

15 February 1985

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister meets Spanish Defence Minister and later gives interview to CBS TV

Princess of Wales visits the Sir Michael Sobell House, Oxford

NUM Executive meets TUC, London

TUC youth conference, Congress House, London

STATISTICS

DEM: Time Rates of Wages and hours of work

PUBLICATIONS

HO: Prison Reform Trust 'Working their Time'

DTI: 'British Business' - European Regional Development Fund feature; market report on North Yemen

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Business: PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS
Unborn Children (Protection) Bill: 2nd Reading (Mr E Powell)
Charter Trustees Bill: 2nd Reading (Mr C Morrison)
NI (Termination of Jurisdiction) Bill: 2nd Reading (Mr E Roberts)
Adjournment Debate
Future of the Port of Liverpool (Mr E Loyden)

MINISTERS - See Annex

PRESS DIGESTPONTING ROW

- You lose respect for Kinnock as exchange of letters shows signs of boring the "pops".
- Kinnock says your latest letter is pathetic and accuses you of being 'a bit hysterical'.
- Ponting, hero of a Freedom of Information rally, complains that the MoD leaked the outcome of his talks at the Department yesterday - where he was told he would not be employed again.
- D/Star - P2 - Kinnock says your latest letter is pathetic as cold war gets icier.
- Sun p2: Kinnock bungles bid to save face. Sorry "trick" angers Maggie. He makes a disastrous attempt to outsmart you. Relations at rock bottom.
- Mirror p2 - Deep freeze for Maggie and Kinnock - no hearts and flowers between you on St Valentine's Day; Geoffrey Goodman claims that you are destroying the Civil Service - Civil Service union leaders complain of a collapse of morale.
- Express p1 lead, says you write off Kinnock in disgust. He tried to get off the hook while continuing to doubt your veracity; George Gale on where you got it wrong - in eking information out bit by bit you have allowed yourself to be driven into a weak and awkward position from one of great strength. And he finds it impossible to believe that there was no political consideration of the Ponting prosecution.
- Mail p2: Kinnock retreats, but not enough. Tory MPs describe his 16 questions as nit picking.
- Telegraph leads with MoD ban on Ponting and efforts to find him a job elsewhere in Whitehall. It says relations between you and Kinnock deteriorate further, although he yielded a little.
- Telegraph leader says Kinnock leads a party which in certain moods under other leaders has shown a fine disdain for responsibility in Government. The difference now is that Labour shows signs of making it a habit. It is in danger of being seen publicly to abandon gravitas. Electors spot this quickly and reach their own grave conclusions.
- Guardian says you and Kinnock remain at literary loggerheads. Personal break almost complete; and that Mr Heseltine is preparing a strong personal attack on Ponting on Monday.
- Times says Ministers' honesty has been called into doubt by Kinnock. In another story it reports Sir Ewen Broadbent as saying he did not tell the Law Officers of Mr Heseltine's personal view of the idea of a prosecution.
- Malcolm Rutherford, in FT, thinks only the Alliance comes out of it well But the important point is to reform S2 and the House should assert itself. He also wants a permanent committee on constitutional matters reporting once a year or whenever it thinks anomalies are getting out of hand.

