

13 January 1986

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister gives interview to CSIS; meets Japanese delegation

Liverpool councillors contest surcharges in High Court

Home Secretary makes statement on Roskill Report (or January 14)

EC Fish Council, Brussels (to January 14)

EC European Parliament Plenary Session, Strasbourg (to January 27)

Trade and Industry Secretary visits European Commission, Brussels

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STATISTICS

DTI: Producer price index numbers (December-prov)

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PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Transport; Wales

Business:

Public Order Bill: Second Reading

Adjournment Debate

The proposed closure of the cancer treatment unit at Oldchurch Hospital, Romford (Mr R Squire)

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MINISTERS - See Annex

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PRESS DIGESTWESTLAND

- Vast majority (91%) of small shareholders who reply back Sikorsky or leave it to Chairman; Bristow turns down offer, and profit, for his shares.
- But vote tomorrow is still in the balance. Some reports suggest company meeting will be postponed.
- Much speculation over how you will handle Mr Heseltine's allegations in the Commons.
- Meanwhile Mr Heseltine accuses you on television of conducting a whispering campaign against him, and Mr Brittan of polishing his explanation of his conversation with Lygo.
- Tory MEPs will support the Euro-solution in a debate this week.
- Little coverage for an on-the-record denial that you did not ask Reagan to put pressure on Sikorsky to bid for Westland.
- D/Star P8 - Maggie's whisper war - by Heseltine. Makes it clear he will pursue the issue to cause you maximum embarrassment.
- Sun P2 - Tarzan's fury at No 10 whisperers! Outburst to force reply from Maggie; Heseltine ducks a confrontation with Westland workers.
- Mirror P2: Come clean! Brittan is under pressure over 'threat' to air chief.
- Express P1 leads on "Mystery bidder joins Westland rescue drama - Bristow says No to big profit and backs Eurodeal"; P2 - Brittan to face anger of MPs. If Mr Brittan makes a statement today this will thwart Kinnock who wants to draw you in and disappoint Heseltine.
- Mail, P1 lead: Stop the No 10 whispers, Maggie. Heseltine's new challenge - come into the open.
- Telegraph (P1) thinks 30% will vote against the Sikorsky rescue; on back page "Heseltine hits at whispers campaign". Kinnock is to begin a relentless campaign against you - he believes you have been wounded by resignation and subsequent allegations. In another story from Washington it says existing British defence contracts in the USA are not expected to be affected by the outcome of the Westland affair.
- Guardian says the offer to Bristow was made by Lazards, Westland's financial advisers; in another story it says the Chancellor was embroiled in the affair last night with allegations that he gave tacit approval in a letter to colleagues for the Sikorsky bid. Opposition do not intend to tackle a censure motion against you on Wednesday for fear of uniting ranks behind you.
- Times says Westland may seek "cooling off period".
- Times reports Heseltine's appearance on Weekend World fully. Quotes Lazards as saying neither they nor Westland were involved in bid for Bristow's shares; Mr Brittan is to face a concerted challenge over his alleged threat to Lygo.
- FT says Sikorsky is considering pulling out, depending on the outcome of tomorrow's meeting; a feature says this is a meeting with everything to play for.

