

12 December 1986

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

HM The Queen visits South Yorkshire

Prime Minister visits North West

Final establishment of Irish International Fund (1st meeting on Sunday 14 December)

STATISTICS

Usable steel production (Nov)

Retail prices index (Nov)

Tax and price index (Nov)

Construction - output (3rd Qtr)

Building societies monthly figures (Nov)

Department for National Saving monthly progress report (Nov)

PUBLICATIONS

Joint report of the chairmen of the Advisory Council for Applied Research and Development (ACARD) and the Advisory Board for the Research Councils (ABRC).

British Business - articles on computer security, waste disposal

Economic indicators of industrial countries

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Adjournment debate:

The proposed closure of Queen Mary's Hospital for Children

MINISTERS - See Annex

2.
PRESS DIGEST

DEFENCE

- Chief of Defence Staff accused of getting embroiled in party politics by criticising Labour's non-nuclear policy. Alleged by Labour MPs to say it is "wimpish" to go for a policy of Euro-wide non-nuclear deterrents.
- Sun: Kinnock "the wimp" lashed by war chief.
- Joe Haines, Mirror, says Kinnock is getting himself into an impossible position. Unless he abandons his defence policy the voters are likely to abandon him. Yet he can't do it. Consequently, Haines advocates a referendum on nuclear issues after general election.
- Today says Kinnock was accused last night of ducking a Commons clash with you over defence through the Education Bill filibuster. Express: Kinnock saved by Commons marathon.
- Telegraph says Kinnock last night abolished hopes of Left that his non-nuclear defence policy would produce savings to boost social spending by saying the lot would go on conventional defence.
- Ferdy Mount, in Telegraph, says Labour now asks us to accept that unilateral disarmament is not a moral decision at all but a hard headed practical imperative. But is Kinnock sensible to throw away the moral argument?
- Guardian says Kinnock yesterday broadened his unilateralist proposals to include the withdrawal of British nuclear weapons in West Germany.
- Times: Geoffrey Smith wonders whether, now that the process of fudging policies has begun, the party's uneasy truce will come to an end.
- David Watt, in Times, says Labour's attempt to remodel its defence policy is a hopeless operation. The same old central defect remains, either under Labour Britain would continue to depend ultimately on American nuclear weapons (in which cast it is crazy to kick the Americans out) or it will not so depend (in which case Labour is not offering a credible alternative defence). There are only two ways to escape: to adopt the "free rider" position (so disreputable that "not even" Kinnock dares to spell it out) or to pretend nuclear weapons are no longer relevant.
- FT: NATO agrees in principle to open talks with Warsaw Pact on reducing conventional forces.
- Malcolm Rutherford, in FT, asks why is the British Labour Party so jinxed? The Tories will be absolutely ruthless on this issue in the election and Kinnock will probably have no choice but to go on trimming but then his troubles with the Labour Party will begin. It seems a pity when he had so much else going for him.

POLITICS

- Roy Hattersley cancels speaking engagement with Leeds CBI because he says CBI are too pro-Thatcherite.
- Sun prints Neville Sandelson's advice to SDPers to vote Conservative. Guardian claims Labour will go into the election with a solid 37% and consequently agrees with Mr Brittan that the Conservatives need to give more attention to the Alliance threat.
- Today has a large feature on how Kinnock leads the way - backwards - on union law.
- Mail feature on the "Ryman timebomb" ticking away under Labour with his threat to force a by-election over the Militant issue in Blyth.
- Mail feature on Edwina Currie, "the best actress playing at Westminster's Palace of Varieties today."

NIMROD/AWACS

- Kinnock backs NIMFOD and calls for early debate.
- Times says the political row over the choice is intensifying with allegations by NIMROD supporters that the PAF has been leaking to undermine the system.
- Cecil Parkinson, in Times, says NIMROD does work and George Younger has acknowledged this, and it has an indisputable advantage in cost and delivery.
- FT leader says this is shaping up as one of the most politically charged defence procurement decisions. But it should not be so. It has not helped that Labour has come out in favour of NIMFOD. If central issues of cost and technical performance point decisively in favour of US option, Ministers should not be afraid to choose it.

INDUSTRY

- Government officials from 10 countries today end their informal meeting on international financial abuses including insider trading.
- B/Telecom's half yearly profit £1,000m but is seeking job cuts of 24,000 over 4 years.
- 12p a gallon increase in price of petrol forecast for New Year.
- UDM offered 6.6% pay rise.
- Westland turns itself round with £26.4m pre-tax profit but future of thousands of jobs, says Guardian, turns on MoD review of requirements.
- Ombudsman advises banks, in response to complaints from parents, not to issue cash cards to children.
- Law Society agrees to allow solicitors to advertise on TV.

SELLAFIELD

- HSE gives DNFL 12 months to put things to rights.
- Telegraph leader hopes the report renders more distant any prospect of our having to compete with industrial powers with coal as the only main source of power.

ECONOMY

- Bank of England forecasting \$5 a barrel rise in oil price - and says economic outlook is bright, predicts steady growth.

