

Defense Initiative program.

The title of Dawkins's piece was, "Meet My Cousin, The Chimpanzee." "Most people take it for granted that humans are more important than apes. But this assumption has more to do with double standards than biology," it read.

Dawkins raved against "the automatic, unthinking nature of the speciesist double standard. To many people, it is simply self-evident, without any discussion, that humans are entitled to special treatment." He calls this a function of the "discontinuous mind," which believes that a "human" is "an absolute concept," differentiated from the concept "apes." From this, he claimed, "flows much evil." Evolutionary theory, by contrast, denies this "discontinuous" factor, arguing that there must be "intermediates" in between human and apes, and that in fact, "we seldom realize that we are apes. . . . There is no natural category that includes chimpanzees, gorillas and orangutans but excludes humans." The category "apes," if it excludes humans, is "artificial," according to Dawkins, since humans are "in the thick of the ape cluster."

Should a single "intermediate" survivor ever be found by archaeologists, Dawkins exclaimed, "our precious system of norms and ethics would come crashing about our ears. The boundaries with which we segregate our world would be all shot to pieces. Racism would blur with speciesism in obdurate and vicious confusion. Apartheid, for those that believe in it, would assume a new, and perhaps a more urgent, import."

He later moaned: "The melancholy fact is that, at present, society's moral attitudes rest almost entirely on the discontinuous, speciesist imperative."

Dawkins then "went ape": "And what if somebody succeeded in breeding a chimpanzee/human hybrid? I can assert, without fear of contradiction, that the news would be earth-shattering. Bishops would bleat, lawyers would gloat in anticipation, conservative politicians would thunder, socialists wouldn't know where to put their barricades. The scientist that achieved the feat would be drummed out of politically correct common rooms; denounced in pulpit and gutter press; condemned, perhaps, by an ayatollah's *fatwah*. Politics would never be the same again, nor would theology, sociology, psychology, or most branches of philosophy. The world that would be so shaken, by such an incidental event as a hybridization, is a speciesist world indeed, dominated by the discontinuous mind. . . . Ethical principles that are based upon accidental caprice should not be regarded as though they are cast in stone."

This diatribe was immediately followed by a second article with further madness on "The Great Apes Project," including speculation on how apes might be represented in legal courts to protect their "rights"; denunciations of attempts to draw a "moral boundary" between humans and apes as "indefensible"; the declaration that humans are "best classified as a third species of chimpanzee"; and so on.

British anticipate John Major's demise

by Mark Burdman

On June 10, the well-informed "Inside File" column of the London *Independent* newspaper reported that British Prime Minister John Major remains firmly opposed to western military involvement in ex-Yugoslavia because he is convinced that it would be "electorally suicidal" to pursue such a policy.

The irony of British politics, however, is that it is precisely the cowardice and absence of leadership displayed by Major toward the slaughter in Bosnia, which has contributed to making him the least popular prime minister since polls began to be taken in the late 1930s (the era of Munich appeaser Neville Chamberlain). Major's support ratings are in the 15-25% range. While such popularity polls have no authority in themselves, they do reflect a growing mood among elite "opinion makers" that Major's time is about up.

Not that there is a popular groundswell in Britain for intervention in Bosnia. Rather, the venality evidenced by Major, a function of his support for the bankrupt and impotent United Nations "global system," has become a symbol for the rottenness pervading all aspects of his incompetent government.

Et tu, Norman?

By mid-June, the most frequent form of speculation in the British press, in the corridors of power, and in London's influential eating clubs, has been not *if* John Major will step down from power, but when.

In a vindictive June 9 speech in the House of Commons, Major's former Chancellor of the Exchequer Norman Lamont declared that the Major government was "in office, but not in power," and was completely obsessed with "short-termism," rather than with making policy. The recently sacked Lamont charged that Major had manipulated British interest rates for venal political ends, and warned that unless the government's approach were to change, it "will not survive and will not deserve to."

The June 10 London *Times* ran a banner front-page headline, "Lamont's Bitter Revenge Puts Major's Survival in Doubt." Under the title, "Brutus's Dagger Runs Deep," a *Times* political commentary that day likened Lamont to "a Brutus embracing his leader and then plunging in the dagger. . . . Evoking shades of honorable men, Lamont left little

doubt that he had come first to slay and then to bury his Caesar." The arch-Establishment daily's lead editorial stated bluntly: "The fall of John Major came closer yesterday. The prime minister was caught off guard, like the Singapore fortress in 1942, with his carefully polished guns aimed limply into empty sea. . . ." The paper advised that unless Major were to reverse course quickly and heed Lamont's warnings, "he is going, almost gone."

