

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

Prime Minister meets Mayor of Berlin, Herr Eberhard Diepgen

Mr Walker visits Russia (to 18 December)

Result of Merseyside Fire Brigade Union strike ballot

Chancellor of the Exchequer launches payroll giving scheme for tax relief on charity donations

Launch of the Home Office civil protection public information package

STATISTICS

Public sector borrowing requirement (Nov)

Index of output of the production industries (Oct)

PUBLICATIONS

Criminal Injuries Compensation Board report and accounts 1985 (22nd report)

OPCS: Adolescent drinking (Prov)

PAY

Scottish Further Education Teachers; 9,900

PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions Employment; Social Services; Prime Minister

Business: Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Bill: 2nd Reading and Money Resolution
Motion on the Draft Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act 1978 (Continuance) Order
Motion on the Supplementary Benefit Payments (Housing Requirements and Resources) Amendment Regulations
Opposition Prayer on the Supplementary Benefit (Claims and Payments) Amendment (no 2) Regulations
Debate on EC Documents relating to Fisheries Arrangements for 1987

PARLIAMENT (Cont'd)

Select Committees: PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER FOR ADMINISTRATION
 Subject: Reports of the Health Service Commissioner
 1985-86

Witnesses: Wirral Health Authority; Hounslow and
 Spelthorne Health Authority

PROCEDURE

Subject: Dates of Recesses

Witnesses: Rt Hon John Biffen MP, Lord Privy Seal and
 Leader of the House of Commons (at 6.00 pm); Rt Hon
 Peter Shore MP (at approx 6.30 pm)

COMMITTEES ON PRIVATE BILLS

Harwich Parkeston Quay
 Plymouth City Council

Lords Report of the Committee for Privileges on Peerages in Abeyance
 (1985-86). Motion for Approval
 Advance Petroleum Revenue Tax Bill (Money Bill): Second Reading
 and Remaining Stages
 Ministry of Defence Police Bill (HL)
 Fire Safety and Safety at Places of Sport Bill (HL): Second Reading
 Employment Protection (Variation of Limits) Order 1986
 Unfair Dismissal (Increase of Limits of Basic and Special Awards)
 Order 1986
 Unfair Dismissal (Increase of Compensation Limit) Order 1986

MINISTERS - See Annex

PRESS DIGESTNIMROD/AWACS

- GEC announces appointment of independent assessors, but general expectation is that they have lost. Weinstock comes in for critical examination.
- Labour fails to get an emergency debate. Kinnock says buy British and not Eoeing if they both work.
- Star has a feature on why AWACS is best; beats NIMROD in tests; leader says no one will emerge from this sorry saga with credit, and once again the British taxpayer will have to pick up the tag. The top priority is to get the best and if that is American so be it. It's the taxpayer who should be screaming at GEC, not politicians blaming the Cabinet and RAF for wanting the best for Britain.
- Today says 10,000 jobs will be lost if NIMROD is scrapped. Kevin MacNamara accuses you of wanting to give USA a Christmas present.
- Sun says 2 radar plants at Radlett and Hemel Hempstead face shutdown if Government scrap NIMROD.
- Mail feature by Andrew Alexander on Weinstock - the live wire that lost its spark. Remarkable transition of hero of 1960s who now can't get it right. He should think about retiring.

NIMROD/AWACS (Cont'd)

