

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

HM The Queen opens new head office of Standard Chartered Group, Bishopsgate

Prime Minister attends memorial service for Mr Olof Palme

EC Energy Council, Brussels

US Congress votes on aid to Nicaragua

Foreign Secretary visits Greece and Yugoslavia (to March 25)

Scottish Prison Officers' Association annual conference, Perth (to March 21)

Judicial Review of barristers' fees

STATISTICS

BOE: London sterling certificates of deposit (Feb)

BOE: UK bank assets and liabilities and the money stock (mid-February)

CBI: CBI/FT survey of distributive trades (end-Feb)

DTI: Capital expenditure by the manufacturing and service industries (4th qtr-rev)

DTI: Manufacturers' and distributors' stock (4th qtr-rev)

PUBLICATIONS

HOC: 18th Report Committee of Public Accounts - supplies for the armed forces (HC 142) (Noon)

PCA: Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration - annual report for 1985 (Noon)

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Home Office; Northern Ireland; Prime Minister

Business: Budget Debate (3rd Day)
Adjournment Debate
The proposed closure of the Keynsham Hospital maternity unit (Mr J Aspinwall)

PARLIAMENT (Cont'd)Select Committees: AGRICULTURE

Subject: The effect of pesticides on human health
 Witness: British Agrochemicals Association; ICI plc

Lords

Peterhead Harbours (South Bay Development) Order
 Confirmation Bill: Consideration on Report
 Appropriation (Northern Ireland) Order 1986: Motion for
 Approval
 Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms Bill (HL) Committee
 Industrial Training Bill: Second Reading
 Museums and Galleries (Prohibition of Admission Charges)
 Bill (HL) Committee
 UQ on whether HMG will, as a matter of urgency, establish a
 fair and coherent competition policy to operate in the
 interests of the British economy and of British industries
 at home and abroad

MINISTERS - See Annex

PRESS DIGEST

The Royal Engagement takes page after page in the paps and puts
 the Budget follow-up and interest rates deep inside.

BUDGET/ECONOMY/PETROL

- 1% cut in interest and mortgage rates. Chancellor holds out prospect of more cuts; says employers should use cut as reason to go for lower pay awards.
- Only cloud is the oil companies refusal to cut petrol prices and instead pass on tax; Anthon Beaumont-Dark wants excess profits tax.
- Average earnings up nearly 3% ahead of inflation (8.2-5.5%).
- Hattersley says Labour will create 750,000 jobs over three years by careful spending.
- D/Star hopes industry will take up the challenge of cheaper loans and spark off a long needed investment boom to shrink the dole queues. Oil companies know that the slump in world oil prices has done their profits no harm at all and they should think again.
- Sun: Nigel's delight over 1% cut in loan rates and "slams silly oil companies" claims.

BUDGET/ECONOMY/PETROL (CONT'D)

- Lord Young created 2000 new jobs yesterday staffing Jobcentres to give interviews to long term unemployed. Leader says there is no excuse for oil companies to pass on any of 7.5p tax: they are awash with profits. They could absorb the rise in tax and still be better off.
- Mirror: Oil companies snub Chancellor and say they refuse to say how much profit they were making on 180p gallon.
- Today says companies admitted fierce competition could set their prices tumbling again.
- Express: "Greedy oil moguls in the dock". Motorway organisations as well as Chancellor attack them; leader says the oil companies, by spurning Chancellor's appeal, have wantonly cast away goodwill. They should reverse their bad decision before the weekend.
- In another leader, Express, says the country takes another step towards economic growth with the fall in lending rates. With lower mortgage rates the economic barometer is moving to set fair - thanks to a sensible Government which lets free people in a free market determine what should happen.
- Express industrial reporter says unemployment is set to fall by up to 200,000 under the Government's further measures which will have the effect of frightening away dole cheats.
- Mail leader on "Price tyranny at the pumps" says the price of petrol has been notoriously slow to follow the world price of oil which has been falling like a stone. Chancellor on this occasion speaks as the tribune of the plebs. The would-be dictators are the over-mighty oil companies who treat their customers as dupes to be offered competition prizes - anything but cheap petrol at market price.
- In another leader in Mail, heralding the fall in interest rates, says businessmen will be able to raise more cash to expand and engage more staff. Verily, budgetary virtue already has its reward.
- Telegraph: Oil companies run into a barrage of criticism. Leader, sharing Chancellor's wider share ownership aims, is less happy about the means he has chosen by introducing tax privileges. These are no substitute for a tax structure in which privileges are kept to a minimum.
- Guardian says Bob Reid, of Shell, said he was not in the least embarrassed. Chancellor indicates arguments against joining EMS have weakened.
- FT: City warms to Budget. Speculation that oil prices may be stabilising CBI sees more investment, prosperity and jobs.
- Sam Brittan says: "After a further 24 hours of reflection, one is struck by the political ingenuity of the Budget... its intellectual boldness in one respect, but also its Toryism.
- Nigel Lawson is considering using the NEDC as a forum for consultation about increased profit sharing in a more flexible system of employee remuneration.

