

21 January 1986

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister meets Japanese Foreign Minister; later attends Thirty Club dinner

Princess of Wales opens the Harris Birthright Research Centre for Early Pregnancy, St Mary's Hospital, London

ACAS Talks on teachers' pay begins

Defence Select committee begins taking evidence on future of Westland plc

Anglo-Soviet bilateral, London

Stanley Royd Hospital food poisoning - report of Committee of Inquiry published

Statement by Mr Fowler on Stanley Royd Hospital

US Congress resumes

Statement by Sir Geoffrey Howe on Aden

Commons Committee on Welsh Affairs begins visit to Wales in connection with tourism report (to January 21)

International Tin Council meets

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STATISTICS

CSO: Cyclical indicators for the UK economy (December)

CSO: Institutional Investment (3rd qtr)

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PUBLICATIONS

DES: HMI report on part-time AFE at Leicester Polytechnic

DHSS: Occupational asthma - Social Security Act 1985 (14.30)

DHSS: Report of the Committee of Inquiry into outbreak of food poisoning at Stanley Royd Hospital, Wakefield (15.30)

HO: HM Chief Inspector of Prisons Report on Guys Marsh

HOC: Energy Select Committee report - regulation of the gas industry (10.00)

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PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Employment; Social Services; Prime Minister

Business:

10 Minute Rule Bill: Protection of Minimum Retirement Age  
(Mrs A Clwyd)

Atomic Energy Authority Bill (Lords): 2nd Reading and Money  
Resolution

Drug Trafficking Offences Bill: 2nd Reading and Money Resolution

Adjournment Debate

Mrs Sybil Gordon and advice received from the Probate Registry  
Office (Mr J Lester)

Select Committees:

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND ARTS

Subject: Achievement in Primary Schools

Witnesses: Campaign for the Advancement of State Education  
(CASE) (at 10.35 am) National Advisory Body for Public Sector  
High Education (at approx 11.45 am)

PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER FOR ADMINISTRATION

Subject: Reports of the Health Service Commissioner 1984-85

Witnesses: Frenchay Health Authority; Wycombe Health Authority

DEFENCE

Subject: The Defence Implications of the future of Westland Plc

Witnesses: Officials of the Ministry of Defence

Lords

Shops Bill: Committee (3rd Day)

Education (Amendment) Bill: Committee

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MINISTERS - See Annex

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PRESS DIGESTCHANNEL TUNNEL

- Rail link announced with option of road tunnel later.
- But a row over no-strike agreement with unions - Britain wants one but Mitterrand says workers are entitled to go on strike (Sun).
- Could create 30,000 jobs on either side of the Channel.
- Ferry operators promise a price war; James Sherwood says if French Socialist Government is ousted in Spring election his road project will go through.
- Lots of feature coverage as well as news stories.
- D/Star: Maggie is rail roaded - Mitterrand has won with trains only, a nice coincidence to announce Chunnel on Concorde's 10th birthday, but no amount of handshakes can conceal the fact that this is going to be a bit of a second-rate tunnel.
- Sun under heading "Island no more" says the project will be of great benefit to both Britain and France. Only one cloud shadows it - its rail-only nature. Placing all our eggs in the railway basket will leave us at the mercy of predatory Left wing unions - you should insist on a no-strike agreement.
- Mirror P2 - "Catch the 1993 Channel flier!" Inside feature goes back to Napoleon and says "at last Chunnel dream comes true".
- Express P7 - Rail only Chunnel storm breaks - major freight hauliers on both sides of Channel furious about decision to build a rail only Chunnel which can't handle juggernauts; leader speaks of "A missed opportunity". You were mistaken to give way - talk of adding a road link in the years ahead is unrealistic.
- Mail - La Maggie: full speed ahead for France. You speak in French for first time to rapturous applause. But you also face strong criticism for abandoning your insistence on road link; leader headed "Railroaded into history books" welcomes the agreement with qualified rapture. It does not go far enough. The suspicion is that you have been railroaded by Mitterrand's political timetable. You have however handed B/Rail the baton of history: they'd better not fumble it.
- Telegraph leads with the go-ahead and says second stage road link disappoints you. Shuttles will be operated by non-union labour. Transport Correspondent says the decision plays it safe with technology. Customs and immigration remain a major problem to be overcome.
- Guardian P1 lead - Jobs boom as PM accepts rail link.
- Guardian adds that Northern Tories are angry about all the investment that is going into the South East; leader says it would have been nice to drive straight across the Channel but the two most likely schemes were considered technologically - and maybe psychologically - too risky. The chosen scheme is sensible though it may end in tears. But if it does we shall have no-one but ourselves to blame.
- Times P1 lead is lyrical - Historic meeting gives force to Napoleonic vision. B/Rail, rail unions and freight organisations welcome decision while road traffic and Kent environmental interests condemn it. Conservative opponents warn that Government could face serious difficulties getting its legislation through.