- Telegraph says save NIMROD fight is likely to fail. Ministers show no sign of being swayed. Heading on back page piece says it all: "Nimrod needed (sic) more time and money for success".
- Telegraph feature on "Has Weinstock lost his touch?" And City page piece says Weinstock's need is that he can't see the need for top executives.
- Times: Several Cabinet ministers who were prepared to fight for NIMROD have changed their minds because of Jim Prior's intervention; Mr Younger is planning to reveal the confidential reasons why Nimrod failed to meet the RAF's standards; British Aerospace is privately backing Boeing.
- FT: The Government acted yesterday to rally support from Tory backbenchers for its expected announcement on Thursday. The message from the Whips was: "We're ahead in the opinion polls. Don't ruin it".
- Guardian: GEC tries to stay NIMROD axe by naming two assessors, to find out if "leaked" criticism of system are well founded. Job loss put at 2500; leader says the technical opinion of the RAF is vital. But the point is whether the system can be made to work in a reasonable time-space. If Nimrod isn't up to the job it should be scrapped; it won't be the end of the world but GEC's call for an independent inquiry makes sense. Hugo Young says there is no Westland in the making.
- Independent: US offers to lend Britain AWACS planes. Boeings new blow to Nimrod. The US system is cheaper than expected. Cabinet set to weather defence storm. Prior could be a casualty if Nimrod is scrapped. GEC's claim that 2500 jobs could be lost is treated with scepticism in the City. The City has learned to live with disappointments from GEC - high speed train engines, torpedoes and failed take over bid for Plessey. Plessey claims that Boeing offers deal at £65m per plane plus support costs.
- Meanwhile Shorts lands a £225m missile order which will safeguard 1,500 jobs and benefit another 1,000.

LABOUR'S DEFENCE POLICY

- Columnist in Star says it is impossible to conceive of anyone with a full set of marbles coming up with such a frightening farrago of idealistic idiocies as Labour's new defence policy.
- Lord Chalfont, in Express, on Kinnock in Wonderland - on the folly that is Labour's non-nuclear defence strategy.

POLITICS

- Nick Edwards to retire at next election because of ill health.
- Sun says this has been the year of the loony Left and compiles a "loon-ar Calendar" - a month by month guide to "the Trot rot in Britain".
- Express says you have ordered the manifesto to be drafted by January and ready by Easter. Those drawing it up should be bold and need to show Government has not run out of steam. You have much to do before you can say the Thatcherite revolution has taken hold.
- Linda Bellos (Lambeth) and Margaret Hodge (Islington) reject Kinnock's plea for Left wing councils to soft pedal.
- Times: You are planning to have the Conservative manifesto completed by the spring in readiness to go to the country at any time thereafter.
- Times: Liberals called yesterday for phased "catching up" pay rises of 10-29% for health service staff in a move that threatens Alliance hopes of keeping tight control over its spending plans.
- Independent: Lengthy editorial on Government consideration of a green paper on further union reform to be published early in the new year. For all the opportunism of the timing the green paper could make a powerful populist case for further reform.

MI5

- Campbell-Savours calls on Tory MP, alleged to have part of plot to topple Harold Wilson, to own up; wants a judicial inquiry. He says MI5 could destroy you because you have upset the Establishment.
- FT: Judge Powell has voiced scepticism over key elements in Britain's case; protecting the public interest claim is "baloney", says the Judge.

ECONOMY

- Chancellor's hopes of tax cuts brighten after OPEC is reported to have agreed production cuts of 10% which puts up North Sea crude price by 45p a barrel.
- Express says it will put 6p on a gallon.
- Times: "Dramatic rise in spending". High Street sales climbed 2.4% in volume last month.
- There has not been a substantial widening of the economic gap between North and South under you, according to the November issue of Economic Trends. However, the south still retains its grip on wealth.
- FT: The Government's claims that tax cuts spur employees to work harder are not borne out, says a study by academics.

INDUSTRY

- HSE programme for improvements at Sellafield will cost £30m according to BNFL.
- Today on Edward du Cann's call for action to preserve British merchant fleet, says you are right to be sceptical about subsidising British industry against foreign competition, but it can't be wrong to hit back when others rig the competition.
- International consortium comes forward with £2m plan to save Smith's Dock, Middlesbrough.
- Graham Day announces plan to turn BL's former truck plant at Eathgate with an ice-rink and shopping centre.
- B/Rail announces there will be no trains on Christmas Day or Boxing Day.
- Car prices set to rise 15-20% next year because of depreciation of £.
- FT: Fertilizer used on farms is causing an increase in water pollution that may require a campaign costing £200m over the next 20 years, according to a DOE report.
- Times - The price of North Sea oil rose to its highest level for 10 months yesterday (Brent crude 16.20 dollars a barrel) on hopes that OPEC would agree to production cuts.
- Times: The Government and the Bank of England will be censured tomorrow by the Trade and Industry Committee for failing to warn dealers and miners of the tin crisis.
- FT: Babcock Power cuts 700 jobs as orders run out.
- Guardian says Government intends to sign a £200m contract to link Home Office, DHSS, Customs and Inland Revenue by computers.