COAL STRIKE

- NUM executive meets Norman Willis, TUC, today after his talks with MacGregor. Seen as Scargill's last chance to get a settlement (Mail); suggestions of optimism.
- Sun says Willis will tell NUM that this is the crunch - TUC has reached end of the road.
- Mirror believes pit peace is near - quoting Heathfield who says they are on the eve of a breakthrough. Express says hopes are highest for many months.
- Another 154 went back to work yesterday; South Wales NUM allows its members to go in to save Oakdale colliery from flooding.
- Mail says Scargill will be made an offer he can't refuse; if he did turn it down it would further undermine his credibility and cause what little support he has left with the unions to dry up; leader says the ball is firmly in Scargill's court.
- Graham Turner, in Telegraph, says the odds are that after the strike Scargill will continue to rule the NUM roost - at least for a time.
- Telegraph says there are cautious hopes for renewal of the talks. It says nationalised industry losses from the strike are expected to top £4bn by the end of this financial year. Ned Smith says he left the NCB because he could not subscribe to a policy of attrition.
- Ken Howells, spokesman for South Wales NUM, has been silenced after a row said to involve Scargill who complained he had canvassed publicly the idea of a return without a settlement.
- Guardian says Willis's colleagues are suggesting he is on the verge of a great coup, but points out the difficult further problem of the NUM's demand for the reinstatement of 650 sacked for offences during the strike.
- Times quotes Sid Vincent, Lance NUM, as saying the whole of the national executive wants a settlement, including Scargill, but it has to be an honourable one.
- The Morning Star predictably talks of a climb down by Government paving way for a settlement.
- FT however says the language of the draft before the NUM is unequivocal the NCB has the right and duty to close loss making capacity. This raises doubts about its acceptability by Scargill.

INDUSTRY

- French and British Governments agree guidelines for bidders for Channel link.
- Concorde's record breaking run to Australia saluted by a number of leader writers - Express describes it as "a lift for our pride".
- Part of Sellafield nuclear reprocessing system shut down because of blockage.
- Marks and Spencer to issue credit cards.
- Ford planning to move its tractor operations from the US to Basildon because of the value of dollar.
- Tom King describes another Pilger special in the Mirror - this time time on the shortcomings of the YTS - as an insult to employers, trade unionists, community leaders and teachers.
- Medlock Bibby, the strike breaking docker, takes a Mail writer as his witness to a TGWU kangaroo court; it makes interesting reading.
- Bank unions reject 5% offer.
- Petrol prices could go up another 3p next week.
- National Consumer Council says solicitors should pay back the £40m a year they are estimated to earn in interest on money held by them for clients.
- MSC draft four year plan foresees high unemployment and sustained need for training and job creation programmes.
- FT says BA and Laker are close to settling out of court.

ECONOMIC CABINET/ECONOMY

- Sun says Chancellor told Cabinet there would be no big income tax cuts in Budget and proposals to widen VAT base have been sabotaged. Mail asserts there will be no tax cutting bonanza and Chancellor has had to postpone for at least a year his bid to become the great tax reformer. And the foreshadowed "Budget for jobs" is likely to do little to dent dole queues.
- Telegraph finds supplementary estimates unintelligible as ever but appear to make a fresh nonsense of the public expenditure arithmetic.
- Guardian says Reagan is considering a 20% surcharge on imports to deal with huge trading deficit.

£1 NOTE

- Sun persists with its campaign to save it: Chancellor should recognise he is the people's servant, not their master.

LOCAL AUTHORITY

- GLC working party recommends Armed Forces should allow sex between homosexuals and lesbians. And lesbians wanting to be mothers should have access to artificial insemination.

Patrick Jenkin foreshadows legislation to force councils to put services out to competitive tender.

HOUSING

- Halifax Building Society warns that a rise in mortgage rates will be inevitable as the base rates fall.

EDUCATION

- NAS/NUT to start strikes over pay from March 4.
- Solihull Council warns the NUT it will take it to court unless it calls off work to rule.
- National Association of Head Teachers has advised its members to do nothing to support teachers' current industrial action.

CIVIL SERVICE

- Government told Civil Service Union leaders last night it was considering warning senior members that taking part in industrial action could affect promotion; union outcry.

HEALTH/WELFARE

- AIDS scare at Camp Hill Prison, Isle of Wight, with two suspected cases.
- GMC tells doctors not to give under-age girls the pill behind their parents' backs except in emergencies; Mail says this is wisely only an interim ruling and rightly does not define what an emergency is.
- Synod comes down against experiments on human embryos.
- Guardian leads with story FT wrote earlier this week - SERPS faces abolition.

