

The days of Major's kingdom are numbered

by Mark Burdman

"A competent, compromise, non-charismatic temporary solution." That is how one English source described the phenomenon of the bespectacled 47-year-old non-entity known as John Major becoming Britain's new prime minister. "A government of the men in the gray suits," was the description of a second. "Very boring," said a third. "He has the profile and competence of a typical bookkeeper," stated a City of London insider. "What is there besides the glasses and the gray suit?" asked a fifth, who happens to be a political cartoonist by profession.

Certainly, seeing John Major at 10 Downing Street is a shock, after eleven and a half years of Margaret Thatcher, the green-grocer's daughter and would-be nanny, who had become not so affectionately known as "Attila the Hen" in the last months before her demise. So shocked was the correspondent of the London *Guardian* watching Major enter 10 Downing Street on Nov. 27, that he wrote the next day that "one particularly amazing fact" about the new prime minister, is that "she is a man." Also suffering culture shock is Major's wife Norma, who, for reasons not entirely clear, has decided not to move herself and the two Major kids into 10 Downing Street with husband John.

Besides all this, City of London insiders are asking pointed questions about Major's past. They can't explain the anomaly, that as a youth he passed a difficult examination in order to qualify as a grammar school graduate, yet later could not pass an exam to become a ticket collector in the public transportation system.

So, what can one make of this colorless figure, and of Britain's first post-Thatcher government?

There will be some cosmetic shifts away from the greater fiascos of the Thatcher era, including the revision, or even elimination, of the abhorred "poll tax," an invention of London's Adam Smith Institute and the circles of the late Lord Victor Rothschild, which imposes a tax per head, rather than a tax based on ability to pay. At the same time, there will be a decided "Europeanist" tone to government verbiage, as the British Establishment tries to gain the footing on the European continent that was impossible while Thatcher was ranting and raving against Germany and its neighbors. In the era of a united Germany and Helmut Kohl having emerged successful from the country's Dec. 2 elections, the contrast could not be more obvious between a fallen Thatcher in London and an ascendant Kohl in Bonn. What good are

British balance-of-power and divide-and-conquer strategies in Europe, if the British are not only "outside the game," but are in internal disarray?

Behind Major's lackluster facade, day-to-day policy will be under the direction of people like Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, an Establishment insider who early on mastered the art of educated sadism at Eton preparatory school, where he was nicknamed "Hitler Hurd," because, as captain of the school's rugby team, he used to whack teammates with a cane when he thought they were slacking.

In longstanding service in the British diplomatic corps, Hurd has learned all the wiles associated with the Whitehall insiders of the Foreign Office. As one London source stated Dec. 4, "The central fact of the new John Major government is that the British Foreign Office is going to be far more powerful than it was under Mrs. Thatcher. The approach to Europe will be far more sophisticated, far more subtle, and far more effective, without all the noise. The Germans will have less fun laughing at Britain, as they did under Thatcher."

The new government would best be dubbed "the Major-Hurd regime." On Dec. 4, Hurd made a speech in Brussels that seemed to represent a softening of Britain's attitude toward Europe, in which he said that Europe must play a more active role in taking responsibility for its own defense and security.

Otherwise, the key word for the Major government is "transitional."

A baptism of fire

Major entered the prime minister's office on the afternoon of Nov. 27, after winning on the second Conservative Party ballot against challengers Hurd and former Defense Minister Michael Heseltine. By Dec. 2, the same *Sunday Times* of London whose Nov. 18 editorial endorsing Heseltine over Thatcher had sounded the death knell for Thatcher's career, published various commentaries anticipating the rapid demise of the Major government. Oxford historian Norman Stone, who is also the special features writer for the paper, said about Major's regime: "A mysterious hand is writing upon the wall: The days of thy kingdom are numbered." In Stone's view, it were impossible for a monetarist government of right-wing persuasions to hold on to power, at a time when Britain is entering "the worst recession since the war," with profits falling, companies retrenching, small businesses going bust in ever-greater numbers, and unemployment bound to increase.

The *Sunday Times*'s main editorial was entitled, "A war and a slump." It bemoaned the fact that Britain's economic slump is occurring simultaneously with the imminent outbreak of war in the Gulf, with Major "largely unprepared for such a baptism of fire."

