

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister launches "Missing Children Project" for National Children's Home: later, with HRH The Prince of Wales, hosts reception for Percent Club, 10 Downing Street

The Princess of Wales attends a carol service in the Royal Service Church of St Martin-in-the-Fields

Brent education committee consider behaviour of parents and governors in the McGoldrick case

Economic and Social Committee Plenary Session (to December 17)

EC: Foreign Affairs Council (to December 16)

EC: Transport Council (to December 16)

STATISTICS

Retail sales (Nov-prov)

Food facts (3rd qtr)

CBI monthly trends enquiry (Nov)

PAY

NHS maintenance workers; 24,400

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Energy; Transport; Wales

Business: Private Members' Motions. Debate on Christmas Adjournment. Consolidated Fund Bill Debate.

Adjournment Debate

The problems of low pay in West Yorkshire Mr. Wilson.

Select Committees: SOCIAL SERVICES

Subject: Primary Health Care

Witnesses: Maternity Alliance; Age Concern; Overseas Doctors Association

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Subject: Control and Management of the Development of Major Equipment

Witness: Mr Peter Levene, Ministry of Defence

Lords Minors' Contracts Bill (HL): Committee

Recognition of Trusts Bill (HL): Committee

Chevening Estate Bill (HL): Second Reading

Debate on the Peacock Report on Financing the BBC

2.
PRESS DIGEST

NIMROD/AWACS

- Jim Prior calls for independent inquiry into Government's alleged choice - claims MoD biased against NIMROD.
- 100 MPs of all parties back motion calling on Government to choose NIMROD.
- Michael Heseltine says he will back Government on whatever decision it takes.
- Star P8: Prior battles for "doomed Nimrod".
- Sun P2: Blame your own company, Prior. Ministers lash NIMROD failure. One unnamed Minister accuses GEC of breathtaking complacency and the performance of NIMROD disastrous; leader says buying British makes sense wherever possible but if the Government believe AWACS is preferable they should buy it. It wants the best for the nation's defences. It is quite outrageous to suggest you are playing lackey to the USA.
- Mirror P2: Storm as radar plane faces axe; bid to stop US order. £900m down the drain on NIMROD; leader says there could be only two excuses for buying American - that AWACS is far superior and there is no proof of that; and that the US is not hindering Britain and her allies from equipping NATO forces with uniform weapons; but it is. It would be wrong for you to buy American when there is a British system that will do the job.
- Today P9: Prior in last ditch battle for NIMROD; stall Boeing deal, he says; leader asks if NIMROD has had a fair deal? The obvious reaction to Mr Prior's complaint is to treat it as the whining of a loser but there are aspects of the Government's "decision" which need to be explained further. If however NIMROD is inferior it should not be adopted for purely patriotic reasons. Government has a duty to explain why it is not buying British.
- Express P1 lead: Maggie faces NIMROD storm - Prior on the attack as he pleads: Buy British; leader says this is one of the most difficult decisions for Cabinet and if NIMROD is as technically inferior as some critics say the decision would be easy. But AWACS technical edge no longer seems great enough to justify turning to Boeing. It does not seem unrealistic for the Government to grant GEC the few months more they ask for an independent assessment.
- Mail P9 - 100 "Buy British MPs back NIMROD spy plane". You are set for a confrontation; leader says if Ministers decide the American system is better the results to vindicate them will not show for some time but job losses will make them unpopular meantime. Let us hope that the Cabinet will arrive at a decision which will leave them patriots with good conscience.
- Telegraph P1 lead: Ministers face NIMROD revolt; last ditch move by Prior over AWACS. Weinstock likely to get the blame for serious blow to GEC's image. John Wilkinson puts the case for buying American; leader notes the low profiles of Heseltine and Owen and says if genuinely well informed politicians choose not to play the patriotic card the arguments in favour of a change of policy must be strong indeed; companies like GEC must learn to deliver on time; the Government should cancel NIMROD.

