

Clinton's re-election. The President, she said, "cannot be intimidated by Newt Gingrich."

### London says, 'Bye-bye, Newt'

The Speaker is also faced with abandonment by his backers in London. Nobody likes a loser, especially the Windsor/Club of the Isles crowd, which, in a fight for its own survival, has staked a lot on the Gingrich-led Conservative Revolution being able to cripple President Clinton, and the United States, in his "war and a half" against London.

On Nov. 16, the *Wall Street Journal*, in a column by Albert R. Hunt, one of its in-house writers, pronounced Gingrich a political liability. The showdown between the Congress and the President had not yet been settled, but, Hunt observed, "unlike several months ago, the odds are no longer with the Republicans—who have miscalculated, overreached, and deceived themselves." For Hunt, the problem boils down to Gingrich, who "performs a hat trick for the opposition: He alienates the public, unifies Democrats and stiffens the President's notoriously weak spine. Congressional Democrats rejoice every time the Speaker holds a press conference." Hunt warned Gingrich that he'd better drop his complaints about the Air Force One incident, because, "in fact, he was the only guest who was accompanied by his spouse—at his insistence—who also has had a job with Israel Export Co., a concern trying to get business to relocate to Israel in exchange for Israeli government incentives."

Next came a pronouncement from the semi-official

House organ of Windsor Castle, the *Times* of London. Martin Fletcher, the *Times's* Clinton-bashing, America-hating Washington correspondent, declared on Nov. 22: "Newt Gingrich is in free fall, a year after masterminding the Republicans' capture of Congress and being hailed as America's de facto President." He continued, "The House Speaker badly mishandled his party's budget showdown with the White House; his perceived 'extremism' provided the perfect foil for President Clinton's political recovery, and he is expected to acknowledge the reality of his situation on Monday, by formally ruling out a presidential bid."

As the final twist of the knife, Fletcher wrote: "The Speaker also inspires intense personal dislike and a hostile media fanned that antipathy; a recent *Vanity Fair* profile, for example, portrayed him as a megalomaniacal philanderer. . . . Polls show big majorities of Americans disapprove of his performance, and distrust the Republican agenda. Mr. Clinton's approval rating has reached 53%, the highest since February 1994, and he has opened a 15-point lead over Sen. Robert Dole, his probable Republican presidential opponent."

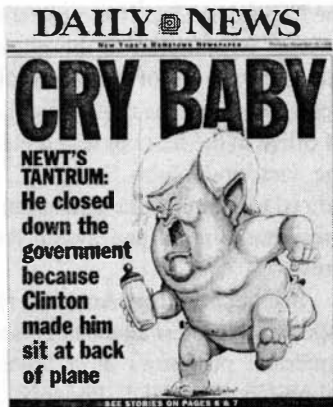
A year ago, following the GOP mid-term election sweep, Lord William Rees-Mogg, former editor-in-chief of the London *Times*, had confidently pronounced Bill Clinton a "lame duck—no, make that a dead duck." He subsequently forecast that either Colin Powell or Newt Gingrich would make mince-meat out of the President in the 1996 election.

My, how things have changed.

## House votes: You can't call Gingrich a 'crybaby'

The Nov. 16 New York *Daily News* became the inspiration for many Democrats in their attacks on Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) during the day. It featured as its front-page story the headline "Crybaby-Newt's Tantrum: He Shut Down the Government Because Clinton Made Him Sit at the Back of Plane." The

story was accompanied by a cartoon of a pudgy baby, with blow-dried white hair and a baby bottle, in diapers, crying while stamping his feet. But House Republicans showed



that they have absolutely no sense of humor.

The tussle began when Lloyd Doggett (D-Tex.), in a one-minute floor speech, referred to Gingrich as a "crybaby" while displaying the *Daily News* front page. Martin Hoke (R-Ohio) raised an objection, asking, "Is it parliamentary to call the Speaker of the House a crybaby?" Speaker *pro tempore* Bob Inglis (R-S.C.) ruled that both Doggett's language and his display of the *Daily News* were out of order.

A few minutes later, George Miller (D-Calif.) came to the floor for a one-minute speech, also displaying the *Daily News* front page, to which Jack Kingston (R-Ga.) immediately objected. Miller said that it was in order to show the newspaper because it "provides and has provided to 800,000 New Yorkers the explanation of why the Speaker shut down the government." Kingston demanded a ruling from the Speaker *pro tem* that the newspaper was a violation of House rules, and Inglis ruled that the material was "demeaning to another member, the Speaker." Doggett appealed the ruling and Kingston moved to table Doggett's appeal. Kingston's motion was approved by a vote of 231-173.—*Carl Osgood*