risking our long term prospects. This time, we have to have the nerve to fight through to long term success. I know that there will be innocent victims, because of the depth of our difficulties. I hope that people like you will be able to recover or restart in a better climate for the future.

Yours sincerely  
Raymond DeLinton

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P.J. Marcks, Esq.



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

27 October 1980

Dear Mrs. Kingland.

I have read your letter to me about the problems of your business.

You probably know that I grew up in a family running a small business. I know of the dedication and long hours which families put into their businesses and I can understand the personal tragedy caused by the run down of a business.

In recent months, I have read of this kind of tragedy a number of times. I realise that there is nothing which I can say to bring real comfort to those, like you and your workforce, who are the victims. Even if you understand what has caused the problems, and what the Government is doing to give small businesses better chances in the future, this can offer no immediate help.

The country is now facing the consequences of years of failure to tackle fundamental economic problems. You have probably heard me and my colleagues explaining this many times - how we have to beat inflation to secure long term prospects, and how we have to get control of the money supply to achieve this. We are tackling these problems at a time when the world economy is in recession, and when there are still great uncertainties, caused by oil prices. We always knew that it would be tough, and we have never tried to hide that. The pound is stronger than you might have expected and I know that this causes special difficulties for exporters like you, although it does help to keep down the cost of raw materials for many of our manufacturing companies.

/As an oil

As an oil producing nation, we are likely to continue to find our currency in demand and its present level also reflects a confidence of other countries in our policies. We have learned in the past of the price we have to pay if we try to create artificial controls on the value of the pound.

But whilst we have been tackling these problems we have started to make changes to help small businesses. These include the tax changes of 1979, the special package of measures in the 1980 budget, changes in employment legislation, simpler and faster planning procedures, and less central government demand for statistics. There is more to be done in the future.

I realise that small businesses will only feel the real benefit of these changes when the overall economic situation improves, and that will take some time yet. Every time I hear of individual problems like yours, I would love to be able to provide some instant relief. The fact is that there is no simple step which can relieve the pressure on businesses like yours, and reduce the level of unemployment, without risking our long term prospects. This time, we have to have the nerve to fight through to long term success. I want to see our own industries thrive in the long run, and I would be very sad to see the disappearance of companies like your own. I hope you will be able to recover or if necessary restart in a better climate which offers real hope of permanent success.

Yours sincerely  
Margaret Thatcher

Mrs J.M. England.

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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

27 October 1980

*Dear Mr. Adams,*

I have read your letter to me about the problems of your business.

You probably know that I grew up in a family running a small business. I know of the dedication and long hours which families put into their businesses and I can understand the personal tragedy caused by the run down of a business.

In recent months, I have read of this kind of tragedy a number of times. I realise that there is nothing which I can say to bring real comfort to those, like you and your workforce, who are the victims. Even if you understand what has caused the problems, and what the Government is doing to give small businesses better chances in the future, this can offer no immediate help.

The country is now facing the consequences of years of failure to tackle fundamental economic problems. Now we must beat inflation to secure our long term prospects, and to help our industries create real new jobs for the future. To achieve this, we have to get control of the money supply. That has made it necessary to keep interest rates high, and to hold public spending down as much as possible. I am sorry that we have not been as successful in keeping public sector spending under control as I would have wished. I do not intend to let the private sector shoulder an unfair proportion of the burden in the future. These problems have to be tackled at a time when the world economy is in recession, and when the underlying uncertainty caused by oil price rises continues. We always knew that there would be a tough period of adjustment, and I have never tried to hide that.

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Yours sincerely  
Margaret Thatcher

Mrs D. Adams.



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

27 October 1980

*Dear Mr. De Faria*

I have read your letter to me about the problems of your business.

You probably know that I grew up in a family running a small business. I know of the dedication and long hours which families put into their businesses and I can understand the personal tragedy caused by the run down of a business.

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Yours sincerely  
Roger White

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Cornelius McFarlane, Esq.