NIMROD/AWACS (Cont'd)

- Guardian P1: Prior fails to penetrate AWACS defence; Government shows no sign of being deflected. Mr Heseltine signals Tory rebels fighting a lost cause..
- Guardian leader says no one disputes GEC's record in providing the avionics has been lamentable but it is a serious charge that the MoD is turning the other way when Mr Prior says his company has come up with goods comparable or superior to AWACS. Mr Prior is surely right that an independent assessment is needed.
- Times P1 lead: 'Tories divided as NIMROD looks doomed'; Ministers are bracing themselves for a week of furious Parliamentary assault. The dispute could be the most politically damaging since Westland; many Tory MPs, while agreeing that the RAF must have the best system, are nervous of the Government choosing against a British company which has factories in 127 constituencies and opting for an American product likely to cost £500m more.
- Times leader says regrettable thought it might be, the Government should buy American and try to secure the most generous offset arrangements. There should be an inquiry into why it has taken so long to decide this.
- Independent P1 lead: Cabinet faces Tory revolt over NIMROD. Defence Ministers reject inquiry call - rearguard action for British system; leader says allegations of bias against the British system are bound to persist unless MoD produce a detailed technical justification for backing Boeing.
- FT P1 lead: George Younger seems assured of Cabinet backing for his proposal to buy Boeing; GEC goes on the attack. NIMROD widely thought to be technically inferior and only cheaper because of the inherent development risk.

INDUSTRY

- Bob Haslam starts pit by pit talks on an incentive scheme which has produced £350 a week for men in N. Derbyshire trials who doubled productivity.
- Today heralds the £20,000 miner.
- Today features Prince Charles' success in persuading Britain's biggest companies to donate half a percent of pre-tax profits to charity - preview of tonight's reception.
- Jaguar fills all its vacancies for 300 with help of D. Employment.
- Editor of Consumer Association's Good Pub Guide accuses publicans of charging sky high prices for mixer drinks and profiteering.
- Edward du Cann calls on Government to do more to save British merchant fleet from extinction.
- Chairman of Vauxhall asks union leaders to endorse no-strike agreement with big changes in working practices.
- Times says Ministers are planning a 25% increase in the Government scheme to persuade unemployed people to set up in business on their own.

INDUSTRY (Cont'd)

- Managers are being paid increases that are far beyond what the economy can bear, say Hay Management Consultants. The 8% rises compare with 4% in Japan, 3% in West Germany, 1% in Canada and zero in US.
- Times: Thirteen airports owned by local authorities are to be registered as companies in what the Government sees as the first step towards full-scale privatisation.
- Car sales in W Europe will reach record of 11.3 million vehicles. Japan third behind Volkswagen and Fiat with Japan's sales 11% up on 1985.
- Recording industry keen to seek to raise the 10% levy on blank tapes expected to take effect in 1988.
- FT: DAF Trucks to extend range to include vehicles supplied and fully built by Rover UK.

UNIONS

- Times: An ombudsman to protect the interest of trade union members is among measures the Government has looked at to curb unions which abuse their powers.
- The National Union of Seamen decided yesterday to expel 656 crew members of the QE2 who took part - against union instructions - in a ballot organised by Cunard.
- A former member of Sogat '82 has sold his house and moved his family to a secret south coast address because of threats from former colleagues.

LABOUR PARTY UNILATERALISM

- Sun leader on Mirror Group's idea of a referendum on defence policy after the election says that in other words the voters would be invited to support the party's policy on defence with the promise that they could vote against it once Kinnock was in No 10. Like Goebbels they must think the Brits are mugs.
- Jon Akass, in Express, says the smooth ad agency argument for Labour to ventilate its defence policy well in advance of an election has turned out to be catastrophic. Mr and Mrs Kinnock have performed us an important service by obliging us to ponder these issues and as a result will never reside in Downing Street.

POLITICS

- Joan Ruddock, CMD, selected as candidate for Deptford in succession to John Silkin.
- Patrick Minford, in Telegraph, on where Labour's economic policies will lead, says they will produce higher inflation and to sacrifice control of inflation for such an uncertain prospect of other benefits seems indefensible.
- Guardian says Government is under pressure from Institute of Directors for more legislation on postal ballots, closed shop and procedural agreements.

POLITICS (Cont'd)

- Independent: Ted Grant, founding father of Militant, says that the Trotskyist group will take over the Labour Party within 10 years.
- FT: More privatisation proposed by Tory manifesto planners. A lively debate is also under way on the way forward for the Health Service.