While the tactical priority for the Major-Hurd regime will be wooing Europe in the traditional British manner, Major is being prepared for the "baptism of fire," since the pro-war

LaRouche: Thatcher caused more deaths than Hitler

Lyndon LaRouche issued this evaluation on Dec. 1:

The world, during the past dozen years, has suffered more cruelty, more deaths, as a result of the policies associated with Britain's former prime minister Margaret Thatcher than the world suffered because of the policies and depredations of Adolf Hitler during his reign in Germany.

There is nothing good to be said for Thatcherism, and the sooner we recognize that, the better.

Thatcherism has caused more deaths in the Third World than most people would even begin to believe. Perhaps a half billion people were killed by Margaret Thatcher's policies, and partly through her influence on the United States. Thatcherism has destroyed more people in Europe, more lives, more economies, created more waste in Europe as a whole, than did Hitler's war. That's a fact.

In 12 years, Margaret Thatcher has matched the depredations accomplished in approximately the same period of time under Adolf Hitler in Germany. Granted the tanks were not moving so much, the bombs were not dropping, the spectacular events reported in the news media of the period of the 1930s and the last war—those were not there; but silently, on Milton Friedman and Jeffrey Sachs's feet, depredations spread.

The point is not to compare Margaret Thatcher with Hitler as a matter of the past, but, by comparing her justly with Hitler, to say: How long are we going to continue this? We're rid of Thatcher, why do we have to continue to put up with Thatcherism?

Look at the case in Eastern Europe and Germany from the standpoint of Germany today. This affects the assimilation of eastern Germany into the united Germany's economy. This affects the cases of Poland, Hungary, and other states of Eastern Europe; it affects the situation within the Soviet realm.

In Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, we have a breakdown in progress, partly caused by what in the 1920s and early 1930s, Soviet economists called "primitive socialist

accumulation," that is, the looting of these countries and their infrastructure, in order to maintain the strategic material potential of the Soviet state, and other follies of the Soviet system.

The Soviets have thrown away, not the primitive accumulation, but some of the countries which are no longer manageable after being depleted. They have decided to plunge ahead, as an alternative, into what they think is a Western model—and it appears that, for the Soviets today, the popular view of a successful Western model is Thatcherism—in other words, the disastrous, ruinous, mass murderous policies of Jeffrey Sachs in Poland, Mrs. Thatcher's so-called Polish model.

The remedy in this case is based on the rapid development of basic economic infrastructure. That means modern rails, as the primary means of movement of goods and persons over greater than local distances. It means the development of waterworks, of course: inland canals, fresh-water management. It means, most prominently, the development of the generation and distribution of electrical and related power, interconnected with the transportation grid, particularly the rail grid, and river and seaports. It means communications, of course. It means the development of services to industry, in the form of education, in the form of health care for the population.

These things cannot be done under Mrs. Thatcher's approach of privatization. But that seems, so far, precisely what is happening in Germany—despite the fact that the German press notes the impossibility of meeting the challenge of eastern Germany, or Eastern Europe more broadly, or the Soviet Union, without successful use of rails.

So far, Germany has accepted the Anglo-American, Thatcher-Bush policy of privatization. Under privatization, the development of east Germany will be a catastrophe, as will Poland and Eastern Europe generally, and the Soviet Union. And, out of the catastrophe to the east of what was the Federal Republic of Germany, who knows what the fate of civilization might be, as Russia and other regions blow up, and turn to their military potentials in a desperate effort to find alternatives?

On a global scale, in the developing sector and elsewhere, Thatcherism has already done more physical damage to the economies and killed far more people than did the regime of Adolf Hitler. It is time to be rid of it.

lobby in Britain is as vocal as ever, if not more so.

On Dec. 4, Major met U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Colin Powell in London. More or less simultaneously, it was announced that Major would be visiting Washington, likely before Christmas, and then would be visiting the British troops in the Gulf, likely early in the coming year. On Dec. 6, Major is meeting Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who will be going from there to the United States.

The major difference now, relative to the recent months of Thatcher rule, is that Major will not be able to exercise the psycho-sexual manipulation over George Bush that Mrs. Thatcher did during her fateful meetings with Bush in Aspen, Colorado, in the early days after the Iraq crisis had begun, when she convinced Bush of the necessity of war against Iraq, so as to build her much-cherished "Anglo-American-led New World Order."