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AS British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher embarks upon her second term of office, the Swiss press has been devoting extensive coverage and comment to her recent election triumph – and to the tasks now confronting the new Conservative government. For his column this month, correspondent Colin Farmer has compiled a summary of Swiss editorial opinion on the political scene in Britain.

Basler Zeitung

THE overwhelming election victory of the Conservatives is a personal triumph for Prime Minister Thatcher and for that which, in the eyes of her supporters, she stands for – leadership.

The Prime Minister knew what she wanted. During the past four years, nothing has deterred her from carrying out her policies. Nothing has deterred her in her efforts to make Britain, once again, a world-respected major power.

La Suisse

MARGARET Thatcher can look to the next five years with confidence.

That which the opposition and certain Conservative colleagues feared has now happened. These election results give the "Iron Lady" the means of carrying out policies conforming more to her convictions, and breaking with the centrist tradition observed by her predecessors.

TRIBUNE DE GENEVE

THE triumph of the "Iron Lady" is partly the result of the failings of the opposition rather than her own virtues or the achievements of a government which is not without its faults.

And Maggie's first quality – a quality not always evident in a politician – is that she has the courage of her convictions. Above all she is prepared to risk unpopularity in imposing her ideas.

What they say now she's back at Number 10

LE MATIN Tribune

MRS Thatcher's victory is due, without doubt, to her strong and resolute personality – her main adversary (Michael Foot) was, in contrast, colourless and lacking in credibility.

And she was able to profit from the psychodrama of the Falklands affair – an adventure which has aroused the pride of the British lion.

Yet Mrs Thatcher also knows that the weaknesses of the opposition Labour Party helped her win the election. Labour's programme relating to disarmament, withdrawal from the Common Market, and its miracle cure for reducing unemployment within a few months was hardly convincing.

Der Bund

A GROCER'S daughter has made British history. But her climb to the top is due not only to her great skill and energy, but to a large portion of luck.

Her success may be attributed, to a considerable degree, to the weaknesses of the opposition.

Tages-Anzeiger

MARGARET Thatcher is the most powerful and extraordinary personality in British politics since the days of Churchill.

Berner Zeitung BZ

MRS Thatcher's landslide re-election is all the more surprising, because under her government unemployment has risen to a record level and only now is Britain beginning to recover slowly from its worst economic crisis since the 1930s.

If the Tories do not now achieve economic success, the admiration and respect Mrs Thatcher has earned from many voters may soon change to frustration or rejection.

As for the Labour Party, it is heading for stormy times. Any opposition which – in a country with three million unemployed – fails to defeat a disputed government, must have fundamental failings.

Labour was not credible – a party torn by internal strife does not win the support of the voters.

LA LIBERTÉ

THE Falklands affair alone does not explain the charisma enjoyed by the "Iron Lady". She has reduced inflation from 21 to four per cent in the space of three years. Her tough economic measures are beginning to bear fruit.

BLICK

BRITAIN'S new superstar is Margaret Thatcher. She has achieved what no man has accomplished since 1945 – the re-election of a Conservative government with a massive majority. Now she will want to wipe the floor with the trade unions.

about Maggie



"Well, I promised you work, didn't I?"

(Tages Anzeiger)



Margaret Thatcher, the victorious "Iron Lady"
(Berner Zeitung)

An advertisement for FRITZ KIPFER removal services. The top half features large text 'ENGLAND' and 'SWITZERLAND' on slanted lines, with 'FRITZ KIPFER' in between. To the left, a box of text details their services: 'Weekly removal service to and from Switzerland. Choose Kipfer of Bern for a reliable efficient service. Complete packing and shipping service to all parts of the world. Regular services by road for commercial traffic too.' The bottom half shows a white delivery truck with 'FRITZ KIPFER' and 'BERN' on it. To the right, a box contains the address: 'FRITZ KIPFER Bern-Switzerland Tel. 031 55 50 55 Telex: 32693'. At the bottom, it says 'or contact our London agents: Robinsons' and lists their branches: 'Tel: A J Hovell-01 452 5441 and branches at Abingdon, Bicester, Birmingham, Bramhall, Bristol, Manchester, Oxford, Redditch, Solihull, Southampton, Wimbledon.'

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