DEFENCE

- 150 arrests after weekend demo by women at Greenham Common.
- FT: MoD to sell 76-acre site in Carberley to Marks and Spencer and Tesco.

MI5

- Labour MPs will today demand the name of a Tory MP alleged to have taken part in an MI5 'plot' to get rid of Harold Wilson's Government.
- Former MI5 man, convicted of killing an antique dealer, claims he sent you details of a plot against Wilson 2 years ago but never received a reply.
- Times: Labour's Front Bench will not be making a big effort to pursue further allegations made at the weekend that MI5 plotted to oust Harold Wilson.

US/IRAN

- New claims that Iran profits used to finance Right wing political campaigns in USA.
- Brother of US Congressman held in Nicaragua on spying charges.
- Times: In his weekend radio broadcast, President Reagan ignored the scandal and gave an optimistic Christmas message.

ECONOMY

- British exports booming with help of lower pound - CBI says order books highest for 9 months.
- Guardian says the Treasury has scored an expensive own goal - a £500,000 study which has found no evidence for the Chancellor's view that large incentive effects, beneficial to the economy will flow from income tax cuts.
- Times: Smaller increases in tax allowances and bigger cuts in the basic rate are among the options being studied by the Government as part of its planned reform of personal taxation.
- FT: A dispute between Iran and Iraq over their oil production has slowed progress towards an overall quota cut.
- FT: Treasury's Economic Progress Report says inflation is key to rate of savings.

MEDIA

- Lord Thomson, IEA, says viewers will get cheap and nasty programmes if Government forces Channel 4 into a ratings war.
- Times: Ministers are sympathetically considering the BEC's request for a change in its licence, which prohibits the transmission of sponsored programmes.
- FT: Cable Authority and Cable Television Association have lodged formal complaints about BBC bias in the programme "The Television Explosion" about the deregulation of the television industry.

HOUSING

- Star writer calls on you to have a heart over cutback in mortgage relief to unemployed.
- FT: Sharp rise in private house building continues to fuel construction output growth.

EDUCATION

- Star leader says Kenneth Baker will command all-party support to stop the most blatant lunacies of some LEAs. In this time of high unemployment and grave social problems, life is difficult enough for any teenagers without power crazed zealots who think that Marxism is more important than maths.
- Sun feature on Kenneth Baker.
- Express reports a counter attack this week against Left wing councils promoting "positive images" of homosexuals in schools.
- Jon Akass, in Express, says Mr Baker has timed his imposed solution beautifully. We have all had enough.
- Paul Johnson, in Mail, says Kenneth Baker is bad news for Kinnock and good news for Britain's parents. He is doing what all sensible parents want and is on to a vote winner.
- Mail leads with the case of a Brent headmaster who is retiring early says the LEA is bedevilled by political and radical infighting and education is being destroyed by politics; leader describes it as more Brent folly and shameful.
- Times: The two biggest teaching unions will announce this week the results of ballots on the pay and conditions package proposed by local authority employees. However, both ballots will have been overtaken by events and may have to be held again.

AIDS

- Office of Health Economics forecasts that AIDS patients will cost £20-30m a year by 1988; says unused schools could be converted into AIDS hospices

AIDS (Cont'd)

- Left wing members of Manchester Police Authority want to vet Chief Constable's speeches after his outburst on AIDS, but support pours in for police chief.
- Iceland to give free condoms to teenagers.
- Norman Fowler admits Government may have under-estimated number of people affected by AIDS, according to Mail: could be nearer 100,000 than 30,000.
- FT: Telephone hotline set up by the BBC for people seeking advice about AIDS has dealt with more than 2,500 calls in its first three days.

HEALTH/WELFARE

- Claims that Harefield Hospital kept alive a baby born without a brain for five days so that the child could become a heart donor. Royal College of Physicians to investigate. Telegraph wonders if we are going too far too fast and welcomes public discussion.
- Times: Britons are eating more fish, vegetables and fruit and less butter, eggs, white bread and potatoes.
- Elderly and disabled people will be left in the community without any care and support unless there is a shake-up in government policy, says the Audit Commission.
- Independent: Police alerted in controversy over heart transport involving baby born without brain at Harefield Hospital.
- Independent: The Committee on Safety of Medicines is to ask herbal medicine manufacturers to justify their medical claims.