London *Independent* political commentator Andrew Marr wrote on June 10: "All the sensible people say Mr. Major still has a further 12 months of secure power before he is in serious danger. I do not believe it. These things accelerate. Once they are under way, the parliamentary mob loses patience and quickly bays for the final act. No one knows whether Mr. Major will be politically alive when this particular melodrama ends." The same paper's lead editorial commented: "The Tory party faces a hard choice: either put Mr. Major swiftly out of his agony; or hope, without good reasons for doing so, that events over the coming months help to heal the wound that Mr. Lamont has inflicted."

This is widely seen as the worst Conservative Party internal crisis since Mrs. Thatcher's downfall in November 1990, when former Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe made a speech blasting Thatcher in mid-November, which hastened her downfall. Ian Aitken, commentator for the London *Guardian*, says that the smell of decay at the top of the Conservative Party is reminiscent of the situation in 1963-64, when the Profumo Scandal brought down the Conservative government of Harold Macmillan.

Paddy Ashdown, leader of the opposition Liberal Democratic Party, said Lamont's speech meant "the beginning of the end" for Major. One unnamed Conservative Member of Parliament was quoted in the London *Guardian* June 10: "Lamont lit the fire. It all depends how long it burns before the bang." Writing in his own name, Conservative MP Tony Marlow headlined his June 15 London *Times* piece, "The honorable way out is Major's only option." Asserted Marlow: "Until such time as John Major volunteers the end of his prime-ministership, the dominant question in British politics will not be 'whether' but 'when' he is going to step down."

Thatcher and Hitler

Yet the British elites have nothing with which to replace Major, except options that would likely be even more calamitous. The underlying problem is that they are so fanatically committed to their monetarist axioms and prescriptions, that each "solution" they reach for can only make the British economic collapse worse.

This monetarist's dilemma is seen in a June 11 commentary in the *Financial Times* of London by Joe Rogaly. Rogaly wrote that Major's "political life hangs by a thread," and stressed that what Lamont said about Major in the House of Commons is "as nothing compared to the calumnies whispered, not in the open, but behind sleeves among Conserva-

tives everywhere." Rogaly asked: "Will this prime minister ever give the country a sense that he knows where he is taking it? If he does not, or cannot, he will go." Rogaly's greatest concern, was that Major lacked the ability to "restore the government's authority, and carry through the painful decisions that must be made if the 50 billion pounds-sterling borrowing requirement is to be halved, and then quartered."

Rogaly is demanding a government with the authority to carry out massive cuts in social services. Each day's British press carries accounts of draconian plans to slash health services, social security, etc., and to "privatize" further components of Britain's transport and other infrastructure. Major is correct in worrying that it would be "electorally suicidal" to carry out such a "Thatcherite" program.

Inside the Major cabinet, there are two true-believer "Thatcherites," Treasury Secretary Michael Portillo and Social Security Secretary Peter Lilley, and other ministers sympathetic to her brand of lunatic "free market" liberalism. Thatcher herself is hyperactive, not only in Britain, but in Washington, Warsaw, and other world capitals, in crusading, under the auspices of her Thatcher Foundation, for the implementation of "Thatcherite" neo-liberal policies.

On June 9, in an article written before Lamont had made his speech, the French daily *Le Monde* reported on Thatcher's activity, and speculated that she may be seeking a political comeback. The paper pointed to a May 31 piece by *Times* scribbler Lord (William) Rees-Mogg, suggesting that Major should step down. *Le Monde* noted that Rees-Mogg is a Thatcher backer. Rees-Mogg is also a business partner of financial speculator George Soros, and of such Soros partners as Lord (Jacob) Rothschild and Sir James Goldsmith. Since Lamont himself is linked, politically and through business activities, to the Rothschild-Warburg banking cabal, it appears that the attacks against Major are encouraged by such circles, eager to pick apart what remains of the British real economy to feed their "free market" speculations.

Their solution is a new dose of "Thatcherism." On June 14, Thatcher seemed to throw cold water on the idea of herself coming back, calling on Tories to rally behind Major. However, she has placed herself to capitalize on Major's weak flank, with a number of speeches demanding that the arms embargo to Bosnia be lifted, and denouncing western policy (including, obviously, the British government's) as "shameful" in its refusal to militarily intervene against Serbia. Some have claimed that she is trying to awaken memories of Winston Churchill's attacks on Chamberlain's appeasement policies.

One other post-Major option being floated centers around Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd. This should send chills down the spine of anyone who has observed Hurd conduct what is politely called "diplomacy" around Bosnia. It is appropriate, in this regard, to recall the story often reported by Britain's *Private Eye* magazine, that Hurd's nickname while in school was "Hitler."