

PRIME MINISTERPRESS DIGESTSDP

- In allkinds of trouble - and Alan Lee Williams pulls out as prospective candidate because he says he has lost the support of Liberals over Trident.
- Steel says there is still a long way to go to get unity on defence.
- SDP backs nuclear power, subject to review; Liberals thought likely to want to phase it out.
- Star says party's anti poverty plan is in tatters; proposed reform of tax and benefits system dismissed as a vote loser.
- Sun: Squabble peril to Alliance - Steel pleads for Alliance supporters to stop squabbling and SDP 'stumbles into a fresh tax row as Owen and other leaders fumbled desperately to shake off a pledge to soak average wage earners harder;' leader asks what is the Alliance policy on nuclear weapons? The reason the SDP are going through these contortions is that they are desperate to preserve the Liberal connection but they don't need Liberals who are electoral poison. On their own they could become a formidable force in politics.
- Today P1: "Rough ride for 'Superbrat' Owen" - he suffered a series of embarrassing setbacks starting with a jibe from David Steel that he was a superbrat.
- Express P1 - "Roy ducks clash with Owen" - apparently he had planned an attack on his leadership as too hard, right wing and autocratic. Favour much closer links with Liberals. Another story headed "Steel plea for a nuclear deal as rift widens"; leader headed "Dr Owen is a suitable case for treatment" says that in the run up to the next election the SDP hardly looks like a party to seriously challenge you. Owen's leadership is worthy of a bigger party and the strain of leading the SDP is beginning to tell. He looks faded, his voice sounds tired and the spring has gone from his step. Suddenly it all seems to be going wrong.
- Mail starts its coverage with piece headed "The troubled partnership" over other stories headed "We are far from an agreement (on defence), warn Liberals" and "Rethink on (tax) plan to squeeze rich".
- Telegraph P1: Unity call isolates Owen, as Steel and Jenkins make clear their enthusiasm for a merger with Liberals; leader says the SDP's proposals to integrate tax with national insurance have much to commend them but the sting is that some economically important taxpayers will suffer disincentives. Its ideas are worthy of serious consideration. But the (socialist) philosophy behind them is suspect.
- Guardian: "Jenkins lectures SDP on smugness" and Owen launches a rescue operation to restore credibility to the SDP programme to redistribute £7bn in its attack on poverty, costing £600m to remove anomalies; leader says electoral reform is no longer absolute primacy of policy though there is no doubt an Alliance Government would bring in PR.
- Hugo Young notes that the seats the Alliance is best placed to win are Conservative and it is such seats that the losers under the proposed SDP tax deal are most likely to be found.
- Times P1: Higher taxes backed by SDP - embarking on a high risk strategy which could bring ructions with Liberals. Times says that Steel is in stronger position with his party than Owen who is under stress.

BRISTOL

- Front page coverage in Star, Sun and Express and elsewhere on other pages to remarks by Rastafarian Community leader who says he is glad a police chief had suffered a heart attack, adding "I hope the bastard dies".
- and
- Remarks condemned by Jonathan Sayeed MP/ Labour leader of Avon Council.
- Star asks what chance is there for any sort of decent race relations in Britain when blindfolded bigots like that man are allowed to continue in business. He is not fit to lead a community of rats.
- Sun, noting the man says he would like to settle in Africa, offers to buy him a £667 one way economy class ticket to Harare, subject to a promise never to come back.
- Today says the man is not fit to be a leader of his community and the majority who do not agree with him should tell him so, and sack him.

DRUGS

- D/Star says you have given the go ahead for massive spending to cut off drug supply lines from abroad; leader says it is all very well the Reagans appearing in a new piece of White House soap to condemn the evils of drug abuse. But so far all the evidence in the USA is of words and precious little action. But you are prepared to spend a great deal of time and money waging a proper war against the drugs menace.
- Sun says police have cleared 40 drug gangs from London. But Mail quotes Assistant Commissioner leading drug fight in London, as saying they have so far failed to make a dent in the drugs trade.
- Another Sun story "UK cash will fight jungle drug misery" - reference to David Mellor's offer to Peru and Bolivia of cash to fight drug suppliers.
- Mail leader praises the Reagan's initiative - no one could have done it better and you have a duty to lead from the front as you did in the Falklands. You must trust your own emotions and sympathies to find words to mobilise the nation. America's president has woken up to find that drugs cannot be delegated; so should you.

DRUGS (Cont'd)

- Telegraph says David Mellor has thrown the Treasury into a quandary by overspending on his film budget for the South American trip.

LAW AND ORDER

- Juries to be retained for fraud trials.
- Mail says violent gangs are turning London housing estates into no go areas for postmen and deliverymen.
- Mail reports a systematic swindle on High Street banks by young Nigerians.
- TV South documentary will claim tonight that the SAS maintained a special unit after the war to bring to trial Nazis who murdered SAS men in the war.
- Home Secretary says 5000 jobs have been created by crime prevention schemes in first year of community programme.

ECONOMY

- Shares bounce back, FT index up 17.9.
- Express says you are facing an upset on pay today when local authorities offer at least 6%.
- Britain is the 12th best country to live in - Denmark first - according to University of Pennsylvania review of 124 nations.

Governor of Bank of England urges caution with mortgage lenders in response to rising arrears.

INDUSTRY

- Austin Rover offers £9 a week quality bonuses in response to union demand for £10 a week in spite of half yearly loss of £60m. Sun says unions fear new job losses.
- Nicholas Ridley proposes a streamlining of planning system to accelerate necessary building and land development. Times presents it as "Ridley set to curb rights of objections at inquiries".

MEDIA

- Julian Critchley wants MoD to publish official records of Etaples mutiny in 1917 so that truth behind controversial BBC serial "The Monocled Mutineer" can be known. Guardian leader says whatever faults or mistakes lie in the BBC over the series the punishment does not deserve Lord King as chairman.
- Times says Lord King takes himself out of the running and thinks Lord Barnett should be chairman. BBC thinks it will be a retired Civil Servant.

MEDIA (Cont'd)

- FT leader says that in the last resort the chairman must be responsible for all facets of the corporation's activity and that includes its editorial reputation; and that means responsibility for its impartiality, integrity and independence from political interference.
- Military historian, a new critic of series "The Monocled Mutineer", claims there were more than a dozen historical errors in the last episode alone.

EDUCATION

- Kenneth Baker has demanded immediate withdrawal of ILEA book on homosexual behaviour. Mail says "if LEAs won't withdraw irresponsible sex propaganda should parents not have the right to withdraw their children from sex education classes? Answer please, Mr Baker".

POLITICS

- Peter Rees not standing in Dover again - 34th Tory into retirement, according to Guardian.
- John Ryman won't be fighting Blyth for Labour.
- Mail feature on the problems Hard Left authorities are having in filling posts, even those paying £38,000.
- Mail only one of pops to cover Conservative Blue Rosette Club launch.
- Times says the Labour Party has told all its local authority groups to prepare for a huge expansion of local authority spending and manpower from day 1 of any Labour Government.

SOUTH AFRICA

- 14 dead in fighting between Zulus and radical blacks in Soweto.
- Man of Indian origin appointed first non-white Ambassador - to IC.
- EC trying to sort out whether or not to drop coal from its measures against South Africa; coal ban blocked by Bonn (Guardian).
- Botha calls economic conference for November 7.

PARIS

- Special meeting of EC Interior Ministers next week, at French request, as fourth bomb within a week blows up City police driving licence office, killing one, injuring 51.

ANGLO-GERMAN SUMMIT

- Guardian says security will be high on your agenda today - as well as South African sanctions.

BERNAPD INGHAM