LAW AND ORDER

- Home Secretary writes special article for D/Star in support of their campaign against violent crime.
- D/Star exposes a £10-a-time pyramid-type scheme to provide details of jobs for the unemployed; says man who devised it has stashed away a fortune and dashed hopes of thousands.
- Ian Botham, cricketer, fined £100 for possessing cannabis; Somerset CCC considering his captaincy.
- More than 500,000 pornographic magazines, books and videos seized by police in an operation in London, Manchester and Midlands.
- Mail features Britain's hard drugs crisis and suggests a £2m campaign is all too little and too late.

PARLIAMENT

- MPs' travel costs soared last year by nearly £1m, or 30%, because of higher mileage rates.
- Lords also costing us more because they are putting in more hours.
- Express MPs in car rip off row.

SPORT

- Threat to televised soccer; 92 league clubs throw out £19m deal with BBC and ITV for next four years. Football may be prepared to do without tv for a year but the Football Association, which runs internationals, may take a different view.
- Mirror leader on bad sports, says increasingly sport is played not by sportsmen but by unprincipled hooligans who set an example that disgusts
- 3 soccer fans "serious" in hospital after Sunderland v. Chelsea supporters' battle.

MOD

- 28 MoD cleaners have lost their jobs because they have been classed as security risks.

GERMAN RAF CRASH

- 20th victim dies.

VE DAY

- Little coverage for the decision to commemorate end of World War II.
Mirror - old foes together.

ARMS CONTROL

- Russia wants to re-start troop reduction talks in Vienna.
- Europe to be offered a Star Wars defence system. Telegraph says you will press for British industry to be given a share of SDI research.

POLAND

- 7 Solidarity activists held for planning a protest over food prices.

CHERNENKO

- Rumours about his health intensify as leading Russian doctor cuts short a trip to the USA.

USA

- Commission giving £26,400 towards the cost of a £0.5m yacht race.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- CO: Lord Young visits Bradford
- MOD: Mr Heseltine visits British Hovercraft, Isle of Wight
- DEM: Mr King and Mr Morrison visit Cheshire
- DEN: Mr Walker speaks at the Joint Services Defence College, Greenwich, later attends Newspaper Conference and lunch, London
- HO: Mr Brittan addresses Beaconsfield Conservative Association
- OAL: Lord Gowrie attends re-opening of Atkinson Art Gallery, Liverpool
- SO: Mr Younger hosts dinner for Principals of Scottish Universities in Edinburgh (Mr Stewart and Mr MacKay also attend) Edinburgh Castle; gives interview to Aberdeen Evening Express
- WO: Mr Edwards visits Agricultural Training Board Training Centre, Stoneleigh; attends Llanwern Works 4th St David's Day dinner
- DES: Mr Brooke attends Kingston Polytechnic graduation ceremony, Croydon
- DEN: Mr Hunt visits Birkenhead Glass Factory, Merseyside
- DOE: Mr Waldegrave visits various revenues run by British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, London
- DOE: Mr Macfarlane visits Expedition Advisory Centre, London
- SO: Mr Ancram gives interview to 'Building' magazine
- SO: Mr MacKay presents Action on Smoking (ASH) and Health awards, Edinburgh
- SO: Mr Stewart meets Convention of Scottish Local Authorities on teachers' dispute, Edinburgh
- DTI: Mr Fletcher addresses Scottish Institute of Directors on the Insolvency Bill
- DTp: Mr Spicer opens Ross-on-Wye Relief Road (noon)
- WO: Mr Stradling Thomas addresses IT Conference, Cardiff

TV AND RADIO

- "Brian Hayes"; LBC; (10.00); Masden Pirie of the Adam Smith Institute reviews the news
- "A Week in Politics"; Channel 4; (20.15)
- "Any Questions"; Radio 4; (20.45); Sir Clive Sinclair, Jonathan Porrit, Professor Richard Gregory, Jean Denton
- "The London Programme"; LWT; (22.30)
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