

hanson

LIAISON COMMITTEE

Thursday 24th May

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence: Stephen Sherbourne (with PM)
Tony Shrimley (CCO)
2. Bernard Ingham's diary of forthcoming events
3. Peter Cropper's paper on Railway Finances

THE NEXT FORTNIGHT

This is arguably the most intensive period of activity of the year with:

- Miners' strike (plus teachers' strikes and potential rail disruption)
- Visit of Botha (plus England v South Africa RU test, Anti-Apartheid Rally)
- Visit of President Reagan first to Ireland and then UK (Forum Report etc)
- 40th Anniversary of D-Day landings
- Economic Summit (plus demonstrations, The Other Economic Summit meeting in St James's)
- Run-up to European Council (?Budget settlement)
- Euro-Election campaign

We need to be aware of the potential for disruption - Botha, Reagan, Summit, (plus miners, railwaymen, teachers) during this period.

Also pre Euro-Council sparring.

A lot will be happening, but it may not necessarily be a pretty sight.

23 May 1984

MAY

- 24 Women's International Day for disarmament
EC Fisheries Council, Brussels
Closing stages, Paving Bill
President Mitterrand attends European Parliament
Teachers begin selective 'walk-outs'
Inquiry due to begin into deaths at Port Stanley Hospital,
Falkland Islands
US Presidential Election: Democrat caucus, Idaho
Presidential elections scheduled to begin, Bangladesh
Building Societies annual conference, Harrogate
(Lord Bellwin speaks)
1981 Census - household and family composition; Capital
Expenditure (1st Quarter); Producers and Distributors
Stocks (1st Q)
First Report, Welsh Select Committee: impact of regional
industrial policy on Wales
Annual Report, Countryside Commission for Scotland
BBC TV "Question Time": Roy Close, Margaret Hodge,
Polly Toynbee, Sir George Young
- 25 West German Presidential election
Parliament Rises, Whitsun Recess (to June 4)
Water workers pay negotiations
UK National Study on Trading Services (insurance frontiers)
to be presented to GATT
Foreign Secretary addresses Franco-British Chamber of Commerce,
Paris
Mr Brittan addresses Justices' Clerks' Society AGM, Blackpool
Mr Ridley performs Terminal 4 "topping out" ceremony, Heathrow
Sales and orders in the engineering industries (February)
BBC Radio 4 "Any Questions" from British Congress of Esperanto:
Jeffrey Archer, Virginia Bottomley, Gavin Laird (AUEW),
Professor Ted Wragg (University of Exeter)

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

MAY

- 26 EC informal meeting of Foreign Ministers, France (to May 27)
National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education annual conference, Birmingham (to May 28)
- 27 Egyptian Elections
- 28 Whitsun Bank Holiday
EC informal meeting of Agriculture Ministers, Angers (to May 30)

Foreign Secretary at NATO Ministerial meeting, Washington (to May 31)
Mr Jenkin addresses International Real Estate Federation Congress, Barbican
Mr Rifkind visits Belgrade (to June 1)
Final Round PGA Golf Championship, Wentworth
- 29 EC Research Council, Brussels
Control of Immigration Statistics 1983 and Statistical Bulletin (1st Q); Overseas Trade Figures (April-prov)
Mr Fowler visits Holland and Geneva (to June 1)
Mr Brittan attends European Ministers of Justice Conference, Madrid (to May 31)
- 30 The Queen opens new terminal building, Birmingham Airport
NUR and ASLEF due to ban overtime and rest-day working
European Cup Final, Rome (Liverpool v Roma)
Construction - new orders (March); new vehicle registrations (April)

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

MAY

30 (Cont'd)

Immigration and Nationality Department Report from Home Office

Pay negotiations: NHS ambulancemen

Mr Walker addresses American/European Community Association Seminar, London

Mr Hurd addresses Association of Chief Police Officers/Local Authority Association Conference, Torquay

31

Ceramic and Allied Trade Unions conference, Blackpool (to June 3)

Energy Trends (March); Employment and earnings by industry (March-prov); Stoppages of work due to industrial disputes (April-prov); overseas travel and tourism (March)

Commonwealth Development Corporation - Annual Report

Mr Tebbit addresses North American Guild of Freemen of the City of London

Mr Buchanan-Smith opens Institute of Petroleum conference, Aberdeen

JUNE

1

Duarte takes up Presidency of El Salvador

New controls on asbestos come into effect

West German FDP conference opens

Trades Council conference opens, Torquay (to June 3)