WESTLAND (Cont'd)Comment

- D/Star: The grossly over-acted Heseltine affair has shunted far more important political events into the sidelines - unemployment, falling price of oil, higher interest rates. Jobs must never be knocked off the political agenda; Joe Ashton says Mr Heseltine has set you up beautifully on the first day Parliament is back.
- Sun feature says Lord Whitelaw is the only man who might have saved Heseltine in Cabinet, but he watched in silence. Now Heseltine's fans are accusing Lord Whitelaw of "rank betrayal". But it was the silence of a sensible man towards a foolish colleague bent on suicide.
- Joe Haines, in Mirror, portrays you as "Maggie at Bay" and wonders how much longer you can stay at the top. The vultures are gathering.
- Mail, under heading Michael Heseltine must be answered, says Heseltine is on a media high. There is a huge measure of Heseltine humbug in his mocking whispering by No 10. But his charges about your handling of the affair are specific and you should give your own account soon. And Mr Brittan should make a full statement, too. Heseltine will retain the initiative until he is rebutted.
- Telegraph leader examines your style and alleged manipulation of Government business. The best touchstone, it says, is comparison between known objectives and eventual policies. You must have had to fight very hard to achieve almost anything under circumstances which would have made a Saint shrill. You dealt sharply with Galtieri and Scargill but it is absurd to say that this is how you treat your colleagues.
- Guardian says the Conservatives have made a good start at losing the election but Opposition will have to be careful. Only over Heseltine's allegations about your style of leadership can the opposition claim they were there first and they should let Heseltine make the running in this.
- Ian Aitken, in Guardian, says Heseltine's charge of a breakdown of constitutional Government is pretty spectacular. Not even the highly emotional George Brown claimed that the circumstances in which he resigned represented a breakdown of constitutional government.
- FT under heading "Mrs Thatcher to serve" says some of Heseltine's charges may turn out to be wide of the mark but they are sufficiently damaging to do lasting harm to the Government if they remain unanswered. Hardly an advertisement for good Government whoever is to blame. You should now come clean. If you don't and rely on leaks and innuendoes you will deserve all the flak you will get.

TOTTENHAM RIOT

- Police report says it was pre-arranged and that some basement garages had been flooded with petrol to trap the police in a blazing ambush. Sun says rioters planned mass police murder. Telegraph says the report was greeted by relief and support by many local people.
- Sun leader says the police report is a sickening indictment of misguided and criminal youths supported by an older generation of deadly politicians. No abuse of freedom or deprivation in Britain today that merits a riot or a killing.
- Express says the report exposes a deep conspiracy.
- Guardian leads with "Riot plan prepared months in advance."

LAW AND ORDER

- Report that more than half the women in Islington are afraid to go out at night for fear of being raped or mugged.
- Mirror leader says the poverty, shabbiness and unemployment of our inner cities are part but only part of the cause of crime. The new factor is the broken home.
- Mail says detectives are hunting gangs of conmen who use rats and maggots to trick pensioners out of their life savings by charging them thousands to clean up their "infested" homes.
- Cost of policing London will rise next year by £84m to record £982.3m, up 9%.
- Telegraph big coverage of your "biggest crime prevention campaign".
- Guardian says some legal observers believe there are too many areas where the Government remains immune from judicial scrutiny. Headline says Government abuse of power 'is beyond control'.
- Anthony Beaumont-Dark MP pressing Home Secretary to pay out at least £20,000 (instead of £3500) to family of boy shot dead in police raid.

ECONOMY

- David Lomax, NatWest's economic adviser, says Britain has joined the super league of industrial nations - only Holland, West Germany, Japan and Switzerland can match our growth, balance of payments and stable prices.
- Times says that Chancellor and his colleagues agreed over the weekend that lower personal taxation will be a Budget priority; Institute of Directors warns that without tax cuts economic growth rate could fall from 3 to 1%.
- FT says the Government has accepted that Britain's interest rates will have to stay significantly above those of its international competitors at least until next General Election to defend the £.

INDUSTRY

- Thousands turned away when they besiege Cammell-Laird for jobs after £300m orders - recruitment won't start.
- Express says export orders at its Boat Show were up 80% - sales up 150% to £50m.
- Express says Ford workers are expected to snub leaders who want them to reject a 15.7% pay offer over 2 years when they vote today.
- Rail fares rose yesterday by average of 8%.
- Northern Foods planning 1000 new food manufacturing jobs in Grantham.
- FT describes Roskill report as a no-nonsense attack on fraud.
- You have written to heads of Government who are members of the International Tin Council urging them to end the crisis; FT says support for a deal grows.

CHANNEL LINK

- Sun says there is a danger we shall get the choice wrong. If Mitterrand won't budge on a rail only scheme, you should tell him "Not tonight".
- Guardian says Britain and France may demand a £100m cash deposit from the group chosen to build a link to be returned only when the project is completed.