GCHQ

- Plans to use lie detectors on staff have been scrapped.
- Telegraph leader unsympathetic to the Government's position and says an excellent agreement proposed at the outset by the unions which would have written non-disruption clauses into individual contracts was forfeited in favour of 2 years agonising.
- Guardian says GCHQ 'misery' is ended to relief of Tory MPs.
- Times leader says the Government has made a mess of it and virtually anything the Foreign Secretary can now do to cleanse it, however inconsistent, is welcome.

INDUSTRY

- Japanese new car sales in Western Europe last year increased at more than twice the rate of the market overall to reach a record market share of 10.6 per cent.
 - BL to build Japanese cars in Birmingham - Honda Ballade; Peugeot to start production of left hand drive cars from Ryton in September.
 - Unity Trust, the trade union bank, says 10% of Land Rover would be acquired by an employee trust.
 - Mail says the Cabinet is preparing for a showdown on Land Rover, the idea is that 51% of the company would be offered to British interests and the remaining 49% to GM.
 - FT: The Government still hopes that a deal can be reached with GM over the purchase of BL Trucks and of a sizeable stake in Land Rover, despite increasingly tense negotiations. Both sides appear to have moved back from the brink of a breakdown in talks.
 - Guardian says the Cabinet is looking for a face-saver for BL allowing some element of British ownership for Land-Rover; Norman Tebbit insisting on some British stake.
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- Rank drops bid for Granada.
 - Government no intention of allowing a management buyout of B/Airways, according to Michael Spicer; public should have stake.
 - FT: Alan Bristow told the Commons Trade and Industry Committee yesterday that the Government had spurned his request for financial assistance when he made his original rescue plan for Westland.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- Lambeth sets a legal rate.
- West Yorkshire MCC gives Bradford City £1.4m to help rebuild its ground (Mail).
- Oxford re-sets its rate increase at 28.1%.

PLANNING

- Today leader says the Green Belt policy is being challenged. It must not be unbuckled.

EDUCATION

- Guardian leader says it is hard to see how any Government committed to a well run State education system has much alternative but to postpone its GCSE plans.

LAW AND ORDER

- Man tortured in a police cell until he confessed to muggings and burglaries he did not commit awarded £3,500 damages against the Met.
- Home Secretary claims Labour Party is trying to shackle the police by putting them under control of councils, many of them Left wing.
- Telegraph says Home Secretary has climbed down on arrangements for handling MPs' immigration cases, going back essentially to previous position.
- Lord Chief Justice to hear barristers' case against Lord Chancellor today over fees.
- Supply estimates show 13.6% record rise in intelligence and security service budgets, according to Times.

NORTHERN IRELAND

- Sun says "ghouls" gathered to jeer at rescuers scrambling through rubble to find body of soldier killed on patrol by blast. Five men being questioned over killing.
- Government sets rates for 18 rebel councils.

AID

- Paul Foot, in Mirror, claims Britain, unlike Belgium, France, Holland, Sweden, Denmark and EC, has contributed nothing to UN African famine aid organisation IFAD.