LAW AND ORDER

- Times: Myra Hindley will almost certainly visit Saddleworth Moor within the next few days to pinpoint the graves of two boys.
- New lay tribunals for prison discipline proposed by the Government will fail to command confidence and could cause more prison disruption, says the Law Society.
- Independent: Police Federation to meet Home Secretary on Wednesday to protest against plans to end compensation for policemen accidentally injured in pursuit of criminals.

SPORT

- Lots of coverage of opening of Bradford City's new stand.
- Nigel Mansell, BBC TV sports personality of the year.

PEOPLE

- Tommy Steele 50.
- Lord Home cutting number of jobs on his estate by half - deeply distressed.

NORTHERN IRELAND

- Alert against IRA offensive in run up to Christmas.
- Guardian leads with report that up to 8 members of RUC are expected to face criminal proceedings after Stalker inquiry.

EC

- Times: Michael Jopling has threatened to keep farm ministers in Brussels until they reach a decision on surpluses - even if it takes the best part of a week.
- FT: Agricultural Ministers consider once and for all disposal of EC butter mountain.
- FT leader says the opening up of Japan's home markets can best be achieved through determined multilateral negotiations and better coordinated macro-economic policies.
- Independent: The Government conceded that it does not expect to push through its proposals to liberalise European air fares. But Ministers confident of further competition after today's Council in Brussels.

FRANCE

- Farmers step up lamb war by ambushing British lorry drivers and setting fire to thousands of carcasses.

SWEDEN

- Kurds arrested in hunt for Olof Palme's killer.

PAKISTAN

- At least 54 killed and 300 injured in Karachi riots.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- Bokassa comes to trial today for mass murder and cannibalism.

LIBYA

- Independent: A French firm has won the contracts to make air worthy the two ex-B/Cal air buses purchased by Libyan Airlines. A UK firm has won a contract to paint the aircraft in Libyan livery.

MIDDLE EAST: FT Senior officials from Israel and Jordan have been holding a series of secret meetings with possible implications for the deadlocked Middle East peace process.

BERNARD INGHAM

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEM: Lord Young launches Enterprise Modules in YTS, Church House
- DES: Mr Baker visits Liverpool and Sefton
- DOE: Mr Ridley announces Chairman of Trafford Park UDC and lays order for designation
- HMT: Mr MacGregor speaks on Northern Corporate Communication PEP Scheme
- MAFF: Mr Jopling hosts Captains of Industry Party, Whitenall Place
- MOD: Mr Hurd visits RAF Lossiemouth/Buchan/Kinross
- DEM: Mr Lee and Mr Trippier attend Action for Jobs presentation, Burnley; and visit Remploy factory
- DEM: Mr Trippier makes presentation to YTS trainee, Bury
- DEM: Mr Trippier presents certificates at Beaumont School, St Albans
- DEN: Mr Hunt attends Government energy management meeting, London Electricity Board, London
- DES: Mrs Rumbold visits ILEA
- DOE: Dr Boyson speaks at Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, St Ermins Hotel, London
- DOE: Mr Tracey visits the North West and later addresses the Variety Club of Great Britain annual North-West Sportsman of the Year dinner, St Ermin's Hotel
- DTP: Mr Newton attends Conference on Financing of Community Care, Business School, Sussex Place
- MAFF: Mr Thompson visits HOECHST, Milton Keynes
- MOD: Lord Trefgarne visits HMS Warrior
- MOD: Mr Freeman visits Salisbury FIBOA
- SC: Mr Ancram meets Scottish Council of Development and Industry to discuss Rating Reform, Edinburgh

MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- DEN: Mr Buchanan-Smith addresses European Parliament Committee on Energy, Research and Development, Brussels
- DTP: Mr Moore and Mr Spicer attend meeting of European Transport Ministers, Brussels (to 16 December)
- FCO: Mr Renton departs for Tunisia (to 17 December)

TV AND RADIO

- "World In Action"; ITV (20.30): Terrorism in the Middle East
- "Open to Question"; BBC 2 (19.35): South Africa's Deputy Foreign Minister explains his government's policies and answers questions from young people
- "Panorama"; BBC 1 (21.30): Programme looks at twin towns Coventry and Kiel and how they have fared since World War II