CHANNEL TUNNEL (CONT'D)

- Times leader says the choice is bound to be seen as another defeat for you at the hands of the unbending French.
- FT P1 lead - Channel rail tunnel may be followed by road link proposal. Losing groups aim to fight back.
- FT says the two countries have played it safe. The Channel's practical value will be the greater if it accelerates the removal of all other barriers which hinder the movement of people and goods between the countries of Europe.

ECONOMY

- £ at its lowest value for 8 months \$1.4158 - fears of higher base rates and mortgages; rise of 1½% canvassed; Andrew Alexander in Mail, attacks obstinate and misguided policy of keeping up sterling.
- North Sea oil falls below \$20 a barrel.
- Kinnock gets little pop coverage of what Mirror describes as "his plan to revive the economy and create more jobs" - investment in new technology, R & D and better education and training. Small pieces only in Mirror, Express, and Mail. Telegraph says Kinnock's ideas copy some from Japan. Guardian says Kinnock told industrialists yesterday that Britain's recovery depended on revival of private manufacturers stimulated by public investment.
- Britain is still bouncing back from coal strike, according to Mail's interpretation of output figures.

INDUSTRY

- Guinness bids £2.27bn for Distillers.
- Miners in Selby coalfield claim world records for tunnelling.
- Al-Fayed lobbies peers about Tiny Rowland's irrational campaign against him and calls on Press Council to investigate Observer's report linking him with Mark Thatcher.
- GEC bid for Plessey goes to Monopolies Commission.
- Times says Weinstock was warned by Lygo that GEC's bid for Plessey could be affected by its Westland offer.
- Times says Richard Needham refused to pay £21,000 Lloyd's losses because of "a safe and sound agreement" when he joined; this has led to a campaign of lies and innuendo against him.
- Times says graduates enjoy better job prospects.
- FT says British Airways expects to be privatised this summer.

WESTLAND

- Covered only obliquely by a Sun leader: Heseltine's friends must be the smallest club in town and shrinking.
- Telegraph says company is to issue a new reconstruction plan by the end of the week.
- Hugo Young, in Guardian, says we may have better Government as a result of the affair and it is not impossible that the voters will notice. You are a chastened woman and this substantially weakens your position. But that doesn't mean Government is weaker.

UNIONS

- Mirror says EETPU is facing expulsion from the TUC for its print industry policies.
- TUC to back campaign against any sacking of GCHQ staff with £250,000 advertising fund.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- Government majority down to 71 in RSG debate - 32 Tories vote against Government, including Pym, Gilmour and Prior.
- "Another major embarrassment" - Express.
- Express says Southampton's Labour Council has shot itself in the foot by "disinviting" South African archaeologists to an international convention - the conference has been transferred to Germany.
- Mail says holidays in exotic resorts are being offered to blacks, Asians and other ethnic minority pensioners by Britain's poorest borough, Hackney.
- Telegraph says Wiltshire and West Sussex are considering rate increases of 20-25%.

POLITICS

- D/Star says after Mellish, Silkin and now Cocks it is a nasty Labour tradition for the job of their Chief Whip to carry with it the kiss of death; it can do Labour no good at all.
- After Cocks' rejection, Sun says if the the unthinkable happened and Kinnock won the next election, he would be sitting on the back of a tiger red in tooth and claw; in a feature on the Left's threat to Kinnock, the Sun lists "Labour Eight you are going to hate".
- Express says Cocks finds himself de-selected for being a moderate in favour of a Bennite. That shows just how far round the twist Kinnock's Labour Party has gone. Don't be surprised if Bristol voters do some deserting of their own at the election.
- Mirror leader says Militant Tendency is accusing it of being "the putrid topping on a dungheap of slanders and lies". And it is proud it is at last getting under Militant's skin. It will do what it can to complete the exposure of this "secret organisation". Alastair Graham, CPSA, says Militant is trying to smash his union and subvert the Labour Party.
- Kinnock reveals one of his regrets in life - his father didn't cuddle him.
- Telegraph diary says Kinnock has infuriated Left by saying he would be prepared to lose the next election by the slenderest of margins to achieve a transition period during which Labour would concentrate its mind on office.