PEOPLE

- Ian Botham says allegations of drug taking during his walk across Britain a "smear campaign"; Devon police investigating.
- Sun leader on Michael Heseltine with heading "Do you know this man?" beside a picture of him. Text contrasts his 15 TV appearances when he resigned with the intention of bringing down the Government - and then nothing.
- Sir Anthony Kershaw MP to retire at next election.

EGYPT

- New Middle East crisis when Cairo gang kill Israeli woman, and wound three other Israelis at trade fair shooting.

FRANCE

- Chirac in serious difficulties in trying to form a Cabinet.

RUSSIA

- Zamyatin to be new Russian Ambassador to UK.

EC

- Head of Labour Group of MEPs to embarrass Kinnock, Telegraph says, with a draft document calling for Britain's direct withdrawal.
- FT: The European Commission has finalised plans to open up the TV market in the EEC by breaking down barriers to cross-frontier broadcasting. Fierce opposition is expected from some countries.

PANAMA

- Expected to give Marcos asylum.

NATO

- Britain's plans to modernise its nuclear deterrent with Trident will be discussed for the first time in nearly six years by NATO ministers meeting in West Germany today and tomorrow.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

MAFF: Mr Jopling addresses Economic Forestry Groups lunch, London (Lord Belstead attends)

DES: Sir Keith Joseph meets Mexican Under-Minister, Dr Manuel Ortega

DTP: Mr Ridley attends CIPFA annual dinner, London

HMT: Mr Lawson appears on Jimmy Young show

DES: Mr Patten visits Council for Educational Technology, London

DEN: Mr Hunt visits Bilsthorpe pit, Nottingham

DOE: Mr Patten gives interview to International Building Press

DOE: Sir George Young visits Waveney District Council, Suffolk

DOE: Mr Tracey addresses RICS lunch, London

FCO: Mr Eggar addresses Oxford University Foreign Services programme

DHSS: Mr Whitney attends conference on drug misuse, Lancaster House

DHSS: Lady Trumpington visits Canning Town Social Security Local Office, London

HO: Lord Glenarthur gives address to Cropwood Conference, Cambridgeshire

OAL: Mr Luce begins visit to North West (to March 22)

SO: Mr Ancram and Mr MacKay meet Economic Forestry Group, London

DTI: Mr Clark lunches with Financial Times (Peter Riddell), London

DTI: Mr Pattie hosts BVCA/EUREKA Seminar; visits Business Design Centre, London; attends Telecommunications Engineering & Manufacturing Association annual dinner

DTP: Mr Bottomley visits Cumbria County Council to discuss road schemes (all day)

WO: Mr Robinson speaks at Rates Green Paper seminar, Powys County Council

MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

FCO: Sir Geoffrey Howe departs for Greece (to March 23) then Yugoslavia (to March 25)

WO: Mr Edwards returns from Inward Investment Mission to Far East

DEN: Mr Buchanan-Smith attends EC Energy Council, Brussels

TV AND RADIO

"The Natural History Programme"; BBC Radio 4 (09.05): Asks if the abolition of the British tortoise trade is responsible for the recent spate of tortoise rustling

"Medicine Now"; BBC Radio 4 (10.00): Repeat of Tuesday's programme

"Analysis"; BBC Radio 4 (11.00): Repeat of Wednesday's programme

"Women's Hour"; BBC Radio 4 (14.00): Includes report on Home Office funded scheme whereby volunteers mediate between criminals and their victims

"Union World"; Channel 4 (18.30): Programme for and about trade unionists

"What on Earth is the Church For?"; BBC Radio 4 (19.40): Report on church study groups' Lent examination of the purpose of the Christian Church

"Brass Tacks"; BBC 1 (21.30): 'Health and Efficiency' - Report on a Selfridges manager turned hospital administrator in Oxford

"The Budget"; BBC 1 (21.30); ITV (22.30); BBC 2 (22.35); BBC Radio 4 (22.40): Statement by the Rt Hon Roy Jenkins

"TV Eye"; ITV (21.30): Looks at the future of Sellafield

"Question Time"; BBC 1 (22.10): With the Rt Hon John MacGregor, Baroness Sear and Rosalind Gilmore