UNIONS

- Case of TGWU shop steward in Liverpool who secretly acted as his firm's £300 a week personnel manager.
- FT says S. Wales miners are to lead a drive in the coal industry against the UDM.
- NACODS 28th union to retain political funds.

MEDIA

- Murdoch facing a battle with unions over printing in Dockland.
- Sunday People failed to appear yesterday after a court ordered clerical workers to halt strike action; SOGAT chapel official sacked for gross breach of work discipline.

HEALTH/WELFARE

- Barney Heyhoe rejects as stupid Royal College of Nursing claims that the Government is trying to run Britain's hospitals like supermarkets - a reference to the import of businessmen to run NHS.
- Express, continuing its campaign against dirty hospitals, says an Edinburgh hospital where Christmas dinner led to 120 patients becoming salmonella victims had been given two warnings about its poor hygiene.
- Times says transplant queues grow as donors dwindle and kidney units face strain.

EDUCATION

- More than 100 village schools in Norfolk are under threat following new rules, doubling the minimum number of pupils, by the County's Education Committee.
- Two out of 3 schools in Manchester to be closed today for lunch because of teachers' dispute.

POLITICS

- Liberal/SDP ask EuroParliament for a cash grant to fight next Euro-elections.
- Scargill calls for an end to "evil witch hunts" against Left activists.
- Mail claims exclusive with a report that Labour moderates, standing as Independent Labour candidates, are trying to get an electoral pact with their political opponents to get rid of Bernie Grant.
- Militant Tendency fails to win selection in NE Derbyshire.

DEFENCE

- Express says all 96 cruise missiles have now been delivered to Greenham Common and are ready to fire.
- County emergency planning officers want more money put into Civil Defence; Express says the officers are right and the Home Secretary should reconsider the whole structure.

SPORT

- D/Star says Home Secretary must have no hesitation in telling soccer's "unspeakable bosses" that they can't have drinks restored to executive boxes.
- Times says Government has backed down from its demand that football clubs should implement a national membership card scheme.

IRELAND

- Republic hunting for armed raiders who net £350,000 from two robberies.

EC

- British MEPs mounting inquiry into alleged £57m farm frauds.

ANTARCTICA

- Criticism of private expedition - three-man British team reaches South Pole - because of £500,000 cost of rescue after their ship sinks in ice.

SOUTH AFRICA

- Black community leader who was to have met US envoy, Chester Crocker, found hacked to death.

TERRORISM

- Western Europe on alert for new wave of Abu Nidal terrorist attacks.

LIBYA

- Gaddafi invites Reagan to join him for a chat in his Bedouin tent. Express says this smacks of impudence.

IRAN

- Armed Iranian sailors board US merchantman in the Gulf searching for weapons bound for Iraq.

SRI LANKA

- Tamil guerrillas call off 8 month truce.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

WO: Mr Edwards visits Renishaw, Wooton Under Edge; attends National Museum of Wales

MOD: Mr Stanley visits Department of Military Survey. Feron

DEN: Mr Buchanan-Smith opens OSO Export Seminar, London

DOE: Mrs Rumbold meets former Governor of Vermont, London on local government and environmental issues

DTI: Mr Howard opens Association of Accounting Technicians exhibition, addresses National Consumer Council meeting, London

DTP: Mr Mitchell attends Transport Act regional seminar, Birmingham

WO: Mr Robinson visits South Glamorgan District Health Authority

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TV AND RADIO

"Money Box"; BBC Radio 4; (10.00): The current financial affairs programme which keeps a watching brief on money problems including pensions, tax social security and investment in general

"World in Action"; ITV; (20.30):

"Panorama"; BBC1; (21.30): "The Thin Blue Line" - Looks at whether the police can hold the line in the war against crime

"The Star Wars History"; BBC Radio 3; (21.30): "Defence in Space: the President moves the goalposts".

"Today in Parliament"; BBC Radio 4; (23.15)

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