

27 February 1987

PRIME MINISTER

MAIN EVENTS

TUC: Youth Conference, Congress House

Sex Discrimination Act 1986 - repeals on restrictions of hours of work in factories, mines and quarries come into effect

Television programmes on AIDS begin

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STATISTICS

DTI: Engineering indices of production (Dec) and of Sales and Orders (Nov)

DTI: Balance of payments current account and overseas trade figures (Jan)

DTI: Company liquidity survey (4th qtr)

DTI: Finished Steel consumption and stock changes (4th qtr-prov)

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PARLIAMENT

Commons:

Business: Private Members Motions

Mr Robert Banks - Licencing Reform and the Problems of Alcohol Excess

Mr Michael Marshall - Information Technology

Mr Tony Favell - Trade Union Power in the Public Sector

Adjournment Debate

Plans for the Swale District General Hospital (Mr R Moate)

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MINISTERS - See Annex

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PRESS DIGEST

MAIN NEWS - a very heavy news day with:

- Alliance win Greenwich with a landslide.
- Tower Commission concludes President Reagan was not in control and strongly criticises his top officials - a very unprofessional operation.
- Michael Checkland appointed Director General of BBC; Governors' unanimous choice - seen as playing it safe. Mail describes him as "Mr Nobody". Guardian says appointment will come as a shock inside and outside BBC.
- Church Synod votes to set the wheels rolling towards women priests.
- Our Ambassador in Beirut tends to raise hopes for Waite's release. Syrian Army Chief says his soldiers would not undertake a military operation to free hostages.
- European ban on English football clubs to continue to 1990 without right of appeal - clubs furious.
- Reports that Craxi will resign next week.
- Young policeman, giving evidence in PC Blakelock murder case, accuses senior officers of a lack of backbone in handling the riot.
- Elton John to sue Sun for £20m for allegations about his sex life; Sun continues to print "evidence" from rent boys. Mirror accuses Sun of "The Big Lie".
- Teachers' pay Bill clears Commons; pay deal will be imposed by Easter; unions say uninterrupted schooling might never return if teachers are deprived of negotiating rights.
- Tories to speed up abolition of rates, with Scottish abolition coming in one stage; Waltham Forest raises its rates by 62%.
- Threat of rent rises of up to 65% for 4.5m council tenants after cut in Government subsidies.
- Edwina Currie in 'Marxism Today' on how she gets her own way with men.
- ICI profits top £1bn - up £104m on 1985.
- Davy McKee and Teesside Labour controlled council back idea of a new City Tech.
- Ivor Stanbrook MP finds something 'distasteful and abhorrent' about activities of Nazi-hunters; Scottish TV lists 34 Nazis who fled to Britain after war.
- New portrait of you by Paul Brason unveiled.
- Denis Worrall, ex-Ambassador to Britain, wins rapturous applause for attack on Eothen in opening his election campaign.

MAIN NEWS (Cont'd)

- Comptroller and Auditor General issues a point by point rebuttal of charges that Parliament was deceived over Zircon; and says leak damaged British security. Guardian wants BBC to enter a claim for damages because the Glasgow search was apparently unlawful and to show the film.
- Soviet Union says it still wants a total ban on nuclear tests after breaking moratorium.

GREENWICH

- First time SDP has taken a Labour seat in a by-election (Mail).
- Star: Alliance by a landslide.
- Sun: Deirdre is destroyed.
- Mirror: SDP poll stunner - unmitigated disaster for Kinnock.
- Today: Alliance triumph - tactical voting swings it. Sensational victory. Devastating blow for Kinnock.
- Express: Rosie sinks the Big Two - poll disaster for Labour after tactical vote by Tories. Result beyond Mrs Aarnes' wildest dreams.
- Mail: Crushing victory for Rosie. Shock for hard Left. Crushing blow for Kinnock; depressing for you.
- Telegraph: Alliance wins by 6,611 - spectacular victory; devastating blow for Labour and serious setback for Conservatives.
- Independent: Sensational victory ends 50 years of Labour domination. Rosie Barnes the candy floss candidate they couldn't lick.
- FT: SDP landslide at Greenwich.
- Times: Tactical vote gives SDP huge victory

REAGAN

- Sun: Whatever Reagan's mistakes, he was motivated by his intense compassion for the hostages. This is hardly a crime. The real villains are Regan, Poindexter and North.
- Mirror: Reagan has been let down lightly by Tower Commission. Heads will roll but not the President's. But it doesn't excuse the President for permitting, if not encouraging, swapping of arms for Americans while demanding his Allies stand with him against terror. Joe Haines says the real American scandal was the election of Reagan in the first place - unfit politically, intellectually and physically to do the job.
- Today leader headed "Reagan's murky depths" says the Tower report presents a devastating picture of incompetence. A severe weakening of Reagan's credibility.
- Express feature thinks it is far too early to be arranging Reagan's burial.
- Mail says unfortunately this is the first and doubtless the mildest of several investigations. More ominous is that this savaging of their President is no isolated occurrence but seems to be becoming a regular event. Does the US's political system measure up to today's demands. Perhaps the Americans have grown to expect too much of their president.
- Telegraph: No hint in report that Reagan has behaved in a manner likely to cause his impeachment. Reagan is plainly an honest man whose personal faults have brought about his current problems.
- Guardian leader headed "Befuddled, bemused, bewildered" says the verdict is a novel one: "Guilty but asleep".
- Times front page lead describes the report as a blistering indictment of virtually all President Reagan's senior aides and deeply embarrassing to the Administration; leader says that contradictions brought out in the report will mean that US foreign policy in future will be treated by allies and adversaries with caution. President Reagan should ensure that in future there is just one coherent - and legal - foreign policy.
- Independent: White House chaos condemned in Tower report. Few escape commission's censure. Reagan's style of leadership at fault; editorial says it is a black day for the President but his chances of retiring gracefully are not negligible.
- FT: Incompetence rather than duplicity; leader says the governance of the US and the responses of its friends and foes must be conditioned by the reality of a gravely weakened President. But it would make little real difference, and might do some harm, if Reagan were to step aside. You and Kohl should cease acting like presidential moons and start generating some independent light of your own.