PER CENT CLUB

- No coverage in Star, Mirror Sun.
- Today has short piece about launching of £200m a year aid project.
- Express has a curious story of Prince Charles launching a "tax the tycoons" crusade "to boost jobs and charities."
- Mail: Crusade gets hope of £50m start - already pledged by firms.

UNIONS

- Moderate beats Macreadie in CPSA general secretary re-run poll, on basis of early returns.
- AEU accepts 4.9%.

MEDIA

- Union threatening as usual Christmas blackout of BBC; 500 electricians seek pay rises of 17.5-20% to bring them into line with ITV. Strike ballot result on Friday. Express pronounces them guilty of blackmail. Mail it deserve a loud chorus of boos.
- Brian MacArthur resigns as editor of Today; returns to Sunday Times as Assistant Editor. Eddie Shah said to have recommended his replacement.

MEDIA (Cont'd)

- BBC facing a new row from Left for "delaying and censoring" a TV play because it fears reprisals from CCO - depicts you (and to a much lesser extent) in "a highly unfavourable light", according to Guardian.

LAW AND ORDER

- Police protest about proposal in Criminal Justice Bill to stop compensation for accidental injuries incurred in dealing with crime; Mail leader describes it as petty larceny by Government.
- Times: A woman, aged 102, and her daughter, 73, have been attacked and robbed in the third raid on their Birmingham home.

RATES

- Conservatives pledge to axe rates (Star) - outcome of consultation on paying for local government.
- Jack Straw says you will be £44.55 better off a week if the reform goes through.
- Sun: Tories to axe rates in election booster - top of agenda after election.
- Mail finds a hint of a 1987 election in Government's surprise publication of plans to reform the rates.
- Guardian leads with Government intending to override opposition and introduce community charge, perhaps even before a general election
- Times: Legislation to scrap domestic rates will be introduced in the first session of the next Parliament, if the Conservatives retain power. If the election is not held until 1988 it could happen before then.

- FT: Council service debt now stands at £49bn (£860 a resident) an increase of 2.5% on the year.

EDUCATION

- High Court grants Maureen McGoldrick a temporary injunction banning Brent from going ahead with disciplinary hearing. Today says Brent is trying to establish its authority against Mr Baker - all these power struggles are less important than education of children.
- Sun leader wonders what it will take to make the barmy Brent extremists see sense.
- Times: Mr Baker is expected to decide today whether to intervene in the Maureen McGoldrick case.

EDUCATION (Cont'd)

- Haringey parents bring council meeting to a halt in protest against "gay lessons" in school.
- Lots of coverage of Kenneth Baker back at his old school which he went to as an evacuee at Southport.

- FT: University dons want a 25% pay rise.

AIDS

- Star: DHSS admitted yesterday that they cannot guarantee safety from infection as a result of blood transfusions.
- Church of England tells people to follow the Bible and keep chaste.
- Express leader critical of Government publicity because it fails to point out that the primary spreaders of the disease are homosexuals.
- DPP considering prosecution of Terence Higgins Trust following obscenity complaints against its free leaflet.
- Mail 2 page feature on reader reaction to Anderton - an avalanche of letters and not a single voice among them disagree with him.
- Times; Sexually explicit advertising has been welcomed by the Board for Social Responsibility of the General Synod. It is more important to warn young people than to shock their elders; radio warnings on the dangers of AIDS are emerging as one of the most effective means of public education about the disease. More than 1,000 callers a day have been contacting BBC's Helpline service; Times leader says contraception can only be part of society's protection against AIDS. It will achieve more good - and do less harm - if promoted in a context of moral restraint.
- More support for Chief Constable Anderton from Star columnist who says the Chief Constable is an extremely peculiar kind of cove but he spoke nothing but the truth about AIDS. You should avoid perverts like the plague.

