

# British economy is Tories' Achilles heel

by Mark Burdman

The fight leading up to Britain's June 11 national elections has given Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher the opportunity to stress, in the most outspoken terms, her commitment to the defense of the West against Soviet aggression. At the same time, however, the Conservative Party's failure to deal in a serious way with the economic catastrophe facing Great Britain, is undercutting her ability, assuming she gets back into power, to carry through on her own defense commitments.

As the month of June began, forecasts began to circulate in Britain that Mrs. Thatcher would be denied an outright majority, and that Britain could be faced, after June 11, with either a weak coalition government of some sort, or a "hung Parliament," in which the monarchy might be obliged to intervene to resolve the situation.

Moscow made no bones that it is irate at Mrs. Thatcher, for her unswerving commitment to nuclear deterrence, during her March 28-April 1 visit to the U.S.S.R. One tangible sign of this discontent is that Mrs. Thatcher has had to carry out her election campaign under the heaviest security guard in British electoral history. She has been the target of assassination threats from such "irregular warfare" assets of Moscow as the Irish Republican Army and agents of Colonel Qaddafi's Libya, while Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini has provoked a nasty diplomatic brawl with Britain, by abducting and beating a young British diplomat in Teheran.

## The 'policy of the white flag'

Mrs. Thatcher was at her best on May 28, when she responded to Labour leader Neil Kinnock's latest outrage on defense questions. Kinnock, who closely follows his wife Glenys's commitment to the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) policy of unilateral Western nuclear disarmament, told a London press conference early that day, that Britain need not fear a Soviet military occupation: "The effort to dominate, whether by invasion, or by some kind of incursion, is a militarily unfeasible proposition," declared Kinnock. "That has been the case for some considerable time, and remains the case. It isn't a question of being complacent about it, it is a question of facing the reality, the possibility of such a condition arising."

Kinnock cited the example of Afghanistan, as a model for how Soviet occupiers cannot pacify a country!

Speaking later in the day, Mrs. Thatcher blasted Kinnock's pronouncements as "a defense policy of the white flag. He seemed to accept defeat, invasion and occupation. The British people under a Labour Government would then have to rely on guerrilla resistance to the enemy army of occupation."

"No one would ever attack the Soviet Union," Mrs. Thatcher went on. "We know too much from the past. The United States would never be subject to a conventional attack. It is Western Europe that is subject to conventional attack.

"What deters that is nuclear weapons. It is no use people saying Europe will not be subject to conventional attack because all experience indicates otherwise.

"All experience indicates too that it was not the resistance movements that made those countries free. It was the United States and United Kingdom armed forces which after bloody battles released those countries and liberated them once again."

However, in the U.K., the most recent Defense White Paper commits Britain to real defense-spending cuts in the next three years and to cutbacks in military-related research and development. At the same time, the consensus among the Whitehall defense-policy establishment, is to cut back on British "commitments" on the global strategic plane. The Treasury and City of London cost-accounting fanatics are having a field day, pressing the notion of "budgetary limits" upon defense planners.

## Kinnock calls for 'industrial revival'

The paradox here has not escaped Soviet asset Kinnock. Appearing on BBC's "Panorama" show June 1, Kinnock attacked the Tories for undermining Britain's manufacturing industry, insisting, "We cannot do without manufacturing." He called for an "industrial revival" and advised Britain to "take the example of Japan," where "high standards of education" predominate.

Of course, there is a monumental sleight of hand involved here, since Britain's economic collapse is in great part attributable to Labour's own deindustrialization policies. For most of the 1963-79 period, the Labour Party formed Britain's governments. Especially during the premierships of Soviet fellow traveler Harold (today Lord) Wilson, Labour's support for the "Permissive Society" was what first destroyed Britain, replacing British industrial commitment (such as it was), with an economy based on services, "leisure," and other components of a rentier-financier's paradise.

Mrs. Thatcher did nothing to reverse this. On the contrary, for her, "privatization" has become an almost mystical cure for everything. In reality, it has opened up what remains of British industrial and infrastructural assets to takeover by the investment houses, like N.M. Rothschilds, Warburg, and others.

Worse yet, the Tories have painted disaster as recovery.

The pre-election days saw article after article in the pro-Tory press, painting Britain as being in the middle of an economic boom, growing by leaps and bounds, surpassing other nations of Europe, etc.

### Symptoms of devastation

- The North-South divide: Insofar as there is a "boom" in Britain, it is restricted to the giant growth in and around the City of London, of financial services and real estate, since the Oct. 27, 1986 "Big Bang" deregulation of the City. This has given an aura of "prosperity" to southern Britain, while the northern parts of the U.K. are devolving into conditions that are likened by British analysts to a new "dark age."

- The collapse of transport infrastructure: Anyone who has had the recent experience of traveling via the British rail system can testify to the miserable state of the railways. Well-traveled Britons compare the roads in many parts of the U.K. to pothole-ridden New York City.

- The spread of AIDS: This is the real "time bomb" in Britain. As many as 100,000 Britons may already be infected; the health care system is already seriously overtaxed. By agreement of all the three main electoral parties—Tory, Labour, and Liberal-Social Democratic Alliance—the issue has been almost totally dropped from the campaign. In the midst of this silence, the House of Commons Select Committee on Social Services put out a report opposing all forms of "public

health measures" dealing with AIDS, which included rejecting declaring AIDS a "communicable disease," and has instead endorsed the "safe sex/condoms" approach of Health Secretary Norman Fowler. This is a serious comedown, in a country which was considering emergency health measures for AIDS back in October-November 1986. Obviously, the fiscal-austerity "budget-balancer" fanatics have won out.

- The inner cities: Britain's inner cities have become so violent and lawless, that milkmen, postmen, doctors, ambulance crews, welfare workers, and others who normally work there, have branded them "no-go areas" and are often refusing to enter, and police are increasingly at risk. This applies to such cities as London, Birmingham, Bristol, and Liverpool.

- The random spread of violence: British media are increasingly filled with accounts of murders, rapes, child abuse, etc., of unimaginable brutality and horror.

- The collapse of science: A number of scientific lobbying organizations have been created, such as the new "Save British Science," which warn that the combined effects of funding cutbacks and the "brain drain" of scientists leaving Britain, are causing the worst crisis for science in Britain in this century.

- The collapse of heavy industry: Whether it be steel, auto, or shipbuilding, one increasingly has to speak in the grammatical past tense.

## CONSULTING ARBORIST

Available to Assist in

The planning and development of wooded sites throughout the continental United States as well as



The development of urban and suburban planting areas and

The planning of individual homes subdivisions or industrial parks

For further information and availability please contact Perry Crawford III

### Crawford Tree and Landscape Services

8530 West Calumet Road  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53224

## *We buy and sell*

earthmoving and construction equipment of all types. Import and export worldwide.

*Please contact us  
when buying or selling.*



**ENTERPRISES LTD.**

EQUIPMENT SALES

Phone 403-452-0606

Telex 0374 2883 (Telsec ed)

16641-114 Ave.

Edmonton, Alberta T5M3P9 Canada