ECONOMY

- Express report says you unleashed your pre-election slogan by telling the voters they have never had it so good.
- Express leader reports a deafening silence from Hattersley after NIESR report; it seems to have shot Hattersley's fox. But since he has put so much faith in Institute's past predictions shouldn't he now rejoice?
- Times: Government figures show that British industry continues to lag behind its main competitors in funding research and development.
- Rhodes Boyson urges companies refused contracts by Left-wing councils for political reasons to take legal action (Times).

POLITICS

- Kinnock promises to hand back power to unions at TCWU recruiting conference.
- Guardian says you ought to see the futility of tax cuts in the middle of a raging consumer boom. But the whole budget exercise is not about economics but winning elections.
- Times: Future Alliance Government would not reverse any tax cuts introduced by Chancellor.
- Times: Douglas Hurd warns Conservative Party and supporters not to ignore inner cities.
- Malcolm Rutherford in FT assumes Conservatives will win General Election quite comfortably and speculates on the consequences.

EDUCATION

- Independent: University College Cardiff head is main obstacle to financial rescue.
- Independent: Alan Howarth argues that freedom of choice not central control is the key to improvement in educational standards.

HEALTH

- Independent: NHS waiting lists rise to highest level for two years.

AIDS

- Sun now thinks licensed brothels are worth looking at.

MEDIA

- Express finds Government's radio proposals disappointing for not privatising Radios 1 and 2. That would be doing BBC a favour.

UNIONS

- Sun, on idea that hard-up TUC should charge £9 entrance fee to its next conference, predicts they will be the slowest selling tickets in town.

DEFENCE

- Independent: Germans press US to maintain narrow interpretation of ADM. US unlikely to decide until after Prime Minister's Moscow visit.

MIDDLE EAST

- Independent: Canada and West Germany send their Ambassadors back to Syria.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

DEM: Lord Young attends Enterprise Training in YTS, regional conference, London

DEM: Mr Clarke presents Greenline Docklands Tourism Awards, London

DES: Mr Baker visits Nottinghamshire

DTP: Mr Moore receives courtesy call from French Ambassador, London

HMT: Mr Brooke visits Customs and Excise offices, Tilbury

HO: Mr Hurd visits Merseyside voluntary services

MAFF: Mr Jopling addresses Faculty of Agriculture, Newcastle University

MOD: Mr Younger addresses the Glasgow Ayrshire Society

SO: Mr Rifkind gives opening address at Scottish Financial Enterprise Conference, Sheraton Hotel, Edinburgh

WO: Mr Edwards hosts St David's Day reception, Cathays Park, Cardiff: Mr Roberts and Mr Robinson also attend

DEN: Mr Buchanan-Smith addresses oil and gas seminar, Braxil export initiative, Aberdeen

DEN: Mr Goodlad visits Preston

DES: Mr Walden visits Buckingham College of Higher Education

DES: Mr Dunn visits GEC Avionics, Medway

DHSS: Mr Newton addresses Association of District Medical Officers, Royal Institute of Public Health, Portland Place, London

DHSS: Mr Lyell attends meeting on social fund with Hertford Social Services, County Hall, Hertford .

DOE: Lord Skelmersdale visits Wandysteads and Alwinton farms in Northumberland

DOE: Dr Boyson visits London Borough of Newham

DTI: Mr Pattie attends dinner for CBI Anglo-Soviet Economic Conference, London

HO: Lord Caithness visits Greater Manchester Fire Brigade

MAFF: Lord Belstead visits Wandysteads and Alwinton farms in Northumberland

MAFF: Mr Thompson opens Association of County Councils Food Additives, Drink, Cosmetic and Medicines Conference, Glaziers Hall, London Bridge

WO: Mr Roberts gives opening address, Adult Literacy Conference, Cardiff

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TV AND RADIO

DHSS Mrs Currie interviewed by Dr Penny Watson of Women Physician Magazine, Henbury Church Hall, Macclesfield

Paymaster General, Mr Clarke appears in Radio 4's Any Questions, Baldock, Herts

"What Happened to Flora Leipman?"; BBC 2 (14.20): Fifty years ago a Glasgow family emigrated to the "Socialist Paradise" of Russia. One by one, they were taken into Stalin's labour camps - Flora's brother and two sisters died there. She is the sole survivor. Report by Mary Marquis. Continued at 15.03 after news

"First AIDS"; ITV (17.30): Young people from the world of rock and comedy unite to tackle AIDS. With Norman Fowler MP

"Any Questions?"; BBC Radio 4 (20.30): Rt Hon Kenneth Clarke; Rt Hon John Smith; Des Wilson; Mrs Wendy Savage. Programme from Baldock, Herts

"AIDS - The Facts"; BBC 1 and BBC 2 (21.30): A short programme of facts and figures to dispel myths about AIDS

"The Aids Debate"; BBC 1 (22.30): Special debate chaired by Robert Kilroy-Silk

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