

# Queen may oppose Thatcher on 1992

by Mark Burdman

Will Queen Elizabeth II politically challenge British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, by backing the creation of a supranational "United States of Europe" by 1992, an idea Mrs. Thatcher abhors?

Such a development could lead to a new round of "Palacegate," the scandal that began in the summer of 1986, when Buckingham Palace leaked to the British press its displeasure over the policies of the prime minister. The monarchy is constitutionally prohibited from interfering in British politics, according to political arrangements established in the United Kingdom in the late 17th and early 18th centuries.

On Oct. 14, Mrs. Thatcher had given the fourth in her recent series of sharp rebuffs to the idea of a Europe run by a supranational bureaucracy in Brussels and Strasbourg, which she has called "airy-fairy," "nonsense," and "a nightmare." On the last day of the annual Conservative Party conference in Brighton, Thatcher attacked "those who see European unity as a vehicle for spreading socialism," an unmistakable reference to the Brussels-based European Community president Jacques Delors and his coterie. "We haven't worked all these years to free Britain from the paralysis of socialism only to see it creep in through the back door of bureaucracy from Brussels," she said. Mrs. Thatcher added that her own policy for Europe was "willing and active cooperation between independent sovereign states."

The counterattack began the same weekend. The Oct. 16 *Mail on Sunday* reported that Lord Henry Plumb, the president of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, would invite the Queen to address European Members of Parliament early next year. According to the paper, ex-Prime Minister Edward Heath responded to the report of the Plumb invitation by saying, "I'm sure the European Parliament would much rather listen to the Queen than to Mrs. Thatcher."

Heath was nursing some wounds. In Brighton, he had been labeled "Judas Heath" by British Conservatives who are loyal to Mrs. Thatcher's neo-Gaullist position on "Europe 1992." Heath is a longstanding ally of the supranationalist plotters in Brussels and Strasbourg.

On Oct. 17, the Queen and Prince Philip began the first-ever visit by a reigning British monarch to Spain. The royal yacht *Britannia* anchored in Barcelona, and hosted a conference entitled, "Opportunities for Spain and the United Kingdom in 1992." Participants included Bank of England head Robin Leigh-Pemberton and Bank of Spain head Mario Rubio; Barclays Bank chairman John Quinton; Barings Bank

deputy chairman Nicholas Baring; Rothschilds Bank managing director Michael Richardson; Mario Conde of the Banco Español de Crédito (Banesto); and Miguel Boyer, former finance minister and head of the Banco Exterior. The seminar was organized by Lord Limerick, president of the British Council for Financial Services.

One can only hope this meeting was carried on with decorum. Some years back, when *Britannia* was in Spanish waters for a party for several of the junior members of the royal household, the Spanish weeklies published a photograph that showed Prince Andrew reviewing a mock chorus-line of men dressed in women's underwear.

## Royals 'out of the closet'

Strange fantasies of a different sort dominated the pages of the *Daily Telegraph* of London Sept. 16. One Hugh Montgomery-Massingberd, who reportedly spends much of his time hankering after a royal knighthood, heralded the Queen's trip to Spain, in the context of the "Europe 1992" process, as an historic opportunity for bringing about the revival of monarchical systems across Europe.

In a half-page commentary entitled, "How Our Queen Can Play a Unique Role in Europe," Montgomery-Massingberd said that the Queen's visit to Spain is "a significant development in the future of Europe. Here, at last, are the continent's two leading monarchies, and two great monarchs, Elizabeth and Juan Carlos, seen to be together."

He regretfully recalled the decline of the idea of monarchy as a result of two world wars in this century. But now, Montgomery-Massingberd chirped on, "whether Mrs. Thatcher likes it or not, we are very much part of Europe. . . . Europe is open for business, and people are looking to the Queen for leadership. Nobody is better qualified. . . ."

"It is, in short, time for the royal family to come out of the continental closet, and own up to their European heritage," he went on. "Far from being finished, Euro-monarchy could be ripe for a revival. There is already a majority of monarchies over republics in Europe, and as the latter tire of the uninspiring careerism of politicians, there are encouraging signs of royalty rearing its head again. As France prepares to remember the bicentenary of the Terror, the royalists are being taken surprisingly seriously; royal returns in Yugoslavia and Romania have not been put beyond the bounds of possibility in the light of recent events; and we can never rule out another swing of the pendulum in Greece."

There is a "glorious irony" in the two best candidates to head a prospective "United States of Europe," Montgomery-Massingberd continued. One candidate for the "top job is none other than the head of the Imperial House of Hapsburg, Archduke Otto of Austria. . . . Alternatively, if the Queen succeeds in leading Britain wholeheartedly into Europe, she would surely make a universally acceptable figurehead for the federation."