HEALTH/WELFARE

- Sun leader attacks Rotherham health authority for threatening to charge nurses £1 a trip to work on special buses to work over Christmas.

EAST/WEST

- Sun says your central role in international arms talks was given a big boost by Kremlin - first time British Ambassador called in by Soviet leader for 23 years.
- Express: Let's get on with it, PM tells Gorbachev; your message delivered by Ambassador. First summons since 1963 heightens expectations of your visit to Soviet Union in April.
- Mail: Maggie for Moscow in peace mission.
- Telegraph: Ambassador's meeting indicative of Gorbachev's emphasis he is placing on relations with Britain.
- Times: Sir Bryan Cartledge yesterday had a 90-minute meeting with Mr Gorbachev, the first formal talks between a Kremlin leader and a British Ambassador in 23 years.
- FT: UN's arms control stance spelled out to Gorbachev.

US/IRAN

- Scandal comes to Britain - Terry Waite said to have had six meetings with sacked Col North over hostages - was he duped or did he know about the secret arms deal?
- Regan said to be ready to testify in open court. CIA head, William Casey taken to hospital after becoming ill in his office. Telegraph says Casey had two minor seizures.
- Telegraph leads with report that CIA was supplying Iraq with satellite photos to assist bombing of Iranian oil depots and power stations while selling arms to Iran.
- FT: The White House has offered to send Donald Regan to tell Congress what he knows about the Iran deals.

NORTHERN IRELAND

- PIRA planning a pre-Christmas blitz, according to RUC after recent seizures of caches of explosives on both sides of border.

EC

- Denmark joins 8 countries now in favour of cheaper air fares; but still a long way to go.
- Approves £9m worth of road grants for Britain.
- FT: The EEC's legal action against European airlines is likely to be stepped up in the next few weeks following the failure to agree a package of airline liberalisation measures in Brussels.
- Times: There is an air of bleak mid-winter about prospects for the foreign affairs, agriculture and transport talks.

SPORT

- Soccer forced to surrender to thugs (as media see it) - non-League Telford prevented by police from staging their cup tie with Leeds on their own ground because police don't want Leeds fans in town.

MIDDLE EAST

- Express claims that squads of Japanese terrorists are being trained by Syrians for action against European targets.

PAKISTAN

- 56 more die in riots.

BERNARD INGHAM

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- DEM: Lord Young speaks at Institute of Directors, Pall Mall
- DES: Mr Baker speaks to Industrial Society Regents College
- DTI: Mr Channon presents Industry Year, Higher Education Awards, London
- HMT: Mr MacGregor addresses the Basingstoke Conservative Association Patrons Club
- CO: Mr Luce visits arts institutions in Bracknell and Swindon
- DES: Mr Dunn addresses Bexleyheath School - sixth form conference
- DOE: Mr Patten visits the Black Country to see proposed Urban Development Corporation site
- DOE: Lord Skelmersdale visits Liverpool (includes town of Albert Dock)
- DTI: Mr Butcher addresses Industry Year Conference, Newcastle
- DTP: Mr Bottomley visits Crowthorne for the first anniversary of MAVIS (Mobility Advice Vehicles Information Service)
- MAFF: Mr Gummer attends buffet lunch with Institute of International Affairs; later attends Food and Drink Federation Christmas party with Mr Thompson
- SO: Mr MacKay visits Mauchline Creamery, Mauchline
- SO: Mr Lang attends 4th Graduate Enterprise Dinner and Exhibition, Moir Hall, Glasgow
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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- DTP: Lord Brabazon attends meeting of European Transport Ministers, Brussels
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TV AND RADIO

- "Call Nick Ross"; BBC Radio 4 (09.05)
- "File on 4"; BBC Radio 4 (19.20)
- "Apartheid"; ITV (Part 1, 21.00; Part 2, 22.30): First half of four-part documentary on history of apartheid in South Africa
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