

**PIERRE FRANÇOIS GOUIFFES,  
MARGARET THATCHER & THE MINERS:  
1972-1985, Thirteen years that changed  
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*MARGARET THATCHER & THE MINERS: 1972-1985, Thirteen years that changed Britain* is the English translation of French Book “*Margaret Thatcher Face Aux Mineurs*” written by Pierre François Gouiffes. He authored four other books on issues related to economy such as on housing, reforms and ownership. This book primarily covers the rule of Conservative Party under the Prime minister Margaret Thatcher. It is an expedient account on Thatcher’s economic policies related to Coal miner and the miners response. Gouiffes’s has gone through many sources which included official sources, interviews of key power players, review of related works and biographies of prime witness to write his book. Furthermore, charts were used to indicate the economic growth and production. Author focused on the two things. Firstly, he seeks to explain the origin and aftermaths of confrontation between National Coal Board (NCB), National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and trade unions. Secondly, he highlighted the miners perspective on the strikes.

Since the time Industrial revolution, coal had essential role in the economic growth of British. It was January 1972 when the national strike launched by miners. It was an outcome of deadlock in negotiation between NCB and NUM on the issue of

wages. NUM was demanding the increase in the weekly wage but on the other hand, NCB was offering minimum increase. This gulf between demand and offer paved the way for a national strike. In the beginning, this strike was not that most important but it had critical consequence on upcoming years of Thatcher's rule. Next strike took place in 1974 and third in 1984-85. It ended up to irrecoverable damage to all stake holders.

Author is of the opinion that Margaret Thatcher premiership is interpreted in a more polarized opinion. One perspective is that she transformed the British economy and reversed the country's post war decline. On the other side, her detractor blames her savage public spending cuts and sweeping privatization of economy. It resultant to unemployment, collapse in the output of coal and steel industry. Her policy of free market economy designed to growing middle class but rich get richer and the poor are irrelevant.

Ms Thatcher from her early days had a clear-headed policy to deal with iron hand when it comes to miners and trade unions. Like, when Margaret Thatcher was Secretary of State for Education (1970-1974) took a hard decision to close the schools. Because she was left with no option and further, she accused opposition that union paymasters have called a strike deliberately to cripple economy. Without heating and lighting system classrooms couldn't function. On the other side, opposition put all the burden on the Conservative Government. The breakdown in essential public services was not the fault of the trade unions but solely the fault of Conservative Government. In the intense political environment, Prime Minister Edward Heath (1970-1974) decided to engage with trade unions and intended to create broadest consensus. PM Heath argued that we should acted as conciliators and not aggressors. Ms Thatcher took a bold stance against the PM decision. She was of the opinion that today miner leader involving army in support of strikes, it seemed to be wrong time for conciliation. Her stance about set pace of iron hand policy to deal with miners and trade unions and it was manifested when she became the part of power corridors.

In general, Pierre's *Margaret Thatcher & The Miners: 1972-1985* is a fine book. Surely, the book facilitates the reader to get the synthesis view point of the period 1972-1985. Besides, all this Gouiffes creates a space to explore more about the economic policy of Conservative party under the premiership of Margaret Thatcher. Students, teachers, historians, economists, diplomats, scholars and the general reader can gain a lot knowledge and information from the study. Overall, it is a fruitful account on politico-economic development of England in 1970,s and 1980,s.