EC

- Mirror continues its campaign against food mountains, saying Russia is making huge profits out of them; leader says you have failed to honour the most basic of your promises - to be a good housekeeper.
- Express also takes up the "growing scandal" of Euro food stocks.
- Euro Parliament votes for an illegal budget.

YOUR SPEECH

- No coverage in Star, Mirror
- Sun: Maggie hits out in two-nations row. Nothing like the N/S divide that some people think.
- Today says you mysteriously censored the speech.
- Mail says you had to endure a stinging attack on your N/S policies by your host.
- Telegraph: You warn against protectionism.
- Guardian: You change your mind about offering the electorate a Tory dream that one day the average British family could be worth £100,000.
- Independent: Thatcher drops 'vision'.
- Times: Thatcher warning on US trade war.
- FT: Thatcher praises enterprise culture.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- Sun leader says rent arrears, totalling £210m, represent one of the biggest electoral bribes in history.
- Old GLC poster, showing three whites ignoring a blackman trapped in a blazing flat, has to be withdrawn by popular protest in Brent; put up by Left wingers.
- Mail leader on Left wing extravagance in Stirling says council leaders are proposing to buy a limousine on the rates so their wives can go shopping, to free their husbands to get on with council work.

EDUCATION

- Parents of children at Somerset school said to be furious with teachers because they can't be bothered to organise a nativity play.
- Express says Government is considering setting up a network of super schools for the brightest children - as an extension of 20 private city Techs.
- Brent headmaster for 14 years to quit because he says he can no longer work with the political interference and constraints imposed upon him.

AIDS

- Chief Constable Anderton, Manchester, blames "degenerate conduct" for the spread of AIDS. Sun offers three cheers for him. For the first time a major public figure says what the ordinary person is thinking. Express says the majority will applaud his words of wisdom.
- Boxing authorities to screen boxers coming to Britain to fight.

HEALTH/WELFARE

- Esther Rantzen calls for £2m to support TV's Childline service; otherwise it will have to close in February.

MI5

- Hugh Trevor Roper, in Independent, says you are clearly determined to end the laxity of the permissive years! But there is a price to be paid and it is time steps were taken to neutralise the paranoia. To do that to protect the present (and the future) it should yield up the records of the past.

LAW AND ORDER

- New Government guidelines to police forces on handling racial attacks.
- Immigration down 12% to October.
- Today backs Lord McLuskey's idea of a one-off amnesty for those awaiting trial on minor offences to help clear backlog of trials.

MEDIA

- First satellite TV network given the go-ahead, and hopes to transmit by 1990; includes Branson, ITN, Granada and Anglia.
- Times says that many MPs are querying Sir Robert Armstrong's action in stopping publication next month of Chamberlain's private diary relating to Abdication - reversal of earlier decision

SOUTH AFRICA

- Announces tougher curbs on the media. Generally condemned by British press.

PERU

- Refuses to accept Briton, wanted in connection with £26m Brinks Mat robbery, after intervention by British diplomats.

GERMANY

- Senior West German defence official accused of spying.

BERNARD INGHAM

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DES: Mr Baker visits Royal School for the Blind, Leatherhead
- MAFF: Mr Jopling visits Fish Docks, Grimsby, then opens Associated Cold Stores new store, later meets council and fishing industry representatives, Hull
- SO: Mr Rifkind address "Inventors in Industry" Conference, Dragonara Hotel, Edinburgh; later, accompanied by Mr Ancram, attends meeting with Conference of Scottish Local Authorities, Edinburgh
- DEN: Mr Buchanan-Smith attends memorial service for helicopter crash victims, Aberdeen
- DES: Mrs Rumbold visits Nottingham
- DHSS: Mr Newton opens new geriatric unit at Queen Victoria Hospital, Morecambe; and later attends opening of Royal Infirmary Hospital, Manchester
- DHSS: Baroness Trumpington visits Churchill Rehabilitation and Assessment Centre, Maidstone and later Mountbatten Pavilion and Duchess of Kent Court, Maidstone
- DOE: Lord Skelmesdale visits Letchworth
- DTI: Mr Howard addresses the Kent University Industrial Society
- DTP: Mr Bottomley addresses the Institute of Highways and Transportation annual lunch
- MAFF: Lord Belstead visits British Friesian Cattle Society, Rickmansworth
- MOD: Mr Hamilton visits Crawley
- SO: Mr Mackay opens BP Fish Nutrition Factory, Inverness
- SO: Mr Lang opens 50th Jobclub, Stirling and seminar on Enhancement of Relationship between Industry and Education, Glasgow College of Technology
-

TV AND RADIO

- "Advice Line"; BBC 1 (09.45): Paul Clark and Eileen Evason answer questions on social security problems
- "Micro Live"; BBC 2 (19.30): Electronic mail system
- "A Week in Politics"; Channel 4 (20.15): With Nick Ross
- "Any Questions?"; Channel 4 (20.15): With Esther Rantzen, Cecil Parkinson MP, Ken Livingstone and Dr James McFarlane, Director General Engineering Employers' Federation
-