LAW AND ORDER (CONT'D)

- Digby Anderson, in Times, says when politicians seek to reduce crime to a matter of economic variables, the political accountability of police forces or the technology of burglar alarms, they distance themselves from and subvert the moral thinking of the people.

HEALTH/WELFARE

- Express starts another campaign - against the "growing scandal of caesarian operations that go horribly wrong."
- Mr Hayhoe announces a plan to clean up hospital kitchens.

DEFENCE

- No coverage of 'Spetsnaz' story in Jane's Defence Weekly in D/Star, Sun, or Mirror. Express P2 claims Russia plants women spies at Greenham; Whitehall officials admit they take seriously the threat posed by the Russian SAS.

LAW AND ORDER

- Mail leads with a report by a woman sergeant that senior officers were reluctant to listen to warnings of a riot on the Broadwater Farm Estate. Leader says her report is a cry for help.
- Sun says Moors murderer has described Lord Longford as "a silly old fool" while using him to arrange special perks in prison.
- Express leads with a story that one of its women reporters who exposed lax security was held for 7 hours when she returned to Gatwick yesterday to report what she had discovered - kept in a cell and questioned repeatedly before being released without charge. Michael Spicer says vetting airport cleaners to make sure they are not terrorists is a big problem.
- SPG to join the Brixton war against muggers, with full support of the community's leader

IRELAND

- USA set to give £357m to help the Republic and Ulster (Express).
- John Hume accuses Unionist leaders of cooperating with paramilitaries.

ADEN

- Tales of rescue from those returning to Britain; more rescues by Britannia, which is seen as salvation.
- MoD denies report that frigate Jupiter has been hit by shell fire.
- Foreign Secretary thanks the Soviet Minister for Russian cooperation.
- Times says 600 are still trapped in Yemen.

LESOTHO

- Chief Jonathan toppled by bloodless military coup. Boers blamed for it (Guardian).

UGANDA - faces open civil war.

ANTARCTIC

- Private expedition to South Pole will pay \$30,000 US rescue bill.

BERNARD INGHAM

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

DOE: Mr Baker, Mr Waldegrave and Mrs Rumbold dine with Association of County Councils

DTI: Mr Brittan attends National Farmers Association lunch, London

WO: Mr Edwards attends London Welsh Society reception, London

MAFF: Mr Gummer addresses Lincoln & District Agricultural Society

DES: Mr Dunn visits Wirral Youth Service

DOE: Mr Patten visits Stoke-on-Trent

FCO: Lady Young addresses UN Development Fund for Women

DHSS: Mr Hayhoe speaks at Imperial College

DHSS: Mr Newton opens new home for the elderly, Harrow

DHSS: Mr Whitney visits Wandsworth Social Services Department

ODA: Mr Raison addresses Save the Children Seminar on 'Prospects for Africa', London

SO: Lord Gray meets Moray District Council

DTI: Mr Morrison visits Barrow shipyards; addresses International Gardening Centre Conference, Blackpool

DTI: Mr Pattie visits Marconi Space Systems, Havant

DTI: Mr Howard addresses Consumer Goods Study Group, London

DTP: Mr Mitchell attends Transport Act regional seminar, Southampton

WO: Mr Robinson visits Mid Glamorgan District Health Authority

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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

MOD: Lord Trefgarne visits exercise 'Viking Shield'; Norway

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TV AND RADIO

"File on 4"; BBC Radio 4 (19.20): Considers the implications of the Westland decision in the context of the European defence industry (Michael Heseltine asked to appear)

"Medicine Now"; BBC Radio 4 (20.00)

"Viewpoint 86: Zero Options"; ITV (22.30): First of two programmes on schizophrenia from which 300,000 people in Britain suffer

"Nothing but the best"; BBC 1 (22.45): "The Good, the Bad and the Irrelevant". Beverley Anderson looks at schemes to make schools more 'relevant' in third of eight programmes

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