Statistics: Unemployment and unfilled vacancies (May-prov); company liquidity survey (1st Q); car and commercial vehicle production (April)

2

Prime Minister meets South African Prime Minister, Mr P W Botha

First Rugby Union Test - England v South Africa

Anti-apartheid rally, London

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

JUNE (Cont'd)

- 2 President Reagan begins visit to the Irish Republic
- Deadline for countries to declare participation in Olympic Games
- Bakers', Food and Allied Workers' Union conference, Bridlington (to June 6)
- Observer Trans-Atlantic Boat Race, Plymouth to Newport, Rhode Island begins
- England v USSR, football international, Wembley
- 3 President Reagan continues visit to Irish Republic - visits Ballyporeen Co Tipperary
- GMBATU conference opens, Torquay (until 7 June)
- Monaco Grand Prix
- 4 Prime Minister meets President Reagan
- President Reagan addresses joint session of the Dublin Parliament
- Dr Keith Hampson appears before Bow Street Magistrates Court
- EC Finance and Education Councils, Luxembourg
- Post Office Engineering Union conference, Blackpool (to June 8)
- Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians conference, Southport (to June 8)
- Statistics: Capital issues and redemptions (May); UK official reserves (May)
- 5 EC Consumer Affairs Council, Luxembourg
- ASLEF conference, London (to June 13)
- US Presidential Election: Democrat Primaries in California; New Jersey; New Mexico; South Dakota and West Virginia; Democrat caucus in the Virgin Islands
- Statistics: London Clearing Banks' monthly statement (mid-May); Credit business (April); Retail Sales (April-final); money supply (mid-May)

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

JUNE

- 6 The Queen in Normandy for 40th anniversary of the Normandy landings
- Derby Day
- Publication of book "Sources close to the Prime Minister" by Messrs Hennesy, Walker and Cockerell
- International Labour Organisation (ILO) conference, Geneva (to June 27)
- Statistics: Advance energy statistics (April); housing starts and completions (April); house renovations (1st Q)
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- 7 London Economic Summit (to June 9)
- "The Other Economic Summit" (TOES) stages public rally, Euston Road, London followed by conference (to June 9)
- Educational Institute of Scotland AGM, Rothesay (to June 9)
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- 8 London Economic Summit
- EC Research Council
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- 9 London Economic Summit
- CND Rally, London
- NALGO conference, Brighton (to June 16)
- ASTMS conference, Blackpool (to June 12)
- The Oaks, Epsom
- International Football tournament begins, Brazil (until June 20) (England and Argentina scheduled to participate)
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- 10 Prime Minister bids farewell to Economic Summit guests
- Communist Morning Star, AGM, Wembley
- Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades union conference, Bournemouth (to June 13)

RAILWAY FINANCES

In case there is no agreement on the current offer, and relations in the rail industry deteriorate, may one suggest that the Government's attitude should be quite different from its attitude on the coal industry.

Both steel and coal were, in 1979, industries with substantial over-capacity. This had to be reduced, however painfully. Major strikes have occurred, but the public has backed the Government: partly, no doubt, because these strikes have not gravely inconvenienced consumers.

Rail does not have over-capacity in the same way, except insofar as unprofitable services are maintained as an act of public policy. So a strike, if it occurs, will be about pay, not loss of jobs.

Rail workers are quite obviously among the lowest paid workers. One only needs to look at most of them. This is one of the reasons why British stations so often resemble slums.

There are many rail users - and others - who believe that the railways must be kept open; that it behoves a self-respecting nation to have clean and efficient railways; and that public subsidies are unavoidable because of the basic economics of the situation.

Might it not be in the Government's interest to adopt British Rail for the next five/ten years as if it were an orphan child; concentrate on putting it right (shades of Mussolini?); and present this particular item of government expenditure as a credit rather than something to be ashamed of?

If government were to pick out one part of the infrastructure at a time, and concentrate money and publicity on it, might not Britain's reviving self respect be further boosted? Try and make a real success of nationalisation in a sector of the economy where privatisation looks very improbable?

It was right after 1979 to concentrate grimly on bringing public expenditure down and holding it down. But there will come a time when it may be possible to take slightly more cheerful view of some of it. That may need to be before the next General Election. One is not, of course, arguing for relaxation of control over the PSBR - perhaps for further redirection of expenditure away from welfare spending and subsidies to the manufacturing nationalised industries.

Peter Cropper
23.5.84
Conservative Research Department