

PRIME MINISTER

PRESS DIGEST

PRISONS DISPUTE

- Sun: Troops put on stand-by. Prisoners claim wardens urged them to riot. Leader says Hurd must get tough.
- Star: Leader says the prison officers have shown they know a lot more about running the prisons than the Home Office. Why were there no contingency plans to stop the riots starting?
- Mirror: The POA and Home Office officials will have talks today. Leader says if the riots lead to the Government at last taking a proper look at what is happening in our jails, some good will have come of them. Prisons have been starved of cash and sensible policies for years.
- Express: Drug taking is partly to blame for the rampage. It has been a problem in prison for years. Leader says POA was totally irresponsible. Mr Hurd is right to insist that there can be no talks until the threat of further action is lifted.
- Mail: 'Hurd will use troops if jail talks fail'. Special army camps have been prepared. Leader says the prison officers made a serious miscalculation, but their conciliatory gesture deserves a corresponding one from the Home Secretary.
- Today: Mr Hurd is right to stand his ground. POA restrictive practices have gone on too long.
- Telegraph: The prisons problem, coming on top of the Shops Bill debacle, has severely dented Mr Hurd's prospects.
- Guardian: 'Violence forces talks on prisons. Leader says: "Mr Hurd has the means, the motive and the opportunity (to put things right). Now let's see if he has the guts.'
- FT: Leader says Mr Hurd needs a finely judged balance of tough talk and conciliatory gestures.

CHERNOBYL

- Sun: Medical checks at Moscow showed British students were contaminated by radiation. Russians say they are in no danger.
- Churkin, Second Secretary at Soviet Embassy in Washington, told Congress that Chernobyl is still threatening people inside and outside Soviet Union. The delay in telling the world was because the Russians were not sure what was happening.
- Express: Government health chiefs gave an assurance last night that Britain is in no danger. But urgent discussions are being held about steps needed to vet imported food.
- Mail: The radioactive cloud could reach Britain's east coast tonight, says the Met Office.



CHERNOBYL (CONT'D)

- Telegraph: The Russians have cancelled their earlier requests to Sweden and West Germany for assistance, suggesting there may be political infighting over how to handle the disaster.
- America insists it has much more information than the Russians realise and casualties are far higher than Moscow says.
- Times: TASS now says 18 Soviet citizens are in a serious condition.
- Kenneth Baker calls for an international investigation.
- Pregnant wives and young children are to be evacuated from the British Embassy in Warsaw. British firms have been advised to do likewise.
- Western TV satellite links with Russia have been cut until Monday - "for technical reasons".
- Radiation levels are now falling throughout Europe.
- Western experts say an area of Russia equivalent in size to Britain may have been blighted for 10 years.
- Washington says it was wrong about a second reactor having melted down.
- FT: The Soviet Union has shut down all 20 of its Chernobyl-type reactors

TIN

- FT: The appeal for aid from the Geevor mine has been rejected by DTI, according to Geevor's chairman.

BL

- FT: Lonrho is seeking £250,000 compensation from the Government for costs incurred in making its bid for Land-Rover.

BY-ELECTIONS

- Telegraph: Steel says the Alliance is breathing down the necks of the Tories in West Derbyshire. Conservatives admit the battle is a tough one.
- Times: Liberals are concentrating a good deal of effort on the nuclear issue.

NORTHERN IRELAND

- Telegraph: A strong hint that the Northern Ireland Assembly may not be allowed to run much longer was given by Mr King yesterday.
- FT: Sir Charles Carter, Chairman of the Northern Ireland Economic Council warns that Ulster's economic decline will worsen violence. He wants increased spending in the province.



TOKYO

- Times: You will discuss Gorbachev's message with President Reagan. The letter is regarded as constructive, particularly as it covers a visit to Britain later this year by Shevardnadze. You may send a reply with Lord Whitelaw when he visits Moscow on May 23.
- Leader says in public the summiteers cannot be expected to produce more than the latest brand of platitudes but hopefully in private they will settle European/American differences.

ROYALTY

- Sun: Duchess of Windsor has left most of her £5m fortune to an AIDS clinic.
- Duke of Gloucester says the Government is reluctant to campaign against tobacco because of the billions of pounds it is saving by not having to pay pensions to smokers killed by the habit.

TERRORISM

- Star: You and President Reagan plan to set up an agency, spearheaded by MI6 and the CIA, to fight terrorism.
- Mirror: A big build up of missile defences on Gibraltar is almost complete, ready for an expected attack by Libya.

ROAD TAX

- Express: Dodgers are getting away with £100m a year. A new blitz is planned.

LOCAL ELECTIONS

- Mirror: Labour is heading for a triumph in next Thursday's local elections in London. Poll gives Labour 45%, Tories 35% and Alliance 19%

ETHICS

- Express: Supportive feature by Peter Hitchens explains why you will survive the British public's "seven-year itch". You may not be popular, but people in their hearts know you offer the best hope for the future.
- Telegraph: 'Labour pledge to end private education' - by withdrawing all subsidies and concessions.

EDUCATION

- Times: Talent is draining away from the universities. 1,404 academic staff left in 1985/86 and low pay means replacements more hard to find.

ECONOMY

- Times: Differences of opinion between the Bank of England and the Treasury on base rate are likely to come to a head next week when April's money supply figures are published. A sharp rise in M3 is expected. The Bank is much more cautious than the Treasury about further base rate cuts.